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FROM THE EDITOR

THE ADVANTAGE OF THE OUTSIDER

The editors apologize for the somewhat belated appearance of this third number of CHIME. The reason for the delay is that, during the past few months, the editors have been busy organizing Chinese music concerts in Amsterdam, as well as an international lecture series on Chinese music at Leiden University. The contents of this volume reflect, to some extent, the result of those activities. From January onwards, the CHIME office in Leiden was visited by a stream of scholars, musicians and composers from abroad who all share a strong fascination for Chinese music. Naturally, the future of Chinese music research was discussed on many occasions, and some plans were made for closer co-operation between Chinese and Western researchers and for future projects within the framework of CHIME.

This is not the right place to discuss these plans in detail, but it may be useful to reflect a little on the general outcome of the discussions, especially where the position and future tasks of foreign and Chinese scholars with respect to Chinese music are concerned.

Obviously, the position of the Western scholar who carries out research on Chinese music differs in many ways from that of his Chinese colleagues in the field. It is not enough to be vaguely aware of these differences. One should realize their implications for the actual nature of the work that can be done. It goes without saying that Chinese scholars have the great advantage of a strong, natural affinity for their own music, and of being in a position to investigate and describe a culture in the language from which it was born. The Chinese are, in every possible respect, closer to the musical sources, in some ways even unified with them: they are often, at the same time, the investigators and the performers and treasurers of their own musical tradition.

By contrast, Western scholars can claim the advantage of living far away, and looking at Chinese culture from a great distance, which sometimes enables them to discover hitherto unanticipated relationships and connections, or even unexpected manifestations of beauty. The advantage of the outsider can hardly be underestimated, certainly where Chinese music research is concerned.

Chinese scholars are subject to many limitations. Let us mention a few important ones: 1. The scope of their research is politically limited. Anthropological aspects of musical tradition are hardly or inadequately investigated. That Chinese scholars have done such excellent work in the field of structural analysis of rural instrumental music may very well be partly due to the fact that this is the only aspect which they can safely research. Nearly all instrumental music in the villages is embedded in ritual and (semi-)religious practices, which are eyed suspiciously by Chinese government officials. The communist doctrine aims at extinction of all forms of 'superstition'. Consequently, scholars of instrumental village music deliberately neglect its ritual and religious context, in favour of purely musical aspects. 2. The long time isolation of China has excluded Chinese scholars from adequate knowledge about international developments in musicology. Basically, this isolation...
continues today. Only a small number of Chinese researchers are able to understand a foreign language. Moreover, it is very difficult for them to obtain foreign literature on musicology. Related problems of China’s international isolation are: libraries still function poorly in China and no adequate education programmes in the field of ethnomusicology and methodologic research have been developed.

3. Musical scholarship in China is traditionally connected with (sometimes even identified with) knowledge of musical aesthetics and abilities in musical interpretation, rather than with objective and empirical observation. The Chinese word for ‘scientific’, 科学 kexue, is often used in a special sense, namely, ‘carefully adhering to certain theoretical - e.g. aesthetic, literary or political - principles’. This is, of course, a perfectly legitimate, alternative view of what scholarship involves, but it gives rise to a lot of confusion when traditional Chinese and modern Western scholars exchange viewpoints. The latter usually emphasize the need for more objectiveness.

4. There is a mixed attitude amongst Chinese scholars towards change and new developments in Chinese music. On the mainland, the ‘modernization’ of Chinese music is welcomed as a necessary implementation of the Socialist reform programme - which, in practice, it never is. Among Chinese scholars who have emigrated to the West, many innovations in Chinese music are summarily rejected, and continuation of tradition and linkage with the past are sometimes over-emphasized, because traditional music, rather than new music, is viewed as the ideal hunting ground of the ethnomusicologist. Neither attitude does much justice to Chinese music culture as a whole.

Apart from these conceptual limitations, many Chinese scholars are hampered in their work by purely economical problems. It is a sad fact that Western scholars are often financially much better equipped to do fieldwork in China than their Chinese colleagues.

Notwithstanding all these considerations, music scholars in China should, of course, be respected for their tremendous achievements. In fact, the time is long overdue for a general, critical appraisal of their work, somewhat similar to Dr. Keith Howard’s sympathetic essay on the achievements of Korean scholars.* This would certainly create a better understanding of their work among general readers in the West, and also provide a suitable introduction to the reading of Chinese sources.

There is no need to stress the need of closer co-operation between Western and Chinese scholars in tackling the mysteries of Chinese music. The basis for a modern ethnomusicology - which existed in China in the 1930s - has been restored in the 1980s, and the coming decades will prove very exciting for the further development of Chinese music research, both in the West and in the Far East. No doubt, many long-established theories and concepts will be overturned. In the next century, scholars of Chinese music may very well discuss the work of their predecessors - i.e. of our generation - with a slight note of bewilderment.

Meanwhile, it should be realized that Western musicology is on the brink of many changes, too. If, over the past decade, many of our conservative views were overturned, this was often due to the influx of world music and of new knowledge, gained from studying hitherto uninvestigated ‘primitive’ musical cultures. (The word has turned against the scholars who first applied it).

The time may not be far away when Chinese researchers will surprise the West with valuable new viewpoints with respect to Western music and Western musicology. They will probably teach us a lot about our own limitations. After all, the advantage of the outsider is not reserved for Western scholars alone.

If you travel southeast by train, leaving the high plateaux of Shaanxi and its 'yellow earth', towards Sichuan, where the mountains are suddenly green and wild, topped with mists and if you look carefully after Qipan Pass at the border to Sichuan, you might see the broken remains of one of China's most important communication routes - the zhandao 取道. For here, an incredible wooden road begins its trail south. Since its construction in the Warring States period (BC 475-221) it has borne witness to a thousand tales of adventure, warfare and legend - and to a strange form of theatre.

The road cuts through the mountains that rise either side of the surging Jialing River. Wooden wedges were hammered into the edges of the steep mountainsides and then covered with plank after plank to make a log track stretching from Shaanxi towards Chengdu. So dangerous is the route, in fact, that at Chaotian Gorge as at other stations along the way, stone tablets are carved with the warning: Caution, step carefully!

Continuing along the route, a small town, Guangyuan, offers the traveller a night's rest and refreshment. The gate at the town wall announces to the traveller that now he has passed the 'throat to all Shu'. It is a bottleneck, the cut off point that protected Sichuan in times of war from invaders from the north. And now on through the rugged mountains, passing verdant forests where the echo of strange night-birds and the cackle of apes laughing in the trees resounds around the rocky crags, on to towns such as Jian'ge or Zitong, on finally, to the capital, Chengdu.

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1 The authors are involved in a research project on Chinese theatre based in Mainz, Germany. Huang Weiruo is a guest lecturer on the project. He is a teacher of traditional Chinese theatre history at the Central Academy of Drama in Beijing. Michael Gissenwehrer is university assistant at the Theatre Department of the University of Mainz. He is a graduate of theatre in Vienna and at the Central Academy of Drama in Beijing. Jo Riley is writing a PhD thesis at the University of East Anglia, UK. She is a graduate in English from Cambridge and at the Central Academy of Drama in Beijing.

2 Ancient name for Sichuan Province.
The zhandaodao has been a strategic route since its construction over 2,000 years ago. Legend has it that after Liu Bang and (Bawang) Xiang Yu defeated the Qin dynasty around BC 206, Xiang Yu took over power. To show his good will, Liu Bang promptly withdrew southwards into Sichuan, taking the route along the zhandaodao, and burning the road behind him as he went so that he could never return along it to threaten Xiang Yu’s reign. After some years had passed, however, Liu Bang had a large enough army to challenge the overlord Xiang Yu, and so sent his soldiers to repair the zhandaodao. Seeing this, Xiang Yu ordered his best generals under Zhang Han to the Shaanxi border and positioned them at three strategic points to lie in wait for Liu Bang’s attack. Meanwhile, Liu Bang’s main army forces sneaked across an enormously difficult mountain path to the east of the zhandaodao, known as chencang dao 陈仓道. There he made a surprise, successful attack, which was the beginning of his eventual victory over Xiang Yu. Even today, a particularly cunning manoeuvre in daily life meets with the saying, 'Repair the zhandaodao by day in order to steal across chencang by night.'

The zhandaodao is not only significant to warfare. Like the great Silk Road, it was a vital trade route connecting, in this case, the central plains and loess plateaux to the southwest of China. The route has been crossed by many a wayfarer, merchant, messenger, exile, prisoner, refugee and poet. One such was Du Fu; another who established a whole school of poetry after describing journeying along the zhandaodao (though he himself never went there) was Li Bo.3

Gradually, small inns must have been established at strategic points along the road to provide refreshment, accommodation or a change of horse. Around these stations grew settlements. As these settlements turned into villages, the people continued to celebrate the rites as they had done in the places they came from.

ELEMENTS OF NUO THEATRE
Theatre began to play a significant role in the ritual ceremonies. This theatre, tiyangxi 調陽戲, is commonly described as a nuo theatre 邪劇. Nuo is translated as 'exorcism'. Nuo theatre does not mean exorcistic theatre (in the sense of a theatre merely performed to expel evil demons) but is rather a complex 'meta-event' consisting of a fixed series of magical sections interwoven with theatrical scenes which might last from one night to five days. A typical nuo theatre event, chong tan, jiao hun huan yuan (expelling demons, recovering the soul of a sick person and redeeming the vow in the form of animal sacrifice and theatre performance) might include:

- The ceremonial construction of the altar / performance area.
- The delivery of a document containing details of the problem to be dealt with (sickness etc.) and the promise of sacrifices / offerings.
- Invocation of the relevant gods and their soldiers; the preparation of, cleansing of and securing safe passage of the above as well as their earthly accommodation.
- The search for the lost soul of the sick, battle against the demons responsible and the expulsion of evil on a "plague boat".
- Preparation of sacrifices and the offering of them.
- Blessings, and departure of the gods ( escorting the gods).

3 See Li Bo's poem Shu dao nan. The school of poetry inspired by him calls itself Yeyu wending - 'listening to the bells (on the eaves of the houses) in the night rain'. For a similar influence in drama, see Chang sheng dian (Palace of Eternal Life) where the Emperor Tang Minghuang makes a journey along the zhandaodao to Jiange.
The theatrical scenes occurring within this event, which may consist of short dance or movement pieces or longer and full-length plays, fulfil the following functions: a) that the gods and heavenly generals addressed in the magic or shamanistic sequences actually appear represented; b) that these characters explain in person their own biographies, origins and appointed tasks; (this includes self-introduction and comic anecdotes); c) that the magical, shamanistic sequences are illustrated and proven in a metaphorical way on stage. This definition of nuo theatre restricts itself to the complex inter-relationship of rite and performance within a single nuo event. While some of the theatrical sequences and devices described in this article may also occur in other forms of theatre in China, they are in such cases deprived of the magical function and ritual significance accorded to them within the nuo event.

PEOPLE/PUPPET THEATRE
There are at least ten different kinds of nuo theatre known at present in China still being performed.4 These forms actually represent different styles of nuo performance from various regions of China. They are slowly becoming the focus of Chinese theatre researchers, as can be seen by an international symposium on nuo theatre held in Shanxi in May 1990.

Tiyang theatre is, however, one of the most unique forms of nuo theatre. It is known locally as yangxi 陽戲, wanyangxi 完陽戲, and also hua hua yuanxi 花花恩戲.5 The

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4 Perhaps one should add, being performed again after the political turmoil of the Cultural Revolution.
5 The names of many nuo theatres are difficult to translate literally. Tiyangxi refers directly to the manipulation of strings (tī) i.e. marionettes. Yuan meaning vow or promise is often used in names of nuo theatre - perhaps the yang in tiyangxi is a corruption of yuan. Some suggest a connection to yin-
special feature of tiyang theatre is that marionettes, masked performers and non-
masked actors perform rites and theatre in rotation. Villages in the Sichuan counties of
Zitong, Jiange and Guanyuan - villages that have grown around the route of the
zhandao - still perform tiyang as generations before them have done.
The performers of tiyang form a company known as the tiyangxi jiao banzi 提陽戲教班子. The addition of the word jiao 教 (religious) here is significant, for it hints at the idea of the folk religious aspect to the theatre. All the members of the troupe are farmers, amateur performers who go about their normal business on the land when not performing. For the duration of the performance, not only are they transformed into consummate performers, but are also deemed temporary wushi 巫術 or wu 巫, sometimes translated as shaman, witch doctor, or priest. This is because, any male member of the community who feels he has special powers to cure sickness, to drive out evil spirits, or communicate between the world of the man and that of the spirits may join the troupe. Firstly, however, he must undergo an initiation process which teaches him how to express his special talents within the structure of a performance - artistically.
The process of initiation is quite simple. The leader of the troupe is known as the
zhangtanshi 掌壇師. The zhangtanshi is a wu of outstanding ability. The office is
passed directly within one family from father to son, or if there is no heir, then within
the family clan to the next generation. Failing that, to the next generation of a different
clan. The zhangtanshi commands a group of about 23 members known as guhuo 殺伙. Toecome an initiated member, an offering of 50 kgs of rice or an equivalent sum of
money is required. The tradition reveals the similarity of tiyang jiao to a kind of
religion in that when daoism first appeared in China it was known by the name of the
offering required to become a member - the 'wu dou mi jiao' 五斗米教 (the 50 kgs rice
religion). Then the new initiate must swear his obedience to the zhangtanshi at the altar
of the three 'patron saints' of tiyang theatre - Chuanzhuh 変主, Tuzhuh 茶主 and Yaowang
藥王 (see below). Finally the initiated must sign his name in a special register kept in
the home of the zhangtanshi and is warned should he not observe the canons of their
belief that the gods in heaven will know at once...
Naturally, such secrets and rules must be kept secret from the uninitiated. But the
troupe members are free to act independently of the zhangtanshi during the normal
course of life outside the performance.

PREPARATIONS AND PROCESSIONS
When a family or community suffers some calamity, or illness, cannot produce
offspring etc., they will send for the services of a wu. In most cases, this will be the
zhangtanshi. Both parties agree on an auspicious date when the zhangtanshi and his
guhuo (the rest of the tiyang troupe) will return and perform the whole nuo theatre
meta-event as detailed above. The family or community in question act as hosts for the
duration of the performance, which is open to all.

On the day agreed the troupe will gather at the home of the zhangtanshi (where the
costume and mask trunks etc. are kept throughout the year) and a small prayer
ceremony is conducted before the trunks may be removed from the house. Then two
members will lift the trunk containing the marionettes and lead the procession out
towards the performance area. The zhangtanshi follows behind them, and following
him, the rest of the troupe bearing the various percussion instruments, and other
requisites including the shenfan 神幡 (god-banners) and shenxiang 神像 (statues of the

yang instead. The performers themselves are unable to clarify this point. Wan is used here in the sense of huan, redeeming a vow.
6 The word tan was formerly used to describe a group of wu and in present use describes most nuo theatre troupes.

8
The procession takes a winding path to the performance area, and in this aspect follows the pattern of most nüo theatres. The principal position awarded the marionettes seems to show the belief that the marionettes already represent the various gods as sacred images. This can be clearly demonstrated by a comparison between a tiyang procession and that of another nüo theatre, in this case, E. Jiangxi's dan nüo 擇傩.  

<table>
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<th>N. Sichuan tiyangxi</th>
<th>E. Jiangxi dan nüo</th>
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<tr>
<td>1st in the procession</td>
<td>Two members of the troupe bear the trunk of marionettes.</td>
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| The nüotou 傳頭 (head of the dan nüo troupe) carrying a small wooden statue of a boy known as the tang taizi 唐太子 (who protects the masks in the trunks).  
  The tang taizi is not used in the performance but stands on the altar in the performance area for its duration. |
| 2nd in the procession | Zhangtanshi - head of the tiyang troupe (empty handed). |
| 1st General - a large wooden figure of Buddha;  
  2nd General, 3rd General, General Mianshan and General Chang - large wooden 'masks' are each carried in a sedan chair borne on poles shouldered by two performers. These are not used in the performance but stand on the altar for its duration. |
| 3rd in the procession | The rest of the troupe carrying remaining trunks of masks, costumes, props etc. |
| The rest of the troupe. |

Here we see that the images of tang taizi and nuoshen are accorded precedence in the procession and carried as religious idols to the performance area. The marionettes of tiyangxi are treated in the same way as these religious images, but they are then part of the performance, symbolising, or even 'reincarnating' the actual gods they are carved to represent.

CHARMS AND THE TIYANGXI GODS

At the place thus designated, and under the command of the zhangtanshi the assistants or guhuo set up a table as altar along the main axis of the house or building in question - along the zheng xiang 正向. The table is covered with a special cloth which may be decorated with patterns and fu 符 - magic charms or spells such as those which might destroy evil demons or those which might serve as an invocation to summon spirits.  

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7 For more detailed discussion of this form, see Wang Limei and Liu Sha, 'Jiangxi di liangan yu nuoxi', paper given at International Symposium on nüo Theatre, Shanxi 1990.

8 The custom of putting the small wooden image of tang taizi in the costume trunk is widespread even in other forms of Chinese theatre such as Peking opera, where he is known as da shige 大師哥. Here, the doll is placed face down on top of the costumes in Number One trunk. This trunk contains all the kao (armour) and mang (formal court robes), that is to say, the most precious. During the performance, the doll is taken out and placed on the altar backstage after a small ceremony where incense is lit. After the performance, he is put back in the trunk, and from this time, no one must dare sit on the trunk. There are many such rules showing the respect he is accorded. The da shige is also used in the performance should a baby be required as, for example, in the play Fourth Son Visits His Mother when it is carefully wrapped in silk and handed to the actress.

The fu is actually an invention of the ancient wu. Somewhere between a drawing and a written character, it was later used by Daoist priests as well. During a ritual only certain wu are entitled to write a fu - those with special talent and skill in doing so (in Daoism, only the Daoist priest). The wu of this area in N. Sichuan even have a small rhyme concerning who can write fu:

If you write a fu and don't know how
The demons and spirits will laugh out loud.
If you write a fu and do know how,
You'll scare them off completely!

Even a skilled fu writer may not write or use a fu at an inappropriate time or in an inappropriate place, however. One tale tells of a famous wu in the Wudai period (907-979 AD) named Fan Guiyuan. Though he was extremely talented in writing fu, he was also fond of drink, and under the evil influence of drink, often unruly. One day, after drinking too much, he staggered to the toilet and foolishly composed a fu to summon a god. A god did in fact descend - filled with rage. He took the brush Fan had been using and drove it into Fan's forehead, causing a deep wound. Poor Fan's wound never healed, but festered until the day he died. From this moment on, Fan was known as 'Puss-head Fan'.

Once the altar is arranged, the marionettes and masks are placed on it and then an earthenware pot beside them. When the wu takes up either mask or marionette for the performance the spirit contained in the mask or marionette will enter him. Thus he must make room for the god's spirit, for a man cannot have two spirits at once. So the wu puts his own spirit into the pot on the altar for safe keeping until the performance is over when he will return the spirit to the mask or marionette and take his own soul, or spirit back.

Now above the altar, three long banners are hung, each bearing three images of the most important gods for the performance. Reading horizontally, the topmost three images are Confucius, Taishang Laojun, and Sakya Muni (Buddha). Thus the wu make no distinction between the various different 'religions' of Confucianism, Daoism or Buddhism. Instead, whichever god seems mightiest and supremely powerful will do, for he is sure to be effective. Such lack of distinction between the various religions is also found in other areas at the nüo performance arena: N.E. Guizhou, or W. Hunan, for example. Beneath the top three images are the secondary gods: Xuanzang (玄奘), Guanyin (觀音) and Wenchang Dijun (文昌帝君). Beneath these, the local gods, Chuanzhu, Tuzhu and Yaowang. All these gods are given offerings of meat and wine (save Guanyin, who is a vegetarian), but only the lesser gods actually have to work for their living, each having specific duties to fulfill:

• Xuanzang - also known as Xuanwu (玄武), Zhenwu (真武) or Dangmo Tianjun (真武天君) destroys sickness-bringing demons.
• Guanyin - protects the birth of children, particularly male ones, and ensures their safe and healthy development.
• Wenchang Dijun - also known as Zhang Yazi, said to have grown up in Zitong county. Born in the Jin dynasty (1115-1234 AD), he became a scholar and after passing the examinations, left to become a minister. After his death, he was revered as god who will protect and bless other scholars seeking promotion and knowledge.
• Chuanzhu - also known as Erlang shen. In fact, he may be the second son of Li Bing, though some say he is Zhao Yu. In any case, he has a special ability to capture demons and mischievous devils, even fierce animals, for all evil spirits who dwell on land or sea fear him tremendously.

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10 See local history records, Tongzhou zhi, Yishizhu.
Tuzhu - Sichuan's Earth Spirit. He can also destroy bad demons and devils and expels Taisui (said in Sichuan to be a large red fungus growing under the earth which if disturbed as in house building or farming, will bring calamity) and Dijing.

Yaowang - a historical figure, a doctor by the name of Sun Simiao. Some time after his death, he was revered as the medicine god, capable of expelling epidemics and chasing out sickness.

**OPENING CEREMONY**

Now, behind the altar proper are set two square tables over which a bamboo pole is suspended. Cloth attached to the pole forms what will be the top of the marionette stage, and two curtains are hung either side of it. The right hand curtain is often painted with some kind of invocation to the gods, whilst the left one bears the picture of a gui 鬼 or spirit.11 Between the side curtains, a wooden frame of about 1 1/2m high by 1m wide forms the actual performance area of the marionettes.

Incense is lit, candles and lanterns and offerings of wine and a boar's head are laid out on the altar. At the sound of a bell which is struck three times, the proceedings begin with kai tan 開壇 or, declaring the altar in use. The significance of this episode in a general sense is the beginning of the ceremony as a whole and specifically the time when the 'actors' put their souls or 'anima' into the pot. The zhangtianshi and the guhuo or troupe enter wearing long cotton robes (pao 袍), and carrying various percussion instruments and a huqin 胡琴 (string instrument). Sometimes the troupe has no huqin player, in which case one performer sings the part with 'lang di ger lang' and so on and is known as the ruan huqin 軟胡琴 (soft huqin). As they enter, they play and sing to the 'Duangong qiang' 雙公腔 (Duangong melody).12 Praying to the gods, inviting them to descend, the troupe makes a circle, moving in a clockwise direction. The zhangtianshi leads the singing and the troupe follow with the chorus. The use of chorus is a common feature of many kinds of noo theatre which extensively employ gaoqiang 高腔 and yiyang 弋陽 melodies, and is of course the outstanding characteristic of Sichuan opera - Chuanju. Depending on the reason for the whole ceremony, the zhangtianshi invites the relevant gods.

During this part of the ceremony, the spectators and host family are warned to be quiet and solemn. They are forbidden to talk or move about. The zhangtianshi then burns some incense and the troupe enters the backstage area behind the curtains. Now the area in front of the altar is empty. As the percussion instruments sound up, the troupe sing more chants as invocations to the gods to descend into their images in the masks and marionettes in order to receive the prayers and thanksgivings of those present - to enjoy the wine, the boar's head and the performance.

Now five wu enter the area before the altar. One wears the mask of Tianmen tudi 天門土帝, (Earth Spirit of the Heavenly Gate), the remaining four each wear masks representing the character Gong Cao. This section of the proceedings is known as The Entry of Gong Cao'. Gong Cao is a legendary figure said to have been a Han dynasty chronicler (BC 206-22 AD) who became a favourite of the Daoist and folk religions after his death. He is presented as the messenger between heaven and earth, between the gods and mortal men.

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11 In other forms of Chinese theatre dating back to Yuan zaju, the two entrance/exit doors at the back of the stage are known as guimendo 鬼門道 - the spirit's door.

12 The Duangong melody is frequently used by wu in all kinds of ritual, and it also appears in many forms of traditional Chinese theatre such as Chuanju or Huangmei opera where it passes under the name noo diao 例調.
The four Gong Caos bear a document addressed to the Supreme Being, on which is written:

The people of X county by the road in Sichuan offer their prayers, light incense and submit reverently to plea for X reason, to you they humbly kowtow. They offer a performance of tianxi 天戲 and dixi 地戲 if you will descend and cleanse this place, purify and bless it, for after these rites we beg you receive our plea. X year, X month X day.

Now the four performers arrive at Nantianmen 南天門 (the south heavenly gate), but can go no further because the status of Gong Cao is too low. Instead, they pass the document to Tudishen 土地神 who goes behind the curtains, makes a full circle¹⁴, returns and hands the letter back to the waiting Gong Caos saying 'The document has been approved.'

CLEARING THE ROAD
The section that follows is called 'Guarding the Altar. Now that the request has been approved, the preparations for the performance proper can begin. The first step is to send out Ling Guan, who with his three eyes and fearsome aspect can vanquish and devour any dragon, tiger, evil demon or ghost. One of the wu enters masked as Ling Guan, wielding a golden stick (bian 鞭) calling out spells with which to destroy the evil spirits that surround us all the time. It is a moment of fear for the spectators, followed by relief once the performance area is deemed clean, undisturbed by evil demons.

Now that the performance area is pure and calm, the gods can be invited to descend. But some form of transport is needed. Another wu enters wearing the mask of a horse groom. Using a set of stylised movements rather like those still used by the horse groom on the Peking opera stage, he leads an imaginary horse onto the stage. He then washes it, and feeds it¹⁶ and prepares the saddle. This part is mimed, there is no speech or singing, but it is accompanied by the percussion instruments.

Once the horse is prepared, the gods are ready to descend so the performance moves to the stage erected above the altar. The first god or spirit to arrive (marionette) is Xiao gui 小鬼, one of the minor spirits. Like all the marionettes, he is about a foot in height, but he has a humorous, laughing face. The marionettes are operated by the wu backstage. Xiao gui enters (descends) with bouncing, vivacious step. The wu recites and sings the story of Xiao gui in a kind of introduction similar to that used in story telling and opera performances. The Xiao gui tells his duty is to clear the road for the coming gods. Again, the singing is accompanied by a chorus backstage. Now a second god enters, Tudi 土帝 (earth god). This is not the same Tudi as the one who received

¹³ The word dixi here describes simply the plays acted by the wu as opposed to those performed by the marionettes and has nothing to do with another form of nuo theatre known as Dixi which comes mainly from Anshun, Guizhou. See Jo Riley, 'Dancing the Gods' in Britain-China Centre Report No.43, Spring 1990, p.11-17.
¹⁴ Pao yuanchang 破圓場 'running the circle' is the term also used in all traditional Chinese theatres to describe the passage of time or space.
¹⁵ Bian here does not mean 'whip'. Rather it is a magic stick of about 1 1/2 feet, looking rather like a slim, tall pagoda. It is used today in all kinds of opera, as Peking opera for example, by characters such as Ju Lingshen in the play Havoc in Heaven.
¹⁶ The washing and feeding of a horse before inviting the main character of a play such as Guangong to mount the horse was a crucial part of Peking opera until about the 1950s, when it was considered too superstitious in content.
the document earlier and interceded for the Gong Caos. Rather he is a character who
also ensures the road is clear and safe for the entry of the greater gods, he is a kind of
pathfinder.
Perhaps the villagers of N. Sichuan are very aware of the hardships of travelling - after
the experience of their own zhanda0 - in any case, many such lesser spirits enter the
stage with the same function of securing the road: Jieshi lang 助事郎 (youth who
concludes arguments), Chenlao 錢牢 (name of a character), a Buddhist monk, a Daoist
priest, Heshi lao 和事佬 (the old man who reconciles arguments) and monkeys and
apes.

Now the gods of higher rank descend, and each is placed on the altar after his 'entry
performance' in a certain order according to his rank - Chuanzhu, Tuzhu and
Yaowang. This performance or sequence of performances will be as long or short as
the number of marionettes the troupe possess - anything from 24 to 32 marionettes.

This marionette god-descending performance is known as tianxi 天戲 (heavenly
theatre), sometimes known as tianshang 32 xi 天上三十二戲 (32 plays above heaven)
after the number of marionettes. The marionettes usually have quite lively vivacious
expressions - some even have moveable eyes or lips (see photo).

THEATRE PERFORMANCE AS OFFERING TO THE GODS
Once the various gods are all present, the performance proper, the offering to them,
can begin. This section of the proceedings is known as dixia 32 xi 地下三十二戲 (32
earthly plays). These plays are performed by wu 戰 wears the masks of the various
characters of the particular drama. Though not all 32 plays might be performed, a great
number are, on the principle of 'the more the merrier'. Some examples of the kinds of
performance offered are as follows:

'The Entry of Taibai', 'Delivering the Letter on a Galloping Horse', 'The Entry
of Dianpan Tudi', 'The Entry of Ling Guan', 'The Entry of Gong Cao',
'Zhongkui Beheads the Demons', 'Earth God Intercedes', 'Bringing Wealth on
a Galloping Horse', 'The Judgement of Sanpo Gongpo', 'Chasing the Crane',
'Calling the Doctor'.

Compared to the plays performed by the marionettes, these dramas tend to be more
complex, involving dialogue and plot and are often secular and farcical in content. Take
for example, the play 'Chasing the Crane'. This play has two characters, played by
two wu in masks - the red crowned crane and a crane herd-boy. The crane is an
arrogant, unruly bird and likes causing trouble. So one day in anger, the herd-boy
takes a stick and chases him and beats him. After much chasing and beating, the herd-
boy does indeed manage to tame the crane. But not for long. The herd-boy climbs onto
the crane's back and urges it on. But the crane tosses its shoulders and throws the
herd-boy to the ground. As he rises, and rubs his wounds, the herd-boy sings:

I am a herd-boy in heaven
I rode on a crane out of heaven's gate
But when I urged him on with my whip
He threw me to the ground
My bum is split into two halves
And my teeth have landed in my crotch.

To some extent, one could describe the dixia as extensions of the tianxi in that the
marionettes are the gods descending, and the wu perform what happens when the gods
arrive on earth.
MAGIC SEQUENCES

Dixi performances alternate with sequences of magic and ritual led by the wu. These sections serve to expel the offending demons, to recover the soul of the sick and to ask for the blessing and protection of a place or person. For example, after one dixi sequence, the zhangtanshi might sing and dance the yu step - a magical dance step which stamps out evil influences. Performing these steps, the zhangtanshi, followed by the wu make towards the kitchen of the home and hold a ceremony of reverence to the Kitchen God (who has power over the lives of members of the household, distributes riches and poverty at will and makes an annual report to the Supreme Being). The yu step also goes under the names cai bagua (stamping the Eight Diagrams), or cai jiuzhou (stamping nine provinces i.e. China). With both feet working in alternation, the wu marks the eight directions of the Eight Diagrams (said to explain the composition of the universe): qian (heaven), zhen (thunder), kan (water), gen (mountain), kun (earth), xun (wind), li (fire), dui (lake).

The yu step.

The origins of the yu step stem from ancient Chinese mathematicians who devised a magic grid of numbers known as jingong, whereby all the numbers in any straight line add up to 15. Though the series of numbers is not quite the same as in the yu step, nonetheless one can see whence the 'power' of the yu step might emanate:

The jingong.

The grid was used in divination where it was combined with the eight directions of the Eight Diagrams to explain the composition and features of the universe. Daoist priests and folk wu have adopted it for use in various ritual ceremonies as described above and it is used in almost all forms of nuo theatre.
As the zhangtanshi dances the magic step, he also recites and sings charms or spells to increase the effectiveness of his power. This spell is one dedicated to dispelling demons:

Lei da Lei er Lei san Lei si Lei wu,  雷大雷二雷三雷四雷五
hong hong san tan na ou xi wei han hua  呼呼三檀那喼瞎哇呼
li zha ji zhaou ru ming tian xia zhi,  咦咋急召汝名天下知
su zhi su zhi, ji ji ru lü ling.  速至速至, 吏吏如律令.

At the same time, the zhangtanshi may also use certain hand signs representing charms known as jue 割. There are hundreds of kinds of jue such as the 'beheading the demon jue' or the 'sweeping out demons and purifying jue'. The following diagram shows the 'sharp bladed sword jue':

Between one hand sign and the next, the zhangtanshi will also often take a glowing stick of incense and write more charm and spell characters (zi hui 字譯) in the air. These function rather like the fu described above and tend to be constructed around the character for rain, yǔ 雨 and the character for spirit, gui 鬼, thus:

Perhaps here we can see the forerunner to the basic performance art of all traditional Chinese theatres - the synthesis of the feet with the body, the hands, the mouth (in song) etc. as well as the four principle skills of an opera actor, chang 唱, nian 唱, da 打, zuo 做, singing, recitation, martial skills and acting.

Now the zhangtanshi removes his cloak (fayi 法衣) and throws it into the air like a fisherman casting his net. This is to catch any devils that might still be lurking. To avoid the demons causing a riot through the discomfort of being bumped around inside his cloak and trying to escape or bribe the zhangtanshi for their release, the host quickly offers them gifts of food and money. In fact these gifts are later divided between the zhangtanshi and his wu.

Similarly, sequences of dixi performances are interrupted by acts of magic or extra-human ability such as leaping through fire hoops, or climbing barefoot up a ladder made of swords with the blades turned upwards and so on. A wu who performs such acts well is considered to be especially blessed, and he may even go on to driving a needle through his cheeks or tongue to prove it. Some villagers say, however, that these tricks are simply control of one's bodily rhythms such as one might learn from qigong 氣功 etc.
FOLK FARCE
When the tianxi and dixi performances are over, the entertainment part of the proceedings begins. The next section is filled with performances of huaxi 花 戏 ('entertainment' plays). In fact, huaxi is more similar in genre to folk theatre, having little or nothing to do with the spiritual world of gods and ghosts. Some of the plays that might be performed are:

'Wife Meng' (known in many operas as 'Crying at the Great Wall')
'Plum Blossom Beauty'
'An An sends Rice'
'Jiang Ziya Comes Down from the Mountain'
'The Hunchback visits his new In-laws'
'Persuading the Husband' (in other operas known as 'Killing the Dog')
'Having a Fortune Told at the Temple Fair'
'A Just Punishment'

The last play in the list is typical of the huaxi repertoire. It tells the story of Liu Doupeng, a hardened gambler, and his wife. On New Year's Eve, Liu once again loses a great deal of money. His wife is furious and a quarrel ensues. After much argument, they decide not to speak to one another, and that whoever speaks first must make the supper. Now it so happens that the brother of Liu's wife passes by, and seeing that the couple seem unable to speak, he fears they have been prescribed a wrong medicine by the local doctor. He rushes to the village leader and lays a claim against the doctor. But the doctor has been away these last months and certainly could not have attended the Lius. The village leader then calls Liu to see for himself, but when Liu refuses to talk, he has him beaten with forty strokes of the stick. When the punishment is over, Liu, who has remained silent despite his torture, collapses. Just at this moment Liu's wife passes by and thinking her husband is dead, she calls out to the heavens and rails and rants. Upon which, Liu gets up and demands that she prepare the supper!

Clearly the content of the huaxi plays is highly farcical. Though the same tiyang performers participate, neither mask nor marionette is used in these performances - another indication of the secular nature of these plays. Indeed, huaxi could well be likened to Sichuan dengxi 燈 戏 (lantern plays). The huaxi repertoire varies enormously from area to area so that the whole performance of huaxi will vary in length according to the number of plays known. On the rare occasions where a tiyang troupe is unable to perform huaxi a troupe will be invited in from another village and the profits of the whole ceremony divided.

CLOSING CEREMONY
After the performance of huaxi an episode known as 'Buddha returns to his court' follows. Here, the various marionette spirits of Chuanzhu, Tuzhu, Yaowang and so on give a performance showing the journey back up to heaven. The zhangtanshi and his assistants chant and sing to accompany the god's departure and incense is burned.

In Zitong, once the gods have all returned to heaven, the host takes the boat's head from the altar and places it in a small 'boat' made of sorghum stalks. He then sets it in the current of a river and calls on it to 'flow down to Yangzhou'. In the collective memory of Miao and Yao mythology, Yangzhou is the sacred place of ancestral origin. The grass boat represents potential epidemics and sickness and the boat's head is an offering to the gods.

A tiyang performance is always a lively event attended by village members and their relatives or friends from areas outside the village. Since a performance may last for up to seven days, and many of those present must stay overnight in the village, there is much occasion for gossip and celebration. When the performance is over, the zhangtanshi offers his services in helping cure their ills or offering them charms for
healthy offspring or wealth and so on. This he does by writing the charm required in chicken's blood on a piece of yellow paper which the grateful supplicant then tucks into his or her clothing.

The closing ceremony in Jiange differs slightly from that in Zitong. Here, the zhanguanshi takes the boar's head home, first placing a piece of lean meat in its mouth. Should any of the villagers have a special request such as rescue from a disaster, illness, wishing for a son and so on, he must sneak into the zhanguanshi's home and steal the piece of lean meat, take it home and eat it.

There is only one time of the year when tiyangxi is performed other than at the special request of a village member, and that is the twelfth day of the first month of the New Year according to the lunar calendar - the anniversary or temple feast of the god Wenchang Dijun. On this occasion, the statue of Wenchang is carried out of the temple on a sedan chair and processed around the village. Tiyangxi is only one of the many entertainments that follow in the processional train, such as the lion dance, the dragon dance, dengxi, and so on. In such a case, only the secular themes of the plays are performed, and not the more exorcistic ones.

SYMBOLISM OF THE WOODEN IMAGE IN RITUAL & THEATRE

Structurally, the process of a tiyangxi event is identical to all other forms of nuo theatre. The magical sequences in nuotanxi (S. Hunan, E. Sichuan, E. Guizou) for example, are carried out in the same way as in tiyangxi and to a large extent are known by the same if not similar names. Theatrically, there is one important difference, however. In nuotanxi and all other forms of nuo theatre, the sequences qing shen (神神 invocation and arrival of the gods) and song shen (神神 departure of the gods) i.e. simple sequences showing the histories of the gods concerned, are performed by masked wu. In tiyangxi, these sequences are performed by marionettes. The sections of tiyangxi not performed by marionettes (dixi) serve the function of entertaining the gods and affirming and illustrating the content of the magical sequences. The final section of a tiyang event, played without masks (i.e. after the gods have departed) is known as houxi in all other nuo theatres.

The bottle-neck circumstance of the zhandaoshao has opened the potential for this unusual theatre because two fundamental concepts of Chinese theatricality have crossed paths: 1) the use of human material as the theatrical sign and 2) the use of non-human material (figural, mechanical) as the theatrical sign.

The starting point of both forms of representation is similar. The abstract gods, ancestors etc., addressed in the magical / ritual sections are in both cases presentationally materialised either by mask or by figure (puppet). The difference is that by putting the mask over the human face (rather than by simply carrying the mask on a pole, for example) the human body is given theatrically expressive potential (the body is an extension of the mask). The movements of the body can develop certain theatrical elements which, while restricted to the physical limitations of the body are yet infinitely expressive precisely because of its human quality - speech, dance, song, gesture, movement etc. Once this performance style leaves behind its magico-religious context or framework (consequently therefore, the masks also) it becomes the stylised, codified (abstracted) performance style of other forms of theatre such as Beijing opera. By leaving the fixed mask behind, even more expressive potential is offered the human (face). In the case of figural representation, a different kind of theatrically expressive potential is employed.

The different kinds of figural representation in ritual and the early period of Chinese theatre might provide a rewarding field of research. The present available materials, however, are insufficient to compile any kind of hypothetical model. It is our intention here simply to suggest certain relations that might exist between them.
The earliest reference to puppets\textsuperscript{17} in China dates back to the latter part of the Shang dynasty (11 BC). Prior to this, when a noble or king died, his servants and slaves were buried alive next to him in the tomb so that he would not go unaccompanied into the next world. At about this time, it seems the custom of using wooden images of the slaves instead of the real thing was adopted. Before laying the statues in the tomb, the various slaves were to cut open an arm and let their blood fall onto the statue, thus imbuing it with their soul. Thus the statue was a kind of 'reincarnation' of the slave in question, while the slave was still alive and forced to continue offering labour to the heir of the deceased. The statues thus prepared for the tomb were known as \textit{yong} 像.\textsuperscript{18} During modern excavations in Shandong, such a tomb statue, or \textit{yong} was found in a tomb dating from the Warring States period (BC 475-221). This particular \textit{yong} was equipped with moveable limbs, and although its use was probably not as a puppet, it nonetheless shows the two different paths of development that puppets took - moving and non-moving puppets, or seen another way, performing and non-performing puppets.\textsuperscript{19}

The non-moving or non-performing puppets include \textit{yong} as described above as well as the various statues and idols in the temples that were certainly influenced in the late Eastern Han period (25-220 AD) by the Buddhist statues from India. The significant fact concerning such \textit{yong} and religious idols is that they were all thought to contain the spirit of the relevant slave or in the latter case god, so that these religious and burial statues were and are revered as 'living' statues.

An example of how a religious statue might find its way to the performance area can be seen in the \textit{nuo} performances of Hunan, Guizhou and Guangxi for example, where a pair of statues, the \textit{nuogong} 侕公 (old man \textit{nuo}) and the \textit{nuopo} 侕婆 (old woman \textit{nuo}) stand on the altar for the duration of the performance and are revered as gods of the \textit{nuo} rite. In fact, one should more accurately describe them not as statues, but as 'busts' or even 'masks'. These masks or heads are \textit{not} however used in the performance.

The second kind of puppet is the moving or performing puppet. This kind of puppet divides into two groups: puppets that are made by craftsmen as toys and puppets made for performance. An example of a toy puppet is recorded in \textit{Liezi}\textsuperscript{20} where the tale is told of a talented craftsman, Yan Shi at the time of the reign of Zhou Muwang (1001-946). This craftsman made a wooden puppet that not only moved, it sang and danced as well; but during a performance at court, the emperor thought it too flirtatious towards his concubines and ordered the craftsman to be killed. But Yan Shi simply showed the emperor it was nothing more than wood, glue and lacquer. One must approach this tale with some scepticism however, for though it purports to be from the Western Zhou dynasty (11th century to 770 BC), it was actually compiled by an author in the Jin dynasty, a great deal later (265-420 AD). Nonetheless one can perhaps draw the conclusion from it that from about 220 AD such toy puppets were in existence. The second kind of moving, or performing puppet evolved as a performance puppet on ritual occasions. We know that from the Han dynasty (BC 206-220 AD) puppet


\textsuperscript{18} See Cihai, Shanghai chishu chubanshe 1979, p.4530.


performances were given during burial processions. These performances were enactments of the deceased's life, biographies, or even stories of their life. One can see it might be a simple step from here to a performance purely for entertainment's sake.

By the Song dynasty (960-1279 AD), many different kinds of performing puppet had evolved: the marionette (ixian muou 提線木偶 or kuilei muou 傀儡木偶), the rod puppet (zhangtou muou 杖頭木偶), water puppet (shui kuilei 水傀儡) and gunpowder puppet (yaofa kuilei 爆發傀儡). By the Southern Song (1127-1279 AD) there were even so-called 'flesh puppets' (roukuilei 肉傀儡) where the puppets were actually small boys.

Thus the zhandaoshao has preserved a fascinating theatrical phenomenon where a nuo magic/theatre event is based on the alternating constellation of human and figural representation.

There is one other place, other than Sichuan, where tiyangxi is performed. Between 1862 and 1875, a certain zhangtanshi by the name of Ye Deqing from Zitong set out with his troupe towards the south. They finally settled in Yunnan province in Wenshan county (see map), where the local people still throng to see Zitong tiyangxi.

Despite the various setbacks and difficulties raised by various political situations, tiyangxi is still a very popular and important theatre in the lives of the people living at the edge of the zhandaos, the passage way to the south of China.

21 See Zhuang Jiyu, Ji le bian. Shouwu ben juan liu.
22 See Meng Yuanlao, Dongjingmeng hualü, Zhonghua shuju, 1982.
ORIGINS AND SOCIAL CONTEXT OF THE ERHU

A Phoenix Crying at Sunrise

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'North of the Great Wall is a new music in which each tone is clear and rounded. The music is like an oriole calling from a blossoming tree, a phoenix crying at sunrise, a flowing brook in a deserted valley...’ in ancient times, Chinese poets could express their admiration for the erhu, the two-stringed fiddle, in the most flowery metaphors. By the early 20th century, however, when the erhu had become the tool of wandering beggars, it was generally despised by Chinese and Western writers alike. In this general introduction to the instrument, the author attempts to strike a balance.

The aim of this account is to provide an overview of recent ethnomusicological research into the Chinese two-stringed fiddle erhu 二胡 undertaken at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music as the fieldwork component of doctoral studies at the Queen’s University of Belfast. As such, this description is necessarily of a general nature, pausing on selected areas of interest and passing without comment over others. It is intended to prepare more detailed publications concerned with the specifics of this research in due course.¹

Although the erhu is a well-known and widely employed musical instrument in China, it has comparatively rarely become the subject of academic enquiry, either in China or the West.² Such large-scale studies as do exist typically concentrate upon a single aspect of the erhu’s development or use, such as its history or its solo recital repertoire. As a result, I was intrigued to investigate broader issues bearing upon the erhu, in an

¹ The assistance of the British Council, whose award of a one year studentship made possible this research, is gratefully acknowledged.
effort to provide a framework for the connection of widely scattered but readily available source material. Central to this intention is the analysis of the whole range of background contexts which have shaped and continue to shape the creation of erhu music. The contexts focussed upon in my study are organological, musicological, anthropological and technical, whilst the creative formats discussed therein extend from traditional opera music to film scores and from technical studies to recreational ensemble works. This article shall deal more closely with the general area of context than with the creative genres in which erhu music is expressed.

The erhu is a two-stringed fiddle. Categorised in China as a “silk” (丝) instrument in the bayin 八音 organological system, under the Western classification devised by Sachs and Hornbostel it is a termed a friction-chordophone of the spike-lute variety. More convenient is ‘spike fiddle’. The spike referred to is the instrument’s neck, which transfixes the soundbox to emerge as a vestigial stub - to which the lower ends of the two strings may be attached. The basic structure of a modern erhu is sketched in Figure 1.

In performance, the instrument is set upon the left thigh with the snakeskin facing diagonally to the front and right. Whilst the left hand stops the strings, the right hand draws the bowhair between them, pressure from its middle and ring fingers dictating which string is sounded. Pizzicato is rare and the simultaneous bowing of both strings is confined to a few experimental pieces only.

The two strings, known as the inner and outer strings (内弦, and 外弦) due to their relative proximity to the body, are normally tuned a fifth apart, these days typically to d’ and a’, allowing an effective compass of two and a half octaves. (See Figure 2).

3 At present entitled Context and Creativity: Contemporary Chinese Compositions for the Two-Stringed Fiddle Erhu, submission of this thesis is timetabled for September 1991.
4 No hierarchic structure is intended to be implied by the ordering of these four contexts in this account. I have found it more convenient to begin with an analysis of the development of the instrument itself but, as a general concept, it is proposed that the four perspectives chosen be approached as contrasting two-dimensional images of a three-dimensional subject, the erhu. In combination, they may be able to give a fuller portrait of this instrument than could any one of them, however detailed, alone.
The first perspective from which the erhu may be viewed is its historical development as a material object. This entails examination of its origin, discussion of its subsequent development and the assessment of its aesthetic identity.

**ORIGIN OF THE INSTRUMENT**

The origin of the erhu or, to use its older name, the huqin 胡琴 is one area in which previous research exists. Apart from Laurence Picken’s ‘Early Chinese Friction-Chordophones’ of 1965 there are more recent Chinese articles by Zhou Jingbao and Zhong Qingming.5 Also, of course, much information may be gleaned from a large number of contributions not primarily concerned with the erhu.

Amongst all these sources there is considerable disagreement. In the first place, the perspective of the writer frames his or her interests. The following statement is a generalism but, like all generalisms, contains an element of truth: Chinese writers have shown greater interest in what happened to the huqin once it appeared in China than in where it may have come from or later gone to while Western scholars have been more intrigued by its origin than by its subsequent history or use.

Existing early source materials are scarce and sometimes doubtful. Iconographical evidence, for example, assumes of the artist both familiarity with the instrument and a desire to portray it accurately, folk stories are notoriously hard to date and the instrumental terminology applied to the huqin in ancient Chinese sources has been fluid. There remains the need for an assessment of the development of the erhu in more ‘global’ terms, one that combines the greater flexibility of a modern ethnomusicological approach, with its emphasis upon cultural stimuli and the social function of music, with the strengths of the historic-musicological approaches so far essayed.

To return to the origin of the huqin, Tang Dynasty sources contain several references to a two-stringed plucked instrument of that name and its use in the Imperial Court. Also revealed are a series of struck and scraped string instruments such as the zhu 簧, jiqin 击琴 and yazheng 奏筝 as well as a rather shadowy instrument of the Xi people, the xiqin 西琴.6 By the time of the 11th century the Chinese would appear to have adopted, or at least discovered, a number of two-stringed instruments sounded with either a bamboo slip or a horsehair bow.

Harvey Turnbull has traced the earliest friction-stick to “Sogdia in or before the sixth century;” and Adshead has pointed out how “the central land route [to China] was dominated by Sogdians from north-east Iran...”7 Direct communications from Sogdia to China existed and transmission of the friction-stick concept may well have taken place.

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6 The ‘xi’ 西 part of xiqin could be written using either of two characters, one of which is now pronounced as jí 击.

The presence of these bamboo slip scraped instruments in China is important since when the concept of the horsehair bow was transmitted there, perhaps a century later than its first mention in an Arabic source, it meant that there existed a ready supply of musicians within China who could understand the new technology and apply it to their own instruments. It therefore seems possible that today's erhu is the result of a combination of the longer established bamboo-scraped chordophone tradition in China and the eleventh-twelfth century imported bowed lute, Shen Kuo's mawei huqin 马尾胡琴.

THE RESTRAINING LOOP
A second point has perhaps not been sufficiently raised in earlier accounts. This is the appearance of the restraining loop qianjin 千金 or 千斤, the short band of cord tied around the strings some distance beneath the tuning pegs. As it is first witnessed in the Ming Dynasty painting 'Autumn Entertainment at the Unicorn Hall' 絲竹秋賽圖 by You Ziqi 尤子求, it is usual for Chinese scholars to conclude that its invention was during the same date. This, however, may be an inaccurate assumption since it would suggest that the music played by the spike fiddle changed drastically at that time.

The restraining loop, despite its modest appearance, is in fact a crucial part of the instrument because it stops the strings, as the bridge on the snakeskin does. The musically active string length that may be vibrated by the bow is therefore the same for each string, which means that wherever the strings are stopped the relative pitches produced by each will be identical. Thus on strings tuned to d' and a', if an e' is produced from the lower string, the same fingering will yield a b' on the higher one. Without a restraining loop, the inner string - which is affixed to the upper peg - would be longer than the outer one and the performer would have to adjust his hand position every time he moved from one hand position to the other. Alternatively, he could just tune the lower string as a drone or fundamental pitch only and use the shorter string only for melodies. Or, he could redesign the insertion of the tuning pegs on his instrument. If they were inserted from the sides (laterally) instead of from the front or back, the peg box could be bent back and a 'lip' bridge the strings as they emerged from a central cut away trough, as on the pipa 琵琶 or sanxian 三弦. The neck of the instrument would then be available as a fingerboard and might prevent the insertion of the bow between the strings. In such a case the resonance of the instrument would be different and there would be no need to use a small tubular soundbox. Again the musical style of such an instrument is likely to differ from that of the erhu-shaped kind.

A few instruments of the technologically more complicated (for which, read: “both more expensive and less convenient to construct as well as heavier to hold”) bent-necked, fingerboard and bow variety are seen in historical records and pictures but they are outnumbered by references to the erhu-form instrument, some of which pre-date You Ziqi's painting. The problem remains open. There were instruments with a cylindrical soundbox, pierced by a straight neck and with dorsally or frontally inserted tuning pegs. If such an instrument was played without a restraining loop it would have been highly likely to have a musical performance style involving a drone or referential string. If this was the case, then the Song Dynasty story recorded by Shen Kuo of the court xiqin-player Xu Yan 徐衍 seems odd. According to Shen, during a banquet one of the strings on Xu Yan's instrument snapped; he amazed his audience, however, by being able to complete his solo on the string that remained. If there was a one string performance tradition at that period, Xu's feat would have been considerably less remarkable.

8 The more recent zhuihu 船胡 is able to avoid this necessity with a concave curve at the bottom of its neck.
It seems quite possible that the restraining loop was in fact an integral part of the very earliest Chinese spike fiddles. Firstly, there is no direct evidence to the contrary; secondly, circumstantial evidence contained in a variety of media, for example the story of Xu Yan, supports such a hypothesis. Restraining loops are almost as widespread as spike fiddles themselves, surely because they are so fundamentally practical. Chen Yang’s illustration of the *xiqin*, one of the earliest pictures of a Chinese instrument of this form, does not include a loop, it is true, but then the bamboo slit with which the instrument was sounded is not shown either....9 (See drawing).

A deeper examination of the development of the *huqin* and the spread of associated instruments across East Asia is beyond the scope of this account; instead, the aesthetic debate that has accompanied the instrument since its appearance in China shall be summarised.

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STATUS & APPRECIATION
As an instrument identified as foreign 'barbaric' even, by its name, the huqin has at times been disparaged by the Chinese literati. Nonetheless, it has at times attracted supporters too. Zhang Yanghao's Ode to the Huqin 旅途速 - 哀弦琴, written during the Yuan period, is an especially attractive tribute:

The finest of the eight sounds is that of the strings. North of the Great Wall is a new music in which each tone is clear and rounded. [The music is like] an oriole calling from a blossoming tree, a phoenix crying at sunrise, a flowing brook in a deserted valley...

By the early twentieth century, the huqin was generally despised by Chinese and Western writers alike. Much of the cause of this would appear to be that by then the instrument had become the tool of the wandering musical mendicant. Through association the huqin, already disadvantaged by its foreign identification, acquired an even lower status. However, then just as before, there were specialist performers who used the instrument to express effectively the feelings of their patrons and/or themselves, winning admirers both for themselves and for their instrument.

Throughout the whole of its history, the huqin was liked by some and disliked by others. Those who liked it enthused about or took part in its music; those who dismissed it generally dismissed its music too. The same situation exists today, although the categories of Chinese who tend to support or condemn the instrument now contrasts radically with the earlier situation which may be summarised as scholars: against, people: for. Having achieved the status of an art instrument in China, it now seems to be losing the bastion of popular support and is being implicitly re-defined by many of China's young as an instrument more suitable for
the portrayal of old Chinese culture and the addition of pastoral character to film scores than for the expression of their own personalities. The debate is no longer whether the *erhu* is respectable or not but whether it is relevant or not. Much as in the past, those who employ the instrument the most, whomever they may be, may be expected to continue their own trends whatever the most commonly expressed externalizations by non-players might be.

**MUSICOLOGICAL CONTEXT**

To move on to the subject of the musicological context of the *huqin*, the music of this instrument reveals much about Chinese traditional genres. Although only a few *huqin* scores dating from before the exist, much information upon its musical employment is contained in secondary sources: literary accounts and surviving performance traditions in many genres. Perhaps the earliest score containing music for the *huqin* is *Rong Zhai's* collection of 1814 *Xiansuo: Thirteen Sets* 弦索十三卷. This set of arrangements mostly for a core combination of *huqin*, *xianzi* 箜篌 (saxian 三弦), *pipa* and *sheng* 萨  would appear to have been compiled for the use of a group of Mongol and Manchu courtiers, including Rong himself.

This music reveals two major forms. On the one hand, pieces (for instance *Shiliuban* 十六板) are expanded forms of traditional folk tunes; others (for example *Yang Guan San Die* 阳关三叠) are assembled form a number of shorter, self-contained melodies. The use of the *huqin* gradually broadened throughout its long history, form being a domestic and court entertainment instrument it was slowly added to a large number of ensembles. By the nineteenth century, the *huqin* - in a huge variety of forms - was important in many regional opera styles and amateur instrumental genres. These different forms, many of which are still performed, were sometimes the result of substitution of local materials for the bamboo or wooden and snakeskin parts of the *huqin*. In some cases such substitution was strongly conditioned; thus, the Shanghai opera *zhuhu* 竹 琴 acquired a bamboo soundbox and larger bridge in order to brighten its tone. The *sithu* 四 琴, with four strings tuned in pairs and bowhair divided into two strands, produced a thicker tone than the two-stringed variety and found widespread use, especially in northern China. However, that it was more than just a particularly successful regional form is evinced by its use together with the *erhu* in the accompaniment of Yangzhou *qingqu* 清曲 ballad singing. Clearly the sonorities of these two fiddles were complimentary rather than alternative.  

**SINGERS AND PLAYERS**

With the rise of the *jinghu* 京胡 to a leading role in the *jingju* 京剧 (Beijing Opera) civil instrumental section, a close musical relationship must have developed between solo singers and their favoured accompanists, or *qinshi* 琴师. The dynamics of their relationship would have emphasized mutual dependence in a contrasting way to the internal dynamics of amateur *sizhu* 丝竹 players. In an opera performance paying customers would listen to (and watch) a number of individuals (the vocal soloists) standing out from a group (the background musicians and other actors). The operatic musician had to contribute to the group as well as following the individual characteristics of the vocalists. In the *sizhu* ensemble each member is expected to produce an idiomatic rendition within established stylistic parameters. The audience

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10 Creation of the *sithu* may have been the dominant force causing the two-stringed instrument to drop its more general name “*huqin*” and take up “*erhu*” instead. The use particularly at the start of this century of the term “*nanhua*” 南胡 or “*southern huqin*” for the *erhu* also shows the importance of the four-stringed form in the north.
would often only be the players themselves, although others might well be at the scene. Opera troupes developed systems of beat pattern (ban 拍), changqiang 唱腔 and gupai 曲牌 which gave easily memorable yet highly variable musical guidelines allowing an opera to be performed with a minimum of rehearsal. A large repertoire could be maintained by a small troupe, maximising profitability by allowing a high ration of performances to rehearsals.

While operatic musicians recreated set stylistic patterns for an audience in an order established by the librettist or arranger, sizhu players were actively recreating traditional melodies for themselves. From their combination of a number of contrasting sonorities and heterophonic ensemble style the musical anthropologist could draw a host of social parallels.

MUSICAL BEGGARS
A performing context of a differing kind is illustrated by the example of the itinerant musical beggar. His principal need was to attract a large audience and, having done so then to hold its attention for as long as possible. He would need to have at his fingertips a large and varied, or at least variable, repertoire to ensure that audience interest was aroused and, hopefully, generosity resulted. If he was a skilful improvisor, the street musician could gain a great amount of use from only a little memorised material. The kind of flexibility required to spin out a small number of different themes in multifarious guises is demonstrated by the erhu pieces of Abing (Hua Yanjun) 阿炳 (华彦钧).

The performance context of music is inseparable from both its social background and also the influence of musical technique. The social position of musicians in Chinese society, the details of their lives and other related information is a relatively unexploited area in the study of Chinese music. With a few notable exceptions, little has been done to investigate topics such as the recruitment and training of musicians, their supplementary role within prostitution, their status and social mobility and the role of gender in the determination of musical activity.

THE ERHU AND CHINESE SOCIETY
Preliminary enquiries into this area suggest that the lives of musicians have reflected many of the trends of Chinese society in general. Professional musicianship was very often hereditary, for example, and musical skills were passed on through an apprenticeship system. Many performers, even the most humble, used stage names, their equivalent of the literatus' pen name. Although professional musicians have normally been well educated and mobile by the standards of their age, they were legally disadvantaged in certain situations and often regarded with suspicion.

The position of contemporary erhu players in China is equally complex. If the network of those involved in the provision and transmission of erhu music in mainland China are called the ‘erhu community’, then a chart of their formal interaction could be constructed as in Figure 3 (see next page).

Of course, such an idealized or simplified perception of the individuals it involved in these processes cannot reflect every detail of the interrelationships included. Nor does it attempt to show indirect, but nonetheless pervasive, influence from one group to another. Such influence tends to be more subjective to those concerned and is harder for the external observer to quantify.

INTAKE AND OUTPUT
The first category of personnel in Figure 3 are the politicians. It is they who, in this model structure, formulate and express cultural policy. Feedback to them is harder to assess than their output, it is more a case of ‘seepage’ from the interflow between
other categories than one of direct influence from any distinct one. The bureaucrats, on the other hand, have clearly defined areas of intake and output. Their intrays include not only the policy decisions of the politicians but also the financial proceeds of the sales of tickets, recordings and publications as well as other musical commodities, such as instruments. Bureaucrats in China oversee the implementation of policy through the administration of theatres, schools, factories and ensembles (the work units which control the majority of musical production, whether it be creation through composition, recreation through performance or transmission by tuition, publication, broadcasting or recording). The third category of those with a relationship to the *erhu* are the craftsmen who design and build instruments and, more recently, have taken an active role in the provision of them too.

Those who utilize the *erhu* in performance, performers, teachers and students may also feed into instrument design, either directly as factory consultants developing and testing new innovations or less directly as potential customers seeking an instrument which satisfies certain criteria, such as timbre and price. The players also provide the funds which may go directly to craftsmen or (through a shop) back to the bureaucrats.

Players have relationships amongst themselves: he or she who appears as a performer to an audience may be seen as a teacher by students. As a result, a sub-category of player exists, the specialist teacher. He (or she) differs from performers in that he rarely performs, possibly doing so only in a classroom context. Teachers exchange their knowledge expressed in the form of education for students' fees. These fees may be paid directly from private students or indirectly as a Conservatory lectureship. Students differ from amateurs in that they, in my definition, study *erhu* full-time with the intention of becoming performers. Those I describe as amateurs are those who play or learn *erhu* part-time. All of these categories of player, performers, teachers, students and amateurs maintain a relationship with the repertoire of the *erhu*. Performers and teachers may collaborate with composers in the creation of new pieces; some *erhu* players are themselves composers. Repertoire occupies a central position in the educational process, although it is often rationalized as technique.
Repertoire is also what audiences hear, either in live performances or through the medium of publication and broadcasting. The output of audiences is two-fold. Firstly, they may award status to the performer and composer. Such status may be immediate, as in applause, or perpetuating, as in the case of fame. Secondly, through their purchase of tickets and recordings as well as their reception of broadcasts, they provide input to the bureaucrats. To the politicians, in theory, it is for this final category that the whole network functions; however, to the players themselves many of the internal relationships carry greater resonance.

THE 20TH CENTURY
General themes relevant to erhu players this century have been the raising of the status and by association its performers since the time of Liu Tianhua 刘天华 (1895-1932); the Communist concentration and reappraisal of peasant culture since 1942; and increasing trends towards specialization, with an increase of notated repertoire, a technical vocabulary and further distinction between amateur and professional music making. Of this last theme, the establishment of a conservatory system and the employment of musicians by the government in metropolitan, regional, provincial and national troupes are dramatic parts. The use of notation and recordings, coupled with a formal, classroom setting and a specified course structure has revolutionised not only the way erhu music is transmitted but also the music itself.

Together with increasing specialization, as students speak of their aims to become soloists or teachers or ensemble members, there has recently been an increase of diversification. Thus, some players may find work performing in a hotel restaurant and others, while still students, have begun to accept private pupils of their own. Overstaffing in the conservatories and ensembles has diminished the working weeks of many erhu players. A full-time teacher with six pupils a week was described as the “busiest” by one of his pupils, giving him a total tuition time of only nine hours per week. (Following the suppression of the Tiananmen-centred protests in 1989, one lecturer at another academic institution was punished for his part in the movement by having his workload increased to twenty hours a week). A consequence of overstaffing is that few financial resources are available for the improvement of facilities, the raising of salaries or the provision of other perks. A musical profession is not regarded as attractive by many of China’s young and recruitment may become difficult in the future.
MUSIC WITH A STORY
Moving on to an examination of repertoire, the twentieth century has witnessed the appearance of whole new genres of erhu music, one of which despite almost never being publicly performed has influenced nearly every player. The growth of studies, technical exercises and technical terminology has enabled composers and performers to develop new techniques, or to use traditional ones in novel ways. A second new genre is the recital solo, sometimes with accompanying yangqin 琵琶 or piano. Amongst recently composed solos are many with titles inspired by the policy of Socialist Realism: bumper harvests, the ‘liberation’ of Taiwan and the sorrows of pre-Communist society have all been addressed in erhu music. The influence of this policy (which may be traced via the Soviet Union to the Romantic period and beyond) has had the side-effect of creating Socialist apologia for pre-1949 works. Thus, Abing’s piece Er Quan Ying Yue 二泉映月 came to be interpreted with a programme just as detailed as one of Strauss’ tone poems. Although originally created by players who needed to justify their desire to play attractive pre-1949 music, these apologia have assumed an existence of their own and are now widely accepted by Chinese performers and audiences, despite their origin as ideological necessity rather than musicological fact. They could be described as a Marxist “opiate of the masses” which serve to reinforce the Communist musician’s role as political instructor through musical performance. This feature too is a continuation of historical performance tradition in China, where musicians have always reflected in performance the social outlooks of their patrons, whether priest or peasant, king or commissar.

TECHNIQUE
The stylistic details of such reflection are contained in instrumental technique. In combination with aspects like performance context (influential in the creation of genres and individual pieces) playing technique (which conditions many small-scale features of erhu style) is a factor of high significance in the creation of erhu music. Major features of this area of the erhu’s development in the twentieth century are the continuing influence of a left hand system combining tuning, mode, fingering pattern and ornamentation; and the experimentation with techniques used on the violin or other Chinese stringed instruments.

The interrelationship of mode and fingering patterns on the strings is a fundamental one at the basis of erhu style. Details of ornamentation are in many cases specific to a certain modal degree and/or a particular finger or hand position. The use of gongche or cipher notation underlines linkage in these areas more strongly than staff notation since each symbol in these forms of notation, whether a character or numeral is inseparably associated with a modal degree and one or more implied fingerings. Staff notation, with its emphasis on absolute rather than relative pitch has therefore a less
intimate connection with the modal-fingering-decorative structure of much erhu music. The presently popular cipher notation, which allows the player access to a large repertoire and the possibility of learning pieces without the aid of a teacher, thus has a conservative influence on erhu style, reinforcing the traditional patterns of mode fingerings and ornamentation.

Techniques adopted from other instruments include harmonics, sustained use of pizzicato and a violin-style vibrato. Some of these have precedent in other Chinese instrumental repertoires, qin ≠ music making effective use of harmonics and varied vibrati, for example. Their adoption on the erhu is as much a consequence of its employment as an ‘art’ instrument by specialists as of the influence of Western musical techniques.

To conclude, this account has picked its course through a number of contexts specific to the erhu. In each case only a few points have been raised, more in the hope of arousing curiosity about this important instrument than with the intention of providing a complete description of it. Those wishing to discover more shall find a more detailed analysis and full bibliographical references to appropriate sources in my forthcoming Ph.D thesis.
THE MUSICAL AVATARS OF A BUDDHIST SPELL

Pu’an zhou

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Much of China’s musical past is still shrouded in mystery. Scholars of Chinese music often face the challenge to trace the development of a musical piece from its earliest known versions to present-day performance practice. Local or historical variants, both geographically and historically, are the study of a lifetime. François Picard roamed the Chinese countryside and visited Buddhist temples everywhere in search of a piece identified as an ancient Buddhist chant. In this article - actually a lecture presented at the International Symposium on Buddhist Music in Hong Kong, March 1989 - he successfully demonstrates how, centuries ago, a Sanskrit text formed the basis of what eventually became ‘Pu’an zhou’, one of the best known tunes of all Chinese instrumental and secular music.

Some years ago, I was looking for a subject that I could study for my doctoral dissertation. I wanted to find a piece, still played today, which would illustrate different genres of Chinese music and whose historical development I would be able to trace. While doing my fieldwork, I heard a ‘Pu’an’s spell’ (Pu’an zhou) played on the zither guqin and a ‘Pu’an’s spell’ played by a Jiangnan sizhu ensemble. At first, these two pieces seemed unrelated; the challenge was to show that they both stemmed from the same source which appeared to be a Buddhist Scripture, although today they are considered to be purely instrumental music.

I began to visit temples all over China to ask for this text to be sung, but without success. Yet old or recent scores revealed some fifty versions of it which embrace almost all Chinese instrumental genres: qin and pipa solo repertoires, sizhu, chuida, xiansuo ensembles, Qing dynasty Court music, even Kunqu qupai and of course Buddhist music; it can be found in temple music or secular, popular, ensemble music such as Qujiaying 村落 music. ‘Pu’an’s spell’ had spread from Wutai shan down to Fujian, through Hebei and Shanghai. But these ‘Pu’an’s spell’ were indeed very different and only careful musical analysis allowed me to say that they were related to the same Buddhist chant.

I will not examine all these versions, but merely point out how a Sanskrit text became one of the best known of all Chinese tunes. I shall attempt to demonstrate that although the oldest printed versions were meant for the literate qin repertoire, a better transmission has been made through a popular genre, that is to say Nanguan music.
THE SOURCES

I will examine three different sources. One is the Buddhist Scripture that first appears in the first printed ritual book, the ‘Main Daily Offices’ (Zhuqing ri song 请经日诵) compiled by Zhu Hong 澤宏 in 1600. Our piece, which is called ‘Pu’an’s spell’ by today’s monks, bears the title ‘Master Pu’an’s Spirit Spell’ (Pu’an zhi shen zhou 普庵主師神咒). It is divided into seven parts. The first part is an invocation to the deities, the last one is a call for the Bodhisattva Pu’an to come and deliver the people from calamities. The middle parts are obviously in Sanskrit.

The oldest musical score is called ‘The Stanzas on Siddham’ (Shitan zhang 瞭談章). It was published in ‘The Three Religions Sung with a Single Voice’ (Sanjiao tong sheng 三教同声), compiled by Zhang Dexin 张德新, and dated 1592. This little scorebook for the qin contains only four pieces, and all their texts are related to religion: two are Confucianist, one is Taoist, and our piece is Buddhist. This score does not include different subtitles as is the case, for instance, in a 1611 score, the ‘Qin score from Yang Chun Hall’ (Yang Chun tang qinpu 阳春堂琴谱) compiled by Zhang Daming 张大命. Here, our piece is called ‘The Stanzas on Siddham’ and the preface adds that it is the ‘Pu’an’s spell’. The piece is divided into five sections: ‘Will the August Buddhas Bless us with Their Appearance’ (Zhu fo xin lin 聞佛新林), ‘First Cycle’ (huì lù), ‘Second Cycle’, ‘Third Cycle’, ‘Will the Ghosts Disappear’ (Quomu giandun 羣魔怪遁). As we can see, these titles refer exactly to either the meaning or the structure of the piece.

After this publication, between 1609 and 1870, we find almost forty qin versions of the score which are undoubtedly related. We find also two more qin versions, one from the famous ‘Mei’an qinpu’ 吾庵琴谱 from 1931 called ‘The Stanzas on Siddham’, and the other, not published until the 1958 dapo 打谱 by Pu Xuezhai 博雪斋 but which was circulated at the end of the last century in manuscript form under the title ‘Pu’an’s spell’. These last two pieces are in fact far removed from the original scores, and have been subject to transformations that can all be explained by strictly musical processes.

The third main source, I owe to Professor Schipper who gave me the complete version that I had been longing for. This is a contemporary version called ‘Pu’an’s Spell’ (Pu’an zhou) and it bears the subtitle ‘Buddhist Spirit Spell’ (Shijiao shen zhou 敗教神咒). One can find it in different printed Nanguan score books, from which I choose the ‘Collection of Pieces from Southern Fujian Music’ (Minnan yinyue zhipu quanji 潮南音樂指譜全集) compiled by Liu Honggou 刘鸿驹, Jinlan Langjuneshe Conservatory, Manila, 1953, pp. 236-248. It is the thirty-seventh ‘suite’ (tiao 柵), which means that it is considered as one of the oldest. The suites are composed of different ballads (qu 曲) played without interruption. For our purpose one finds only two tunes, one the ‘Pu’an’s spell’ itself, the other a ‘Hymn to Guanyin, Goddess of the Southern Seas’ (Nanhai Guanyin zan 南海觀音齋). The suites are generally played as an exercise (zhi 指), that is to say, as purely instrumental music. The notation, as usual in Nanguan, transcribes only the pipa part, along with the words. I will not discuss here the origin of Nanguan, but only recall that there is no reason to doubt that part of its repertoire was transmitted orally or through manuscript tradition from the Ming dynasty down to the present.

The preface, beside giving valuable information on the rites prescribed for the playing of the piece, reveals an outstanding feature, if compared with the qin scores: it states that before one starts playing one should write on a red sheet of paper the following text: ‘Great Chan Master Pu’an’s Spirit Spell on the Siddham Stanzas’ (Pu’an tade chanshi shitan zhang shen zhou 普庵大德禅師瞭談章神咒) which is almost exactly the same name as that found in the seventeenth century’s reprint of the Buddhist Ritual book ‘Main Daily Offices’ called ‘Chan Daily Offices’ (Chanmen ri song 禪門日課). After an introductory prayer devotional of musical accompaniment, there are nineteen
separate sections, followed by the 'Hymn to Guanyin'; the suite closes with a spoken section. The intermediate sections are divided into three cycles (hui 開) of six sections (duan 於) each. We find the same kind of names in two other musical scores: the ‘Appendices for Strings’ (Xiansuo beikao 弦索備考) compiled by Rong Zhai (容齋), first published in 1814, and the ‘Combined scores for qin and se’ (Qinse hepu 琴瑟合譜 ), compiled by Qing Rui (清瑞), first published in 1870. As far as I know, today, only the ‘Hymn to Guanyin’ is still sung or even played in Fujian or Taiwan. The magical power of this text and the terrifying warnings in the preface against its inappropriate use, demonstrate that the ‘Pu’an’s spell’ is still not an ordinary piece.

THE TEXT

Let us now compare the different texts. All the three basic sources, Buddhist, qin music and Nanguan, begin and end with the same two parts. They are all written in Chinese. The first part is invocatory, the last is a call for exorcism. It is only in the qin scores that we find these two parts must be sung.

Each of the five central parts of the Buddhist Scripture has the same structure. The text has absolutely no meaning in Chinese. Even more astonishing is that it is also devoid of meaning in Sanskrit. The word xitan 墨巖 or shitian, in various titles leads us easily to the Sanskrit syllabary siddhamārka or siddham. By ‘syllabary’ I mean the combination of vowels and consonants. From the Vedic tradition down to the twentieth century via India, Cambodia and Tibet, I was able to trace the tradition of using the Sanskrit syllabary both as a technique for learning the language, and its pronunciation, and as a magical spell, be it a dhārani, a mantra, or as a diagram yantra. The siddham is one of the first texts to have been transcribed into Chinese characters, and there are versions from it as early as the Dunhuang manuscripts1. It is closely related to our subject, Buddhist music, since it has its source in the Indian concept of the Sacred sound which gave birth to both Pāṇini’s2 description of language and to the fanbai 戴助. A proof of this can be found in the Japanese tradition, since shittan was the former word for shomyo3 声明 before it became a type of calligraphy, which shows that Japanese thought was even more averse than the Chinese one to the concept of the Sacred sound.

The five central stanzas are a combination of the twenty-five consonants with various vowels which, respectively, correspond to gutturals, palatals, cerebrals, dentals and labials. Because the Sanskrit syllabary does not allow all combinations of vowels and consonants, the remaining letters have been placed in a small stanza that has neither the same structure nor the same function as the major stanzas.

If we compare this Buddhist Scripture with the written musical versions, a process unique in all Chinese literature, the use of acrostic, becomes apparent. The text is alternatively read horizontally and vertically. This possibility is in fact inherent in its very construction4 and reminds me of the memorizing exercises used in the Vedic tradition. It can also be linked to the esoteric tradition: only an initiate could know how this text was supposed to be pronounced; but the need to write down the various melodies lead to the revelation of this secret; this also explains why, in the Fujian tradition, it is treated with great respect.

Further more, the five three lines stanzas are not sung in the right order, but as three separate stanzas, the first of which includes the first lines, the second the middle lines.

1 Pelliot P. 2204, dated 942, P. 2212, P. 3085, P. 3099, Stein S. 4583 v° and Peking Niao 64.
2 Pāṇini, in the fourth Century B.C., published the first complete linguistic description of Sanskrit.
3 See Anren 安然, Shittan to 茲壇 致, 880.
and the last three lines of each of the five stanzas. This very special rendition leads
to a rondo form, which, as Wang Guowei\(^5\) tried to show, is related to the Indian
chanda (Chinese chanda 音达, chuanta 传踏, or zhuanta 转踏). I wish to add that, in my
opinion, the term zimu 子母 (‘son and mother’), that one finds in Yuan operas related to
that very form, could be another version of zimu 子母 (‘mother of characters’) which is
the Chinese rendition of the Sanskrit word mārkā.

THE MUSICAL STRUCTURE
The musical structure of the central parts follows the structure of the transformed text.
But the rigid structure of the names used in the Nanguan lead the transcriber to the
omission of the fourth section of the first cycle, which, were it to be re-established,
would start with duo duo di di duo duo di, which would give us the musical structure:

A B C C C B C' C' C' C' B C'' C'' C'' B.

Let us now examine the different musical themes in the Nanguan version. A is made of
five repeats of the same phrase:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{迦迦迦研界} \\
\text{迦迦迦迦研研界}
\end{array}
\]

B is made of four repeats of the same phrase:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{摩梵波波波} \\
\text{迦迦迦迦研研界}
\end{array}
\]

followed by a phrase which can be considered as a paraphrase of A:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{迦迦迦迦研研界} \\
\text{迦迦迦迦迦迦迦研研界}
\end{array}
\]

C is a countertheme of B:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{迦迦迦迦研研界} \\
\text{迦迦迦迦迦迦迦迦迦迦迦迦迦迦}
\end{array}
\]

which is followed by the same ending phrase than B. C' and C'' are simple
amplifications of C. One should add that A is also the motif which is used in the spell
part of the ‘Hymn to Guanyin’.

If we now consider the qin versions, we find not only the same structure, but almost
the same notes. There is an introduction in two parts, a burden, stanzas with two

\(^5\) Wang Guowei 王国维, Song Yuan xiqu kao 宋元戏曲考, 1909.
themes, and a coda. The first part of the introduction, which corresponds to the part which is not sung in the Nanguan, is musically related to Nanguan A. The second part of the introduction is the same as Nanguan A. Here are the synoptic scores of a simplified version of Nanguan A and of qin scores in the 1592 and 1958 versions:

![Musical score](image)

The burden corresponds to B while the stanza corresponds to C. Here are the synoptic scores of Nanguan B and qin in the 1592 and 1958 versions:

![Musical score](image)

The coda is related to the ending of Nanguan B and C. We can find various undoubtedly related versions of one, or both, of the two themes B and C in almost all of the dozens of ‘Pu’an’s spell’ performed throughout China. They can be found
among all the most important Buddhist scores such as ‘Yoga Ceremony to Feed the Hungry Ghosts’ (Da zang Yujia shishi yi 大藏瑜伽施食仪) published around 1770, and the Zhihua si 菩化寺 scores from 1694 and 1903.

If we compare similar themes in both Nanguan and qin versions, it appears that the Nanguan melody is closer to the structure of the text. The study of the characters used for the transcription of the Sanskrit shows that Nanguan is closer to the ‘Chan Daily Offices’ than to any qin text. The melodies for the introduction and the coda which appear in the qin scores, and not in Nanguan, are not evident in any other version. This leads me to the conclusion that today’s ‘Pu’an’s spell’, as preserved in Nanguan music of Fujian and Taiwan, is closely linked to the Buddhist chanting of the spell. Thus, we should accept that this music has been handed down from generation to generation for at least four centuries.

CONCLUSION

The ‘Great Chan Master Pu’an’s Spirit Spell on the Siddham’ first appears at the turn of the seventeenth century. It is not included in the ‘Sayings of Pu’an Yin Su, chan master’ (Pu’an Yin Su chanshi yulu 普庵印雪禅师语录) which is a collection of the texts of the very famous chan monk Yin Su who lived from 1115 to 1169. Pu’an was granted the honorific title of bodantha (tade) in the year 1300, while the first mention of his cult is to be found in Jiangsu in 1314, so that our text is indubitably earlier than the fourteenth century. I must also explain why this text refers to Pu’an. According to his ‘Sayings’, Pu’an found enlightenment through chanting. He performed many miracles and when asked about them, he traced mysterious signs in the air and chanted. So that no other Buddhist figure could have been more appropriate for a text which is an hymn to the efficacy of Sacred sound.

The study of this music enables us to have a better understanding of an important aspect of Chinese culture where music is not influenced by meaning or program, but is rather an attempt to reach a stage beyond all word which is akin to enlightenment, bodhi.
SCHOLARS DISCUSS MUSIC OF JIANG WENYE

Two music meetings in Hong Kong

BARBARA MITTLER
(Heidelberg University, Germany)

On the occasion of two conferences on developments in modern Chinese music, some thirty musicologists, musicians and composers from Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and the United States met at the University of Hong Kong from September 10 to 15, 1990. One of the conferences focused on the life and music of the composer Jiang Wenyue (1910 - 1983). Barbara Mittler took part in both meetings and reflects on their outcome.

It was the aim and purpose of this fourth and, by agreement, final pair of conferences - jointly organized by the Hong Kong Ethnomusicological Society and the Hong Kong University Centre of Asian Studies - to provide a somewhat conclusive frame for the topics dealt with at former conferences and also to try to establish ideas for a more unified system in dealing with topics relating to Chinese music. That this latter objective was hard to achieve soon became apparent through the presentations of Chen Lingcun and Wang Anguo, presently researching and teaching at the Shanghai Conservatory and the Beijing Music Research Institute respectively. The way they divided Chinese musical history roughly corresponded, yet they were, of course, highly Mainland-centred. It will be difficult in the future, to try to find a useful historical division applicable to all three parts of China, but even more so, if one wants to add the expatriots as a fourth group of primarily Chinese composers, which is certainly becoming more and more important.

TWO QUESTIONS
The difficulties of generalizing and classifying a topic as broad as Chinese music might be overcome in conferences dealing with more restricted topics, perhaps dealing with a single composer or a single musical form. The conference on Jiang Wenyue was intended as a first step in this direction. According to Dr. C.C. Liu, Fellow at the University of Hong Kong and organizer of the Hong Kong conference series, conferences of such format would be more easily manageable and probably even more effective than conferences on very general topics. The basis for Chinese music research
has already been laid, what is needed now is more in-depth and detailed study of certain aspects and features of Chinese music. There were two questions which dominated the course of both these conferences: firstly, the relationship between politics and music, which according to the participants is pervading all musical creation, no matter in which part of China. Secondly, the importance of nationalism and internationalism in music, and the question of cultural identity and music which is becoming more and more important to Chinese composers who are continuously being required to justify their application of Western musical techniques and instruments. As a result of the Tiananmen events, it was difficult for Dr. Liu to get in touch with everyone he would have wanted to participate from Mainland China. Accordingly, the political views represented by some of the Mainland musicologists were sometimes, from the point of view of musicologists from other parts of China, difficult to accept.

Jiang Wenye (1910 - 1983).

A presentation on the ‘Development of Symphonic Music in China’, given by Wang Yuhe, Associate Director of the Research Institute of Music in Beijing, gave rise to a very heated discussion about the audience for Chinese music. The question of how it should be possible to determine whether music has been composed ‘for the people’ since every composer, even if he were so egotistical as to compose only for himself still composes for at least one representative of ‘the people’, was not resolved. Luckily, the differences of opinion never escalated into really heated arguments, and a friendly atmosphere prevailed.

Cultural politics affect Hong Kong as well as Mainland China: Richard Tsang, composer and head of the Hong Kong Composer’s League, commented, in a presentation on the ‘Development and Style of New Music in Hong Kong’, on the oppressive influence of English colonization on Hong Kong politics. It is only now that Hong Kong starts paying more attention to its cultural development generally, not only to its economic advancement, said Tsang.

MUSICAL CRITICISM
Barbara Fei, a concert singer from Hong Kong, presented a paper on the ‘Development of Vocal Music in China’. In her opinion, the dilemma of Chinese musicianship, the fact that many of the talented young musicians, singers in particular, leave China to study and then remain abroad, can only be resolved through a change in cultural politics. She argues that the constant discussion over the three singing styles which so often turns into a political discussion inevitably creates insecurity and confusion among young singers. While professional education remains so dependant on political decisions as it is in Mainland China, no great progress can be expected. The question of singing-style should always be a musical question only, never one of politics.

Music criticism is the most powerful weapon for the politician who wants to meddle in the cultural field. Zhou Jinming’s presentation ‘From Political Thinking to the Direction of Composing: a Review of Music Criticism 1955-65’ sparked off what was probably the most controversial discussion at the conference. Zhou’s very moderate and scientifically empirical critique of the sometimes arbitrary and unfounded nature of
musical criticism was answered by a very bitter reply in which the pure perfidy of some of this music criticism became apparent.

‘WESTERNIZED, INTERNATIONAL’
Turning to the second recurrent theme of the Hong Kong conferences, the question of Nationalism and Internationalism, it became clear, at the very outset of the first conference, that the phrase ‘music is an international language’ has proved to be invalid. In fact, this phrase could be interpreted as a ‘leftover’ from colonial times. Certainly, the music of Africa or Asia is not immediately accessible and intelligible to a Westerner, so how then can one assume that music is some kind of Esperanto, or a language intelligible to everyone?
The question of whether China's new music should strive to acquire or keep its national identity or whether it should try to integrate itself in the wide field of ‘westernized’, international’ art-music arises. The Taiwanese composer and musicologist Xu Changhui made a very interesting contribution to this problem in his presentation entitled ‘The Position of Chinese New Music in the Context of Contemporary Asian Music’. This presentation opened up new ways of viewing the developments in Chinese music. Xu Changhui's survey was based on the musical developments in several other Asian countries, particularly countries with a Buddhist background, and thus culturally comparable to China. It is quite fruitful and certainly much fairer to place the Chinese developments in the larger framework of Asian developments than to compare them constantly with the completely incongruent West.

Since the Opium Wars, many Chinese have suffered from a strong inferiority complex. Why else would the music of China be called ‘backward’ again and again? Why should China be called a ‘developing country’ in musical as well as in economic matters? In a presentation entitled ‘Theory and Practice of the Relationship between Western and Chinese Music’, Wei Tingge, Associate Professor at the Music Research Institute in Beijing, posed the question: ‘Can music be backward at all? Is there such a thing as ‘underdeveloped music’?’

Why should the music from Europe and the USA be imitated rather than that from Latin America or Africa? What necessitated the changes in the structure of the traditional Chinese orchestra which resulted, amongst other things, in the construction of *erhu*'s as big as a cello? It is extremely important for the Chinese, especially in the musical field, to build up a more positive and self-confident relationship with their own culture and past and to stop comparing themselves to cultures as different from them as those in the West.

SEARCH FOR IDENTITY
The new Chinese avant-garde musicians, mainly in Mainland China and Hong Kong have found a very profound way of appreciating their cultural heritage. Hong Kong composer Doming Lam gave a presentation on his search for a personal, Chinese musical style, which developed from pieces very typical of the musical style of the fifties like his Violin Sonata which incorporates pentatonic melodies, but which is basically a conglomeration of romantic and impressionist musical language, to works such as his Concerto for Pipa and Orchestra, entitled *Gong Fu*, which is imbued with a definite sense of ‘Chineseness’ comparable to the Hungarian flavour of some of Bartok's music.
The question posing itself to the participants was how best to set about educating the future Chinese composer to write music that is both music of world-importance, music written for a larger audience than the Chinese and which yet preserves the composer’s national identity. Should a Chinese composer start off in a way which is not the current practice, namely by receiving a thorough education in the Chinese musical tradition
after which he could continue by a study of Western musical values and tradition? Dr. Liu, in his concluding paper, declared that Chinese composers should respect the Chinese tradition and only embrace the Western tradition if it enhances their own national creativity. This approach would be difficult to realize, however, because in a world determined by cultural diffusion and internationalism it seems futile to try and close off international developments.

STAGNATION
Nevertheless, it seems questionable, too, whether one should simply say with Aaron Copland, ‘Anything composed by an American is American music’. It seems doubtful, whether the tendency to find a national style for Chinese art-music is really just a new version of Zhang Zhitong’s often quoted phrase ‘The Chinese knowledge as a basis, the Western knowledge for the application’. Only the Chinese composer has the unique possibility of creating a music which is at the same time Chinese and international, and one can envisage a way out of the stagnation into which modern music seems to be languishing internationally - using national solutions. Liang Mingyue, Professor of Music at the University of Maryland, argued that the *erhu* or the *pipa* were once instruments brought to China by barbaric tribes. Over the centuries they became instruments inherent to Chinese musical style. Why then should it be impossible that piano and violin will in time become Chinese instruments as well? (Probably they have already done so in the works of such composers as Tan Dun, Doming Lam, Su Cong and others?)

Certainly, since the eighties, the works of Chinese composers have achieved a much more homogenous standard, a much more striking idiom than the music composed by Chinese in the fifties, sixties and even the seventies. However, the conference on Jiang Wenye showed that the achievements of such ‘pioneers of Chinese art-music as Jiang Wenye, Ma Sicont and others should not be overlooked. Presentations by Wang Anguo, Xu Changhui, Su Xia and Jiang Wenye’s wife Wu Yuncun among others, made it apparent that Jiang’s musical work must be counted as an important step in the development of Chinese music.

A TAIWANESE BORN COMPOSER
Jiang Wenye was born in the then Japanese colony of Taiwan in 1910 and educated in Japan. As a young man, he settled in Beijing, where he became a professor at the Normal University. For a long time, as his wife reported, his Chinese was quite poor, certainly poorer than his fluent Japanese. Yet, he felt himself to be a Chinese. His compositions show and express his love for China; they describe Chinese landscapes, Chinese rituals, Chinese philosophy. One of his important pieces, Five Sketches for Pianoforte composed in 1935, which won a prize at the Contemporary Music Festival in Venice, combines a very Chinese tonality with Debussy-like foggy passages and harsh and witty interruptions which remind one of Shostakovich. The beauty of this music must be the first argument when trying to evaluate it. Admittedly, some Chinese composers nowadays write music which seems even more anachronistic than this piece which was written more than a decade later than Berg’s ‘Wozzeck’ and Honegger’s ‘Pacific 231’. Nevertheless, the standard by which one appraises a musical piece, and here most of the participants agreed, should be its beauty, not its leading position in the evolution of a particular type of music. As Lutoslawski puts it: ‘The argument about what is, and what is not, modern music springs from motives which have nothing to do with art. One of them is the fear some composers have of seeming anachronistic (...) Time changes everything, yesterday’s masterpiece can be today’s rubbish. I am not in the least worried by the fact that it is impossible to give a final verdict on a piece of music’. (From: T. Kaczynski: *Conversations with Witold Lutoslawski*, London 1984, pp. 98; 134/135.)
Madly singing in the mountains

Frank Kouwenhoven
(Leiden, The Netherlands)

In recent years, young mainland Chinese composers like Tan Dun, Ge Gannu and Chen Qigang have found sympathetic listeners all over the world. But is not avant-garde music in China a forced rupture with ancient tradition? Is its strongly individual language indeed compatible with time-honoured Asian artistic values and conventions? Frank Kouwenhoven, takes up the questions which he posed at the end of his previous article on mainland Chinese avant-garde music. He depicts the story of China's new music as a tale of many different voices and of 'deep, spiritual singing'. The roots of the new generation of composers are traced back to the violent and enigmatic period of the Cultural Revolution. But the author also looks ahead, at the various artistic options which are now beginning to take shape in modern Chinese music. In this article, the second of a series of three, he discusses in particular the adventures of the Chinese romanticists.

In retrospect, 1985 and 1986 were probably the most liberal years for innovative artists in communist China. Recently, the cultural climate in the People's Republic seems to have deteriorated once again, affecting not only the work of composers, but also that of painters, writers and film-makers. The major turning-point was, of course, the massacre in Beijing on 4 June 1989 and the nationwide crackdown on the democracy movement that followed. But the winter of artistic freedom had already set in during the early days of 1987, when the political tide again turned in favour of the hard-liners in the Communist Party. At that time, some composers reacted by writing gloomy

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1 See Chime no.2, Autumn 1990, pp.58-93. The author had planned to write a series of two articles, but was soon faced with the impossibility of covering the whole range of different styles and schools of new Chinese music within the space of the second article. Therefore, a third and final article will follow in Chime no.4, (to be published in December, 1991).

2 In the winter of 1986-87, student protests started in regional cities like Nanjing and Wuhan, eventually spreading to other places and also reaching the capital, Beijing. Just like in June 1989, Tiananmen Square became the theatre of lively student demonstrations for press-freedom and democracy. But the conservative faction in the party soon began to flex its muscles and launched a
and despondent works, others preferred to remain silent. It was a period in which many young artists made a definite decision to leave China and not to return before the situation showed considerable improvement.

The first question to be answered here inevitably concerns the situation of contemporary music in China today: do modern Chinese composers still have confidence in the future? Can they continue the very promising and hopeful work they began only a few years ago?

**VIGOROUS CRITICISM**

Even at present, avant-garde music is not exactly forbidden in the People's Republic but recent concert programmes in Beijing with new music have mainly featured the names of conservative artists such as Ma Jianping and Wang Xilin\(^3\), who write in a fairly romantic, tonal idiom.

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\(^3\) An orchestral concert dedicated to works of Wang Xilin (b. 1937) took place in Beijing on 11 March. Similarly, an orchestral concert with works by Ma Jianping (b. 1957) was performed on 23 March.
It is harder than ever for young composers to collect funds for genuine avant-garde concerts, and it needs quite some courage to perform experimental music in China today. True enough, the latest Shanghai Spring Festival (in May) contained a number of promising pieces by young talents.

With regards to 20th century Western music, it is mainly works written in the earliest decades that are found on Chinese concert programmes, with a clear preference for descriptive symphonies and symphonic poems written in a classical, tonal idiom. Mahler can now be heard regularly in Chinese concert halls - usually under the baton of a Western conductor - , but modern and contemporary composers, from Webern to Boulez, not to speak of the younger generations of Western innovators, are ignored and remain virtually unknown to Chinese audiences.4

New Chinese music has been criticized more vigorously than ever in recent issues of various Chinese musical journals. The four modern Chinese composers best-known in the mainland (Tan Dun, Qu Xiaosong, Guo Wenjing and Ye Xiaogang) have now been nicknamed the 'Gang of Four' of Chinese music.5 This type of criticism has so far remained without serious consequences for musicians, except, perhaps, that it has scared quite a few away from the idea of performing pieces which sound too conspicuously 'modern'.

In stubborn reaction, the new generation seems to have become ever more personal and idiosyncratic in their musical utterances. This is true, in particular, of composers who have already left the country to study abroad, but also stands for some of those who still live and work within China.

Contemporary Chinese music no longer seems to be evolving in one main direction. Young composers no longer try to establish a 'national art' or to solve their artistic problems by the escape route of ostentatious chinoiserie. Their position is now similar to that of composers in the West; they all have to struggle to find a voice of their own, and to make it sufficiently audible among the growing chorus of musical innovators across the globe.

4 A song recital by the soprano Li Yamei 李燕美, accompanied by the piano player Luo Ying 罗莹, in January 1991 in Beijing, should perhaps be viewed as a bold exception. It featured songs by Mahler, Debussy, Ravel, Schoenberg, Berg, Webern and Messiaen. The recital was organized by the composer Luo Zhongrong (b.1924), who also had some of his own songs performed. The concert was warmly received by the audience.

5 See Renmin yinyue 人民音乐, no. 5, 1990. This issue of China's most politicized and least musical music journal contains a whole series of papers delivered at the 'Seminar on Music Thought', held in the last week of June, 1990, in the Peking district. The meeting was organized by the Chinese Musicians' Association and was clearly intended to criticize pop and avant-garde music for their lack of socialist spirit. The titles of various contributions speak for themselves: 'Establishing the guiding status of Mao Zedong Thought', 'A Debate on the Socialist Road of Music', 'Oppose Bourgeois Liberalization', 'Renewed criticism against Pop Music', 'Thoughts about Modernistic Music', 'Marxism and the Present Situation of Musical Language', etc. Most articles are de facto political speeches with no substantial references to music. Generally, their message is that music should be written for the masses, it should be comprehensible and it should convey positive feelings about the achievements of Chinese socialism. The four composers Tan Dun, Qu Xiaosong, Guo Wenjing and Ye Xiaogang are often mentioned together in Chinese sources. The actual reason to group them together (apart from the fact that they studied in the same class in Beijing) is that, at one time, all four of them featured in a controversial article by the musicologist Li Xi'an 李西安, published in Renmin yinyue in 1986. This article was based on an interview, in which the composers discussed their ability to listen to inner sounds. For Tan Dun, it would be the starting point for a new composition, whereas Qu Xiaosong casually remarked that he might actually be thinking of nothing in particular while composing music. This came close to heresy in the view of certain orthodox Marxists, who did not hesitate to point out (in their subsequent criticisms of the article) that a composer ought to think of his motherland and of the victories of the Communist Party while writing music. (See: Li Xi'an - Report on a discussion about current ideas on contemporary music (Xiandai yinyue sichao duihua lu 现代音乐思潮对话录), in Renmin yinyue 人民音乐 (People's Music), 1986, no.6.)
ALL POLITICAL PROBLEMS SOLVED
The guardians of socialist art in China have not actually gone so far as to point out the 'wrong notes' in the works of modern composers, but this act of ultimate musical ignorance may well be superfluous, because - just as in the 1950s and 1960s - the present Chinese cultural policies are, in themselves, sufficient to block quite a few performances of genuine avant-garde music and to discourage artists from carrying out too many bold experiments in practice. Over the past few years, the rigid cultural doctrine of the Communist Party and the extremely poor conditions of employment and remuneration of Chinese musicians have prompted not only composers but also many of China's best musical performers, both soloists and ensemble players, to leave the country.
Many of those who stayed behind - either because they lacked the initiative to seize a good opportunity, or because they had started a family and found it difficult to leave - are now desperately trying to get out as well.
Going abroad is the only escape route, and as soon as the artists have emigrated, they are more or less free to write and create what they like. Unlike Chinese writers, who depend entirely on the creative use of their mother-tongue - which only their compatriots can understand - Chinese composers can develop a language which is comprehensible to both Western and Chinese ears, and which enables them to communicate with sympathetic audiences everywhere in the world.
Some composers therefore take an optimist view: 'Almost all of our best talents are now in the West. Nothing can stop us from creating good music.' They do not fear losing contact with their native soil - not as long as they can occasionally visit their own country, carrying their return ticket to the West with them.

IMPORT CULTURE?
In Europe, America and elsewhere, Chinese mainland composers now offer a major contribution to the Western avant-garde circuit. They write for Western instruments
and Western performers, use Western techniques and please Western audiences. Some critics of new Chinese music have expressed their dissatisfaction with this situation. They wonder whether, under the present circumstances, the compositions of Chinese avant-gardists can still be recognized as a true part of Chinese or Asian tradition. Are not these modernist pieces with their fancy titles and complicated graphic notations part of a foreign culture with foreign values which bear no relation to those honoured on Chinese soil?

The question immediately seems to lose all its relevance in the face of Chinese history. Throughout the ages, China has witnessed the ardent struggle of those who tried to establish a truly national culture, juxtaposing it with foreign ('barbaric') culture. In the Han or in the Tang dynasty, the music masters of the court conspicuously based themselves on ancient Chinese rites and philosophies in trying to achieve this aim. But time and again, the country has shown a surprising capacity to absorb elements of alien civilizations, to such an extent that the face of China's culture was changed almost beyond recognition. In the course of the centuries, foreign visitors or invaders all added their own tinge to the palette of Chinese tastes in art. It is a well-known fact that most of China's musical instruments, including the most popular ones, the erhu (two-stringed fiddle) and pipa (plucked lute) were imported from foreign countries. Many musical inventions and ideas were either gradually or suddenly absorbed. Chinese composer Chou Wen-chung regards the rich cultural interactions among ethnic groups who inhabit China and peoples who have come into contact with the Chinese as 'symbolic of the vitality and changeability of the evolving aesthetics of East Asian music'.

Western music came to China, notably in the 1930s and afterwards, and was eagerly adopted and transformed into a language with Chinese or Asian characteristics. Chinese contemporary composers all benefited from contacts with Western art. Whether their personal language will have more than ephemeral value within Chinese culture in the future is something that only the Chinese can decide. But in order to be able to decide, Chinese audiences should first be allowed sufficient opportunities to hear the music. At present, Chinese avant-garde music has little opportunity to prove its merits, because it is not being performed very much in the People's Republic.

THE DISSIDENT ROLE

Sometimes, the 'outsider' position of contemporary Chinese composers is severely criticized for still other reasons: these composers work abroad and write mainly for foreign audiences; by doing so, they initiate in themselves a process of gradual cultural alienation and will eventually lose the right to act as representatives of Chinese culture. Typically, such views are expressed primarily by Chinese living in Chinese communities in the West. Perhaps these people should be reminded of the fact that many of the most enduring works of Chinese poetry and painting, especially during the Tang and Song periods, were created in exile, by dissidents, by poets or painters who were banished from government centres, barred from official posts, sent away to remote areas where they would not be able to interfere with state affairs. Many of them chose a sealed life of their own free will, deliberately turning their backs on worldly affairs and on the fate of their compatriots. In this respect, the tactical retreat of certain contemporary Chinese artists is somewhat comparable to that of their illustrious predecessors. True enough,

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6 Chou has even termed the historical Chinese interest in foreign musical concepts 'one of the basic principles that moulded the development of Asian music'. Cf. Chou Wen-chung: Asian Esthetics and World Music; in: Harrison Ryker (ed.) - The Asian Composers Conference and Festival Hong Kong, 1981 Final Report; Hong Kong Composers' Guild, 1983, pp.24 ff. Chou's paper also briefly describes in some detail the periodic influx of foreign music in China, notably in the years from the Han to the Tang Dynasty.
Chinese composers seek their refuge not in high and desolate mountains but rather in overcrowded Western cities: they can easily turn their small apartment in the heart of Manhattan or Paris into a safe and quiet retreat, the modern equivalent of the hermit’s cave. But in the end, they, too, have opted for a self-imposed exile, basically in order to find the peace - not to speak of the facilities - to create the music in which they believe, and which has become very difficult to write and to perform in China.

**HOW 'CHINESE' IS THE QUEST FOR INDIVIDUALITY?**

One final criticism of contemporary Chinese music should be refuted here. It concerns the 20th century Chinese view that individuality and originality are typical objectives of Western artists. The Western obsession with self-realization in art is sometimes believed to betray a certain egocentric (or, in the communist perspective, a 'bourgeois') spirit which is alien to Chinese art. In Chinese art, originality and individuality have always been secondary aims, the first and most important objective was faithful imitation of the work of ancient masters - or such is popular belief in China. There may be an element of truth in that viewpoint, as long as Chinese art is viewed from a certain distance. Until a few years ago, an exhibition of 'modern' Chinese painting might actually have included the naturalistic landscape-painting of four different centuries, all centered around the same motifs - plum blossom trees and mountains, lakes and fishing boats - all using the same techniques, all apparently resulting in the same artistic outcome, although, in minor details, there would be many differences. It is true that the various schools of painting (or, for that matter, of music-making) never propagated extreme individualism, as was the case in Western art, from the romantic era onwards.

Some Chinese art critics bluntly reject all experiments along Western lines in contemporary Chinese music because they argue that strongly individual, artistic revolts have never been part of Chinese tradition. They point out, correctly, that current Western musical composition is primarily a quest for new sounds and for the realization in music of strongly personal statements. With such undue emphasis on individualism, they say, Western avant-garde music can never (and will never) take root in Chinese soil.

They seem to overlook the fact that Western avant-garde music did take root in Chinese soil, already more than a decade ago, and that it continues to exert a strong influence on Chinese composers today - sufficient proof of the fascination it holds for many young Chinese. Moreover, one wonders whether the basic objectives of Chinese artists are really all that different from those of artists in the West.

*Is musical creation ever anything else than an appeal to heaven in purely creative terms, no matter whether the tone is one of gratefulness or of outrage? If singing can be taken*
as an apt metaphor for the urge to express oneself creatively, in whatever realm of art, the celebrated poem by the Tang poet Bai Juyi, probably captures the essence of the process well, for both Western and Chinese artists:

*MADLY SINGING IN THE MOUNTAINS*

There is no one among men that has not a special failing:  人各有一癖,  
And my failing consists in writing verses.  我癖在章句;  
I have broken away from the thousand ties of life:  万缘皆已消,  
But this infirmity still remains behind.  此病犹未去;  
Each time that I look at a fine landscape,  每逢美风景;  
Each time that I meet a loved friend,  或对好客欢;  
I raise my voice and recite a stanza of poetry  高声咏一篇;  
And I am glad as though a God has crossed my path.  忽若与神遇.  
Ever since the day I was banished to Xunyang  自为江上客,  
Half my time I have lived among the hills.  半在山中住;  
And often, when I have finished a new poem,  有时新诗成,  
Alone I climb the road to the Eastern Rock.  独上东岩路.  
I lean my body on the banks of white stone:  身倚白石崖,  
I pull down with my hands a green cassia branch.  手攀青桂花,  
My mad singing startles the valleys and hills:  狂吟惊林壑,  
The apes and birds all come to peep.  猿鸟皆窥觑;  Fearing to become a laughing-stock to the world  恐为世所嗤,  I choose a place that is unfrequented by men.7  故就无人处.

Although the poem was written in China in the early years of the ninth century, it could very well be regarded as an Asian equivalent of, for example, Friedrich Rückert's *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen*, in which the 19th century German poet declares himself dead to the bustle of the world, and reposes in the tranquil realms of his own song.8

Interestingly, in a recent interview I had with Tan Dun, who is now generally recognized as one of the leading artists of his generation, the composer commented on his own music as follows: 'I have always been searching for new sounds. But when I find them, it is a difficult process for me to write them down on paper, it is difficult to find an acceptable musical notation for them. Why? Because all good music is actually deep spiritual singing. One must be able to chant it, with one’s inner voice, one’s personal voice.' The remark was primarily intended to underline that such music is never transferred to paper in an easy way, since the ‘internal singing’ to which the

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7 Bai Juyi 白居易, ‘山中独吟’. The translation is by Arthur Waley, and was taken from his 1918 anthology of 170 Chinese poems.

8 ‘Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen’ (‘I have lost touch with the world’) ends as follows: ‘Ich leb’ allein in meinem Himmel, in meinem Lieben, in meinem Lied’. (‘I live alone in my heaven, in my devotion, in my song’). There is a well-known musical setting of the words by Gustav Mahler.
composer refers does not easily take the form of a clear-cut melodic, harmonic or rhythmic structure. But it may also illustrate Tan Dun’s general stance as an artist. He emphasizes the need for the composer to discover his own personal singing, and to find ways of bringing it out into the open. The vocal part of ‘On Taoism’ (his orchestral piece from 1985) was initially conceived in a very self-evident way: ‘like a child, singing to himself’. Tan Dun’s joy in creation is not all that far removed from Bai Juyi’s concept of artistry, nor from Western romantic ideas about the need for the artist to exploit his self-interest creatively.

To deny Chinese artists their urge for self-realization may be in line with Confucian and Communist doctrine, but it almost amounts to a denial of human nature itself. It certainly does no justice to the many great and highly individual works of art that have emerged in China in the course of centuries, nor to the excellent men who made them.

A DOUBLE BACKGROUND

In the 1980s, the People’s Republic was no longer a self-contained and isolated society. Western music had already left indelible marks on Chinese music for at least five decades. By the time composers like Tan Dun and Ge Ganru wrote their maiden works, they were not just ‘influenced’ by Western music but, in fact, completely saturated in it. Western melody, harmony and rhythm had already become a self-evident part of Chinese culture. In the urban China of the 1960s, one would frequently wake up in the morning to the sounds of Western (or Western-inspired) music on the radio - the Chinese national anthem itself being a typically Western march tune:

Ex. 1. The opening lines of China’s national anthem.

Christian churches propagated Western hymn singing, military bands in the streets played Western marches, and in Chinese schools and army training camps, community singing was practised with the help of Western tunes, which were frequently mixed up with Chinese ones and used quite indiscriminately. Even today, many Chinese people in urban areas still think that the following, well-known revolutionary song is based on a traditional, Chinese tune:

Ex. 2. Chinese revolutionary song ‘Down with imperialism’.

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9 From an interview which the author had with Tan Dun in New York, 3 December 1990.
10 It was written in 1935 by a 23 year old composer called Nie Er. Originally called ‘March of the Volunteers’, it was the leitmotif of the film Pengyun enyi 风云儿女 (‘Children of the Storm’), a love story against the backdrop of early Chinese resistance against Japanese invaders in Manchuria. In 1949, the song was adopted (with new words) by the Communist Party as a provisional national anthem. Only in 1982, was it officially adopted as China’s national anthem, with the original words restored.
The Chinese model opera tunes of the period, usually presented as a national heritage, were sung partly using a Western vocal technique, to the accompaniment of Western instruments, and with Western, 19th century harmonic progressions. All these foreign musical elements also permeated the Chinese countryside. In short, the Chinese composers who, while still in their teens, first embarked upon the path of music as amateurs during the turbulent period of the Cultural Revolution, owe their musical development just as much to their early conditioning by Western melody and harmony as to their (later) interest in Chinese traditional music. The new language which they eventually adopted is no less genuine or sincere because it sprang from this double background.

Paradoxically, it was during the Cultural Revolution, in the midst of all the patriotism and the fierce propagation of anti-Western feelings, that many of them were for the first time confronted with Westernized music. They learned to play Western instruments, began to develop a practical understanding of Western harmony and instrumentation, and were sometimes offered unique opportunities to experiment with writing music for (partly Western) ensembles. How was this possible?

AN AMBIGUOUS VIEW OF ‘BOURGEOIS’ MUSIC

It was Mao Zedong’s wife Jiang Qing, who took responsibility for China’s cultural policies in the 1960s and early 1970s. In many of her speeches she criticized Western music for being politically unhealthy and ‘headed for destruction’. All performances of Western music were eventually forbidden in the People’s Republic. However, Jiang Qing did not completely dismiss the use of Western elements in Chinese music. She adopted Mao Zedong’s view that one should ‘make foreign things serve China’ and supported the use of Western instruments and Western vocal and orchestral techniques in Chinese revolutionary opera, which she regarded as the potential basis of a new, national culture. She felt that Chinese traditional instruments were sometimes too limited in sound and size to convey to the full extent the revolutionary ardour of her model opera heroes.

Unlike Mao Zedong, she thought that Chinese folk song was not a proper medium for a new, politically inspired, Chinese musical art. Actually, Jiang Qing detested folk song. On various occasions she attacked Chinese minority songs and dances, complaining that there were ‘a disastrous number of them’ and that they were unable to reflect the lofty, political spirit of the times.

Thereofore, under the watchful eye of Jiang Qing and her cultural allies, the drive to westernize China’s music continued during the Cultural Revolution, culminating in the curious Hollywood-nostalgia of the model operas and revolutionary ballets. It

12 The composer He Xuntian, who grew up in rural Sichuan in the far West, once told me the following story about his childhood. In his small, native village, he used to listen to the sounds of psalms and hymns being played on a Protestant church organ almost every day, because his home was next to the church. Moreover, the vicar’s grandson once showed him the library, and it turned out that the vicarage not only contained psalm books but also many interesting books on Western music, such as a Chinese translation of Walter Piston’s 1941 treatise on Harmony. It is only one example of the extent to which Western musical culture sometimes penetrated even the remotest corners of rural China.

13 Western music heading for destruction: see Jiang Qing tongzhi hun wenyi (江青同志论文艺) (‘Comrade Jiang Qing on Literature and Art’), Beijing, May 1968, pp. 63-64. ‘A disastrous number of minority songs’: quoted by Xinhua She (New China News Agency) in Renmin Ribao (The People’s Daily), 6 April 1977. On the general cultural policies of Jiang Qing during the Cultural Revolution, see: Richard Curt Kraus - Pisano & Politics in China; Middle-Class Ambitions and the Struggle over Western Music; Oxford UP, New York, 1989, pp.133-137. In Jiang Qing’s extensive but unorganized remarks, Kraus detected a coherent plan for joining European musical technique to Chinese culture. See also: David Bonavia - Verdict in Peking; the Trial of the Gang of Four; London, 1984, pp. 125-142. The latter pays ample attention to Jiang Qing’s anti-minority policies.
continued, in spite of occasional violence by Red Guards who demolished the pianos and violins they found in their path as symbols of the poisoned spirit of China's bourgeois middle class. It continued, although music conservatories all around China closed their doors, record collections with Western music were destroyed and music teachers, who had shown too much passion for Western music - or perhaps too much disdain for the communists' populist culture -, were persecuted, imprisoned, sometimes even beaten to death.

In the villages, millions of Chinese peasants were familiarized with the phenomenon of the romantic piano concerto: through a film of pianist Yin Chengzong playing his Yellow River Concerto, a sinicized version of the virtuoso concertos of Liszt and Rachmaninoff. For many Chinese, it was actually the first time they heard or saw a piano.14

Meanwhile, all regular education, be it in music or in any other field, eventually came to a standstill. Schools closed; science, technology and education were soon at their lowest ebb for decades. The most promising young men and women of China's urban middle class were forced to work with the peasants in the countryside. They often took their children with them, who were least of all able to understand what was happening in their country. Most of the composers of the later avant-garde generation were, in fact, children at that time. Their eyewitness accounts reveal some surprising facts about those chaotic years which preceded the birth of a new music culture in China.

LEARNING TO SMOKE

Ge Ganru (b.1954), at present one of the most successful of the new Chinese generation of composers, was eleven years old when the Cultural Revolution started. He lived in Shanghai with his parents, both of whom were engineers. They took no active interest in music but stimulated Ge Ganru, who began playing the violin when he was seven or eight. After the schools in Shanghai stopped their regular education programmes, Ge Ganru had little else to do but turn to his instrument. At the age of eighteen, he was sent to the countryside, to Chongming Island in the estuary of the Yangtze.

He remembers his three compulsory years in the countryside with great clarity: 'I was taken to a huge and crowded collective farm. There were thousands of students there, every single room had to be shared by ten people. We had to work sixteen hours every day, so I was afraid I could not study the violin any more. Then, one day, I discovered the former concert master of the Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra, Nian Kaill, who had been sent to the island as well. At first, he was not in the right mood to teach me, because they had smashed his instruments and beaten him up, but gradually he came round to accepting me as his student. In order not to be criticized for playing the violin, I stepped up my efforts to do peasant’s work. Sometimes I only slept three hours a night, so that everybody could see I was not idling or running away from physical labour.'

Ge Ganru continues: 'In return, I hoped they would let me play the violin. I did not do so in my room, which was far too crowded, but usually somewhere outside, in a courtyard or in a peasant’s room. The evenings at the collective farm were boring. We had nothing with which to occupy ourselves. Among other things, I learned to smoke. There were a few other students who were able to play instruments, and eventually we decided to form a musical ensemble. It was a funny mixture of instruments, though: erhu, saxophone, bamboo flute, transverse flute, cello, accordion, pipa, violin. Of course, we were only allowed to play revolutionary music and perhaps some folk songs. We more or less played from memory, somebody picked up a tune and others would join in. It was then that I began to write simple arrangements, with Western

chords. I used whatever I had learned during my violin lessons, I knew some of Paganini’s violin concertos quite well.’

In 1974, when Ge Ganru was informally accepted as a student of violin at the Shanghai Conservatory, which had not yet officially re-opened its doors, he began to take a more solid interest in composition. Within two years, he wrote his own, full-fledged violin concerto, probably the first work of its kind to be written by a young music student at the end of the Cultural Revolution. Ge Ganru was soon noticed as one of the most talented composers of his generation. He was also among the first to leave China, when he got the chance, in 1982.15

MUSIC AS AN ESCAPE ROUTE FROM HEAVY LABOUR
For some young composers, the Cultural Revolution will remain a dark and gruesome episode, in which their homes were ransacked, their parents beaten by Red Guards and sometimes driven to suicide. Sheng Zhongliang, who has now achieved fame in the United States under his American name Bright Sheng, spent eight compulsory years in Tibet, where he ended up as a piano player performing in a provincial band. His memories of life in the mountains of the South-West are mixed: starving and beatings were commonplace, and the Tibetans hated any Chinese presence. Yet, like Ge Ganru, Bright Sheng eventually started arranging music and taking pleasure in it. He, too, had little theoretical background; the music group in which he played served as a practical laboratory. He was eventually accepted as a student at the Shanghai Conservatory. Bright Sheng also emigrated to the United States in 1982, where he became a protégé of Leonard Bernstein.

15 The quotations in these paragraphs were taken from an interview which the author had with Ge Ganru on 8 December 1990, in his current home in New Jersey, USA.
Many Chinese composers used their practical experiences with 'revolutionary music' in a similar way: for them, it became a stepping stone to a professional career in music. During the Cultural Revolution, music was increasingly used for political propaganda purposes. There was a growing need for provincial ensembles which could perform the model operas and revolutionary songs intended to keep up revolutionary spirits amongst the population. By playing in such local propaganda groups, young people in the countryside demonstrated that their political views were correct, but it also offered them an opportunity to avoid, in an honourable way, the heavy physical labour in the rice paddies. Especially for urban youth who were forced to go and work with the peasants, it was an attractive escape route. From the very beginning, the revolutionary groups witnessed a flood of applicants who brought along whatever musical instruments they could lay their hands on. In this way, thousands of young people began to study a Western instrument. It was a suitable replacement for the lack of official musical training in those years and may even have brought many people closer to the spirit of Western music than would have otherwise been the case.

One composer from Beijing recollects: 'My brother taught me to play the violin, I studied with him for only two or three years but with that knowledge I was immediately accepted in a local opera troupe in Hunan. First I played the viola, then the bass and after that the cello. They needed all kinds of instruments. I also took to conducting.'

PURSUITING A CAREER
Qu Xiaoqiong, now living in New York, admits: 'Without the Cultural Revolution, I would probably have become a technician, at any rate I would not have turned to music. In those days, I lived in Guiyang, a small city in Southern China. In my family, nobody was interested in music. When the Revolution started, I was sent to the countryside. A friend taught me to fiddle a bit on the violin and after a year I could already participate in a local Peking Opera troupe. I started a string quartet with a few friends; we came together in private and played Mozart and Beethoven quartets, which was not dangerous in Guiyang because nobody there recognized it as Western music. My knowledge of foreign music was very limited, of course.'

16 From an interview with Mo Wuping, held in Beijing, 24 June 1990. At present, this composer lives and works in France.
17 From an interview with Qu Xiaoqiong, held in Beijing, 23 June 1990. Qu studies in New York, but at the time of the interview he was in China to compose the music for Chen Kaige's latest film Ming ruo qinxiang (Life on a String).
Yet another composer, He Xuntian, is almost euphoric about his experiences during the Cultural Revolution. He wrote music for various propaganda ensembles of workers and peasants. 'It was a very important period for me, because all the music which I wrote was performed immediately. Later on, this situation was never repeated.'

For many young artists, the Chinese model operas and ballets were their very first confrontation with music in any form. They reacted in various ways to the propaganda pieces which they had to play. Some were cautiously critical of this 'political' music, others - the majority - grew quite fond of it and actually derived their first creative inspiration from it. One composer remembers in particular his enthusiasm for the revolutionary ballet *Hongse niangzi jün* 紅色娘子軍 ('The Red Detachment of Women'), a brilliant, orchestral suite which served as a stimulus for him to start composing.

Liu Yuan, a young composer from Shanghai had a similar experience after he fell in love with the orchestral ballad 'Ode for Lei Feng'.

Many young, musical amateurs enthusiastically began to write songs and dance pieces themselves. Lu Pei, a native from Guangxi Province, who spent two-and-a-half years in the countryside, organized a dance performance which was filmed by the Guangxi film company in 1974 under the title *Hentiao zhen lü* 納苗真緰 ('The deep green of the countryside'). He wrote music for it without any theoretical background in harmony or instrumentation, and had it performed by a makeshift ensemble of three violins, one trombone, one bamboo flute, one pipa and an accordion.

Currently, Lu's work shows more affinity with the linear textures of Anton Webern than with any revolutionary propaganda music, but Lu Pei says that he is still fond of his first, creative efforts and proud of the film that was produced seventeen years ago.

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18 From an interview with He Xuntian, Chengdu, 11 June 1990.
19 Qu Xiaosong. Cf. footnote 15.
20 From interviews with Liu Yuan and Lu Pei in Shanghai, 25 May 1990.
THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA
The most important fact to be learned is that the Cultural Revolution was not necessarily a cultural wasteland, not merely a period of draconian limits, ideological madness and violent attacks on individuals.
In the midst of it all, young talents were timidly probing, groping their way, bereft of whatever Chinese, traditional, cultural legacy had been available previously: they could only search the rubbish dump of Maoism, it was their sole property by birth-right; what they harvested were bits and pieces of Stalinist propaganda music, of Chinese Hollywoodism and mock Peking opera, but did that matter?
In fact, they could study this music freely, they were offered splendid opportunities to experiment, and the very limitations of the musical material led to what might be termed an unintentional fast: for years, young Chinese composers lived on a spartan musical diet, which did not necessarily stir the deepest veins of their imagination. Consequently, towards the end of the 1970s, their musical horizons were still very limited when they were suddenly confronted with Western, 20th century music.
The spiritual chemistry of the Cultural Revolution was never intended to work this way, of course, but in 1977 and 1978, when hundreds of young, Chinese composers were faced with decades of abundant, musical innovation in the West, the contrast with their own world gave them a shock and unleashed an unprecedented creative flow in them. In that period, a whole host of new musical talents emerged in China. Notably between 1982 and 1985, many of the young composers wrote at least one or two truly memorable pieces. Even those who eventually did not live up to their initial promise, experienced some remarkable moments of creativity.
In many ways, the Cultural Revolution was the culmination of a long and painful search for rehabilitation which had already occupied China for more than a century. The period is perhaps best characterized as the self-torture of a nation desperately seeking to redefine all its values, and to strengthen its self-esteem in the face of a modern, often hostile and overbearing, outside world.
The attempt to perform ideological miracles and change China overnight was bound to fail. However, the end of the Cultural Revolution at least marked the end of absolute Stalinism and of intellectual hibernation in the People’s Republic, and for the first time in forty years, artists in China - those who had survived the years of chaos - were able to raise a voice of their own. That was a form of rehabilitation and of spiritual resurrection, indeed.

NOSTALGIC MEMORIES - AND WHERE TO GO NEXT
The young generation’s curiosity and the shock treatment they received from foreign music have made them take a fresh look at their own culture, in a way that would have been impossible in earlier times. Virtually all of them have developed a strong affinity for modern Western music and for Chinese traditional music almost at the same time. They have explored and grasped the intrinsic values of both and have left the musical poverty of the Mao era far behind them. The songs of steel and glory are not necessarily rejected but are now viewed in a much wider perspective. ‘We discovered very soon that Tchaikovsky and Beethoven were more interesting than the malformations and excesses of the Cultural Revolution’, says one composer.21 For others, the music will forever evoke nostalgic memories of an incredible - and sometimes perfectly happy - childhood.
As students of music at Chinese conservatories in the late 1970s, they quickly assimilated Western influences, from romanticism to Bartok, from Strawinsky to the serialists, outgrowing one after the other like a baby outgrowing its clothes, imitating and devouring every new style with which they were confronted.

21 From an interview with Jia Daqun, Chengdu, 13 June 1990.
Judging from their music today, young Chinese composers are clearly no longer apprentices, although some of them – as an inborn, cultural reflex, perhaps – prefer to strike a student’s pose forever. The truth is that, in a surprisingly short time, the majority of them have matured - matured unwittingly, one could almost say, because they now face the same, soul-searching questions as their colleagues in the West, first and foremost the question of where to go next.

Where to go next, indeed? Continue in a tonal, romantic idiom? Seek refuge in the strict rules of serialism? Return to the womb of ancient tradition? Improvize music, rather than petrify it in written scores? Or combine all this, and more, into a clever, new, musical eclecticism? In the West, the answer will always be ‘yes’, each solution having its supporters.

A closer look at the various options - and what Chinese composers make of them - will not only provide a comment on the possible future of music in the Far East but also reveal some interesting facts about its little explored past.

UNASHAMED YEARNING
Listening to the music of certain older Chinese artists like Du Mingxin, Wu Zuqiang, Chen Peixun or Chen Gang, middle-aged ones like Huang Anlun and Lin Hua, or even young ones like Zhang Qianyi, Pan Guoqing and Lin Dehong, one might almost believe that the 20th century never touched ground in China.

Their works, although widely divergent in style and means of expression, basically all rely on the techniques and tonal language of 19th century, Western music. The bravura and the unashamed yearning of Western orchestral romanticism established a firm foothold among Chinese composers as far back as the 1930s, when Russian teachers acted as dedicated apostles of the symphonic music of Glazunov, Tchaikovsky, Rimski-Korsakov, Kabalevsky, Khachaturian and others.

Surprisingly, for today’s generation of Chinese romanticists, the problems of finding a suitable tonal language are basically the same as they were for their predecessors and pioneers in the field, five or six decades ago. Coming to terms with Western tonality continues to be an obstacle. A closer examination of the Chinese struggle with romantic tonality is of interest, because it puts contemporary Chinese music in a wider perspective and also sheds a fascinating light on some of the most essential aspects of China’s ancient, traditional music.

THE STRUGGLE WITH TONALITY
For decades, all compositional activity in China has been directed towards the goal of a 'modern, national style', the national element being presented by Chinese pentatonic tunes, the modern element referring to Western technique, harmony in particular.
When Chinese composers wish to harmonize pentatonic tunes according to Western principles, they are faced with problems, notably in those modulatory passages where progressive chords are required to secure a smooth transition. In those cases, it is inevitable to resort to chromaticism and to step outside the modal boundaries of the pentatonic melody.

The Chinese pentatonic scale has no semitones. True enough, semitones and quarter tones in all kinds of configurations can be heard in performances of Chinese music, but they are best regarded as passing tones with a subordinate role - that is to say: subordinate where it concerns the tonal framework of the music. The functions of Chinese chromaticism cannot simply be compared with those of 19th century Western chromaticism, with all its harmonic implications.

A small example from the early days of Chinese romanticism may help to indicate the gap between the Chinese and Western mechanics of tonality, as well as the way in which Chinese composers of the past tried to bridge it. In his elegant little salon piece for piano *Mutong duandi* (‘The Cowherd’s Flute’), written in 1934, the composer He Luding skillfully juxtaposes two melodic lines and treats them heterophonically, somewhat in the manner of the separate parts in *Jiangnan sizhu* (江南丝竹), a genre of traditional Chinese ensemble music.²²

Ex. 3. Opening lines of He Luding’s *Mutong duandi*, for piano (1934).

The chords in this section are not progressive; they do not direct the listener’s attention towards a tonal centre. The section ends with an open chord (G-B-D-E-G) in which the

²² Normally, in a *Jiangnan sizhu* piece, all the players follow roughly the same melody, but each player modifies it according to the character of his own instrument and to certain structural principles which are typical for the genre. The result is one of continuous mild dissonance, a timbral colouring of the melody rather than an interpretation in terms of harmony. In *Mutong duandi*, He Luding consciously imitates this type of heterophony and captures it extremely well, given the limitations of the piano. Of course, the ‘colour-harmony’ of traditionally tuned Chinese instruments cannot be transferred to a well-tempered instrument, but at least the relative freedom of the various parts is clearly reflected in He Luding’s piece. In the example given above, the lower line does not necessarily copy the upper line, but it does imitate some of its contours, it inverts some of the rhythms and derives much of its own material from the upper line, as can be seen e.g. in bars 9 and 10.
supposed tonal basis of C is conspicuously absent. By creating tonal ambiguity, He Luding neatly underlines the non-Western character of his tune. The situation changes, however, in the middle section of the music, where the composer introduces a descending, diatonic line played by the left hand:

![Music notation image]

Ex. 4. Middle section of He Luding’s *Mutong duandi*.

After moving from the new tonic (G major) to its dominant, there is an unexpected further shift to A major (in bar 9 of the example). To Western ears, the re-introduction of G-natural, in the bass line in bar 11, anticipates yet another change of key: the melodic turn in the upper line of bars 11 and 12, supported by B and D in the bass line strongly seems to predict a shift towards E minor, but this change of key never occurs. Instead, the composer returns to G major. Why does it happen this way? He Luding is perhaps not quite aware of these underlying suggestions or maybe neglects them on purpose, his main concern being to secure the pentatonic character of the music. In any case, the music sways unhappily between its pentatonic and its diatonic components.

In a traditional context, Chinese tunes are never based on anything vaguely resembling a ‘tonic’. The gravitational centre of Chinese melodies is usually suspended in mid-air and may be ambiguous throughout - several tones together probably functioning as a centrifugal nucleus. It is not impossible to force a modulation in a Chinese melody into line with a change of key in the Western harmonic system, but they are different processes. Blending them requires more than a superficial knowledge of Chinese and Western tonality.

**TONALITY AS AN ARCHITECTONIC FORCE**

In the romantic symphony and the Wagnerian music drama, Western composers do not merely use tonality as a function of melodic expression but, in fact, as a basic,

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23 Characteristically, the tonal shifts in this music (G-D, D-A, A-G) are all leaps of a fifth - a basic interval of the Chinese pentatonic scale. In this case, G-D should be read as an inverted fifth, not as a descending fourth.

24 Very few scholars have ventured to investigate the exact nature of Chinese tonality and the mechanisms of modulation in Chinese melody. The only full-scale study I know of is Fritz Kornfeld's *Die Tonale Struktur Chinesischer Musik*, published in Mödling bei Wien, 1955. Some of Kornfeld's observations are now outdated or disproved. Nevertheless, the book contains interesting and valuable viewpoints which should be (re-)examined in the light of the wealth of Chinese musical materials available today.
architectonic force, to give the whole musical building its balance and solidity. The example from He Luding’s piano music illustrates, on a micro-level, the sort of complications that began to arise in the 1950s, when the bigger music forms began to grow more popular in China. The Chinese symphonists succeeded only in adopting the empty shell of the Western symphony, not in mastering its inner logic and harmonic essence. It is no exaggeration to say that they missed out the very backbone of symphonic art.

The result was a huge repertory of *Europeana*, as one might call these Chinese symphonies and symphonic poems - the Asian equivalent of the *chinoiserie* which were composed in Europe over the past few centuries: music which overstates the obvious but omits the essential. To critical ears, the melodic flow of the Chinese orchestral tone poem sounds curiously flat, because it lacks both the imaginative harmonic treatment of Western works and the subtle sound colorations of traditional Chinese music. Progressive tonality is often applied clumsily, distorting the traditional flavour of the folk tunes.

I refrain from citing examples. A deliberately extreme treatment of He Luding’s piano piece - rewritten with progressive chords - may serve to illustrate the potential extent of the damage. By giving the main theme of *Mutong duandi* an unambiguous tonal basis, its ‘Chineseness’ is completely destroyed. The tune is changed beyond recognition, although it retains its original shape:

Ex. 6. A Western harmonization of He Luding’s *Mutong duandi*.

**A CHINESE HARMONIC SYSTEM?**

In the course of time, Chinese composers realized that the dichotomy of Western and Chinese tonality required more than just provisional solutions. The option of early craftsmen like He Luding - to create a harmonic language within the realm of pentatonicism itself - was given a theoretical basis in 1959, by Li Yinghai in his book *Hanzu diaosi hesheng* 汉族调式和声 (‘The Harmony of Han Scales’). Li superimposed various pentatonic modes on each other, in order to create chords within the compass of Chinese scales (Ex. 7).
In his own compositions, however, he resorted to diatonicism and Western harmony, silently admitting the limited scope of his Han scale theory. Stiff progressions of fifths and fourths could only produce a static type of music, which may be the reason why so many Chinese piano pieces of this period seemed to go continuously over the same ground.

Part of the trouble was, of course, that Chinese composers in the first half of the 20th century were not only barred from acquiring sufficient knowledge of Western harmony but also lacked a theoretical framework for their own traditional music. With a limited understanding of both, they could hardly be expected to achieve satisfying results.

There were some exceptions, though. In the course of the 1950s, a handful of daredevils cautiously experimented with broken or suspended tonality along the lines of Debussy, or even with dissonant harmonies approaching the language of Bartók. This newly explored harmonic territory seemed to fit in splendidly with the floating nature of Chinese pentatonicism. Examples can be heard in the music of Sang Tong - who had the advantage of a modern, Western training as early as 1946 - and in some piano works of his pupil Wang Lisan. Their harmony was at once more liberal and more conscious of the problems of Chinese tonality than that of any of their predecessors - or successors, for that matter.

From a Western point of view, the solutions of Sang Tong and Wang Lisan were not exactly original, but, in China, these two composers maintained a unique position for many years. Their understanding of the two entirely different music cultures of East and West was more profound than that of their contemporaries and many of their younger colleagues.

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25 In 1961, Zhao Songguang and He Luding wrote introductory books on the theory of Chinese scales. Meanwhile, Western harmony was mainly being taught from translated Russian textbooks (Spossobin, Maximow) and some Western ones (Goetschius, Piston), offering a limited theoretical basis. The opportunities to hear Western music in practice were extremely limited, except, perhaps, for the romantic piano repertoire. When, in 1953, M. Richardson's book “The Medieval Modes, their Melody and Harmony” was published in Chinese translation, it went almost unnoticed, but after it was reprinted, in 1962, some Chinese composers realized for the first time that Western music had more to offer than Beethoven and Russian romanticism.
HARMONY VERSUS TONE COLOUR
Recently, I visited a young Chinese composer who established his name, in the early 1980s, with a brilliant violin concerto written in twelve tone technique, a work which leaves no doubt about his capacity to absorb Western influences. That same composer surprised me with a tape-demonstration of his film and pop music, in which he resorts to a tonal, romantic idiom. The surprise was not that he wrote it, but that his romantic harmony was full of curious twists which, by all standards, could only be described as blatant mistakes. In spite of his modern training and boundless admiration for composers like Wagner and Puccini, he was painfully misinterpreting Western harmony in his own, ‘light’ compositions. This gave me food for thought. Why should this lack of harmonic feeling be so persistent among Chinese composers? In the 1980s, the training of composition students had already considerably improved in China. Today, they have a wealth of translated and original works in the Chinese language at their disposal, on the theory and practice of harmony - the recent books by Sang Tong superseding anything that was previously published.26 Poor training can no longer serve as an excuse, although it is true that music students in China are still offered a random picture of Western music history, in which the whole period from ancient times up to the Baroque remains virgin territory and the 20th Century is presented only in a mutilated form.
A deeper reason for the lack of harmonic feeling may be the strong affinity of the Chinese with the unisono tradition of their own music. The unique patterns of the single voice are at the very core of Asian musical tradition, and they dominate the entire creative field of the Asian musician.
In Chinese ensemble pieces, the melody is usually shared by all the performers in the ensemble, but a true unisono is rare: the various individual lines only follow each other in a rough way, each single line representing a unique version of the melody. The continuous, mild dissonance of Chinese heterophony and the carefully calculated textures of Western harmony are indeed worlds apart. The chords in Chinese ensemble music are not always arbitrary, but the most important thing to realize is that they serve as a timbral colouring of the melody, not as harmonic configurations in the Western sense (Ex.9).

Ex. 9. The beginning of Zhonghua liuban (transcription: Wu Guoliang, 1983).

In solo music, such as folk songs, the melody serves as the backbone of the entire structure, and the single tone as a fundamental musical unit. Through minute variations in pitch, timbre and loudness, the single tone may evoke poetry and beauty all by itself. It is probably wrong to interpret its pitch fluctuations in terms of ‘ornament’, because they are an essential part of the structure. They actually constitute the very basis of the vocal line, and taking them out is like taking out the harmony in Wagner. Here is the beginning of a folk song from Jiangsu, presented both in Western notation and in computer graphics:

Ex. 10. First line of a weeding song from Jiangsu, (A. Schimmelpenninck, 1989).

THE ‘SOUND HARMONY’ OF CHINESE MUSIC

The story of Asian music is that of a microcosmos in a macrocosmos. The most important element to support the melody is sound colour - the colour of the voice, the colour of the instrumental ensemble. When the Chinese speak of ‘harmony’ in a traditional musical context, they actually refer to timbre - i.e. to the combined sound of the materials which are used to produce the music.\(^\text{27}\) Nowhere is the importance of sound colour more evident than in the music of the guqin, the Chinese seven-stringed zither. This instrument can reportedly produce four hundred different timbres,

\(^{27}\) Cf. Liang Mingyue - Music of the Billion; An Introduction to Chinese Musical Culture; Heinrichshofen, New York, 1985. On pp. 64-65 the classical bayin system of timbral classification is discussed in some detail.
depending on the way its strings are plucked or struck. The number may be an exaggeration, but the important thing to note is that the shifting of these timbres has a function quite similar to that of shifting chords, of harmonic progress in Western harmony.

Timbral variety in Asian music is, in fact, the full equivalent of Western harmony. However, it is only in the past decade, that some young Chinese composers have begun to restore such traditional qualities of Chinese music in their own compositions. They reject the possibility of bluntly superimposing the Western system of harmonic relationships on the delicate sound harmony of Chinese music. This is not to say that Western harmony cannot be used to enrich certain expressive gestures in the music or to add to the colour of the ensemble, but it seems highly unnatural to adopt the chordal language of Western music throughout, as a leading, structural principle. Isolated chords and floating harmonies are used effectively, as single brush strokes, on the musical canvas of the new generation. The harmony of Chen Qigang and Tan Dun shows real mastery, and here, finally, a Western technique is skillfully adapted and subordinated to Chinese tradition - the tradition of an in-depth exploration of sound, and sound colour, within the framework of melody and of single tones.

COMPLETION OF A LIFE-CYCLE

Hopefully, this brief excursion into the realm of harmony may help to illustrate how, after having being separated for many centuries, Asian traditional and Western contemporary music are currently approaching each other. Les extrêmes se touchent. The 20th century Chinese guqin player may suddenly find himself on the contemporary music stage, recreating Youlan 雁鷁, a fourteen hundred year old piece, and revealing its timelessness and striking novelty to an audience of avant-garde freaks.

The entire Western development of progressive harmony, a gradual evolution of hundreds of years, has been swallowed and digested by Chinese composers within the span of four or five decades. No doubt, its impact on the musical future of China will be considerable, but it will never be as deep and as lasting as it was in the West, during the past four centuries.

Romantic music in China has now come of age and must be allowed to complete its life-cycle within the context of Asian cultural expression, regardless of how the results will be judged in future.

In general, it has found a more gratifying expression in small forms, such as piano miniatures, than in the very demanding form of the symphony. In the past few years, nearly all the middle-aged and older, conservative composers who still wrote in a romantic idiom have shifted their positions to some degree. They do not abandon Western tonality but allow for experiments in a moderately advanced idiom; they also frequently turn to smaller and more realistic resources than the huge symphony orchestra. Chen Mingzhi writes neat, little twelve tone piano pieces with due emphasis on the pentatonic tones in the series; his miniatures are mild in expression and have a distinct Hindemithian flavour. Others, like Wang Jianzhong, Gao Weijie and Wang Lisan have developed many different strands of a Chinese, post-Debussian impressionism, occasionally resulting in small gems like Gao Weijie's 'Autumn Wilderness' (1988).

There is much imitation of Hindemith, Bartók, Strawinsky and Schoenberg. Representatives of the older generation like Wang Qiang, Ding Shande and Chen Gang all absorbed these modern influences to some extent, but they never deny their penchant for the final chord of the dominant 7th which leads the music back to a safe haven.
GRAND STYLE OPERA
Musical drama of Wagnerian proportions has found its way only haltingly to China. Early efforts to create a national opera modelled on Italian or German examples, such as A Yi Gu Li 野狐岭 by Shi Fu and Wu Si Man Jiang, bear too great an imprint of the revolutionary opera of the previous decade to serve as a new point of departure.

Probably, Jin Xiang’s ‘Savage Land’ 落幕, based on the popular play by Cao Yu 曹禺 of the 1930s, comes closer to the ideal of a Chinese-flavoured grand style opera. It was premiered by the Central Opera in Beijing, in September 1987, under the baton of Li Delun. The curtain was raised during the overture, showing a tangle of human bodies shrouded in darkness and purple coloured smoke. The haze of sounds from the orchestra blended with the voices on the stage, which occasionally burst out in chaotic laughter or in cries like ‘black’, ‘hate’, ‘heaven’ or ‘injustice’. After this electrifying opening, the stage was lightened and revealed a naturalistic setting, while the music continued in a much more conventional idiom, wavering between Puccini and Hindemith.

The opera was well received in China and, as a Chinese Bohème, might possibly appeal to Western theatre audiences, too. The playwright Cao Yu, who was involved in the stage production, called it ‘a true bel canto opera with Chinese characteristics’. Ivo Malec, a French avant-garde composer, sat among the audience on the eve of the premiere and said he was ‘surprised to find such a modern idea in Chinese opera.’

With his feeling for theatrical effects and his clever blends of romantic and contemporary sounds, Jin Xiang may yet develop into a Chinese John Adams.

REBIRTH OF A SYMPHONIC COMPOSER

In China, the music of ‘Savage Land’ and its classical story of love and revenge appealed to a broad audience. The orchestral world of Zhu Jian’er is equally epic in scope but more concise in form and expression. It deserves to be mentioned, if only because this composer literally hammered himself back into shape after having lost faith in his ‘political music’ and in himself at the end of the Cultural Revolution. Zhu started his musical career in the mid-1940s, composing marches for a brass band of the communist New Fourth Army in northern Jiangsu. He entered Shanghai victoriously with the communists in 1949 and began to write music for propaganda films. His studies at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow (1955-1960) turned him into a brazen romantic. ‘Russia was a peak experience’, he recalls. ‘I was free to write whatever I liked and my orchestral pieces were received very well.’ In China, the same music was criticized for its revisionist spirit, and for some time, Zhu stopped composing. Then, in the late 1960s, he was swept along by the revolutionary ardour of the Maoists and began to compose choral cantatas on texts of Mao Zedong. ‘Only towards the end of the Cultural Revolution, I awoke from my dreams. I realized that the kind of music I had written was artistically worthless. I had to start all over again.’ Zhu radically changed his style and began to work on a new symphony, which took him nine years. The piece, completed in 1982, was a reflection on the Cultural Revolution, musically indebted to Britten and Shostakovich but outwardly modelled on Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony, complete with a ‘fate’ motif.

In subsequent years, he developed an interest in twelve tone music and took it as a point of departure in his Second Symphony (1987), a work which expanded on the feelings of shame and bewilderment at the end of the Cultural Revolution. The basic material for the first movement is a twelve note series of which the first three C-A-G# are used to depict a ‘sobbing’ sound. Zhu built a theme from his series by rendering it into the speech rhythms of a pathetic question: why? Why is it so? Why is it such a struggle? To avoid an all too obvious melodic statement, he used chords of minor seconds to support the series throughout:

\[
\text{Ex. 11. The main theme of the first movement of Zhu Jian’er’s Second Symphony (1987).}
\]

Zhu Jian’er’s new music is perhaps naive and too much indebted to Western models, from Bartok to Schoenberg, but it is very sincere and not without historical interest. Because of his extraordinary swing from Maoist propaganda marches to dodecaphonic music, and his remarkable capacity to adapt himself to the changing spirit of times, Zhu will probably remain an exceptional figure among the composers of the older generation.

Among the younger romanticists, Huang Anlun has gained a certain reputation abroad with his prolific output of operas, ballets and symphonic works. There are touches of Prokofiev and of mock Chinese folklore in his music. He moved to Toronto in 1980, studied for some years with Jacob Druckman at Yale University, and developed considerable skills in conventional harmony and instrumentation.

It is hardly feasible to mention here all the romanticists who stayed in China and took even less opportunities than Huang Anlun to update their style and improve their technique. They are the current prizewinners and careerists in the People’s Republic, but most of them seem transitional figures at best.

\[29\] From an interview with Zhu Jian’er in Shanghai, 8 June 1990.
Before moving on to the real adventurers in romanticism - those who accept Western tonality as a possibility, not as a necessity, and who apply it sparingly - a word should be said here about a separate category of Chinese romantic composers, for which there is hardly an equivalent in the West: the wholesale dealers in musical styles. The medium in which they feel most at home is the Chinese cinema.

FREE SHOPPING
For many composers of film music - in China and in the West alike - the musical pluralism of the 20th century is an open invitation to free musical shopping and frequent stylistic borrowings. However, in China, the distinction between the musical craftsman and the creative artist is not as sharply drawn as in the West. It is not uncommon for Chinese composers to develop two or three (or many) different styles at the same time and continuously adjust themselves to the needs of the actual situation. They may employ serial technique in their string quartets, while at the same time writing pop songs with erhu and synthesizer for a local band and preserving their romantic vein for commissions by film producers.

At present, one of the more dexterous wholesale dealers in musical styles is probably Jin Fuzai, aged 49, a musician who works for the Shanghai film industry. His sparkling Chinese ensemble pieces for the cartoon film San'ge heshang 三个和尚 ("Three Monks") won him a Silver Bear in Berlin in 1983. He writes serious ballets and orchestral works, borrowing freely from Britten, Copland, Prokofiev, Ravel and Debussy with the same ease. ‘In China, the kind of music you write depends very much on the place where you work and on the assignments you get’, says Jin.30 He has also produced pop songs, Hollywoodesque romances for strings, light music for dance orchestra and jingles for commercials. For another cartoon, Shan Shui Qing (1988), he invented sounds somewhat reminiscent of the witty and nostalgic theatre music of Paul Bowles. His works reveal the talent and productiveness of an excellent craftsman, one who is clearly not concerned with questions of originality.

Jin Fuzai has the rare advantage of being regularly invited to write for a symphony orchestra; his non-commissioned pieces are also performed. Most film music composers have to confine themselves to the more modest dimensions of a synthesizer or a small ensemble. They usually work for film producers with only a small budget who cannot afford to hire large orchestras. The synthesizer, in particular, offers a cheap and satisfactory alternative.

Synthesizers were first introduced in Beijing around 1980, together with the first pop music that arrived from the West. In the early 1980s, dozens of electric keyboards were imported by enthusiastic theatre companies, film makers, pop groups and acoustical research institutes. With its potential of a full orchestra, the synthesizer soon became the favourite of the recovering Chinese film industry of the 1980s.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN FILM MUSIC
Music for the movies - whether it is created in China or in the West - is often romantic, illustrative and, from an artistic point of view, volatile, since its life is primarily determined by the images for which it was created. The emergence of a promising, new generation of film makers in China, however, has given rise to interesting experiments in Chinese film music which should be discussed here briefly. The images on the screen may sometimes still be reminiscent of the naturalistic film drama of the 1960s, but not the music.

In China, commissions for TV, films or theatre are about the only professional activities that will earn a composer some money unless he embarks on a career in pop music. Understandably, assignments for film music are eagerly accepted, also for productions

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30 From an interview with Jin Fuzai in Shanghai, 25 May 1990.
without any artistic objective. Qu Xiaosong, Tan Dun and Guo Wenjing have all written extensively for films. For a composer like Xu Shuya, writing for the celluloid remains "a waste of notes and time", since most commercial productions only require "romantic music" or "light, traditional sounds", with erhu or dizi and synthesizer. Other composers have been able to strike a good balance between the artistic limitations imposed upon them and the scope of their own ideas - or they have shown indifference to the results, their sole interest being the money. A few have been fortunate enough to come into contact with prominent film makers of the so-called 'Fifth Generation'. In general, these film makers show great respect for the talent of the new composers and often require a more sophisticated kind of music for their films than most of the more commercially oriented film producers.

A good example is the close co-operation between the composer Qu Xiaosong and the well-known film director Chen Kaige 沈.req@. Qu has written the music for some of Chen's best films, such as 'King of Children' (Haiziwang 子王, 1987) and 'Life on a String' (Ming ruo qinxian 命若琴弦, 1990). 'If a film director is not good, you write merely for the money', says Qu, 'but some directors offer you the opportunity to experiment. In such cases, the advantage is also that you can spend some money on research, to collect materials for your music. For 'King of Children', I travelled to Yunnan to collect folk songs. I also recorded all kinds of sounds, like rippling water, wind, children's voices, the scraping of a piece of chalk on a blackboard, and later I mixed all these on a 24 track, with varying speeds. When I told Chen Kaige about my ideas, he was sceptical and said he was unable to check what I was doing. Other composers would normally play their music for him on the piano, but this was something different. But when I demonstrated my recordings to him, he got very excited, lifted his arms and shouted: 'The whole world is destroyed!' This music was used at the end of the film, during a long and impressive shot of a forest fire.

Qu also wrote effective sequences for Tian Zhuangzhuang's The Horse Thief (Dao ma zei 逐马贼, 1984), a film about the hold of Tibetan religious beliefs on a nomad tribe. The mournful hum of a synthesizer and a choir and the sounds of wind and flapping paper form a perfect counterpoint to the long and silent shots of the vast and gloomy scenery in this film.

In some of the best films of the new Chinese cinema, music is used sparingly and effectively, and does not simply function as an obligatory support of the most dramatic or passionate moments. In Zhang Yimou’s latest production, Judo 落豆 (1990), the music spins its own story in quiet accord with the images on the screen. A single gong beat marks the opening sequence and some of the outdoor scenes in the countryside are accompanied only by some thoughtful tones on the xun (ocarina). One can hardly imagine a bigger contrast with the bragging cantatas and marches which
accompanied China’s films of the 1960s. True enough, Chinese film directors frequently make a virtue of necessity when they ask only for marginal, musical accompaniment. It is budgetary limitations that force composers to rely on the simplest possible means of sound production. Some accept it as a challenge and turn the limitations to their advantage. For the film Cuo Wei (1987, directed by Huang Jianxin 黄建新), the composer Han Yong 冷 wrote various imaginative sequences for handsaw and percussion. In a separate development, film makers have begun to use Chinese folk music, notably folk songs, in their films about rural Chinese life. A possible prototype was Chen Kaige’s ‘Yellow Earth’ (Huang Tudi 黄土地, 1984), in which some of the lyrics were still mimicked by the actors and actually sung by professional singers to orchestral accompaniment, but in which also a genuine folk singer from the countryside could be heard, performing a wedding song. In Yan Xueshu’s ‘In the Wild Mountains’ (Ye Shan 野山, 1985), a beautiful and very boldly performed shan’ge (‘mountain song’) accompanies images of the vast and bleak landscapes of China’s northwest. Li Xiaolong’s ‘Love at the Drum Tower’ (Gulou Qingshua 鼓楼情话, 1987) is a blatantly sentimental love story, viewed in the context of Dong minority ritual life, but the film is interesting for its music, which combines genuine field recordings of Dong folk songs with a modern, choral piece by the young composer Chen Yuanlin, Ga 嘎. This piece was partly inspired by the sounds of Dong language.

The interaction between art and folk music within the framework of a film occasionally leads to fascinating experiments. Some Chinese composers actually include tape recordings of original folk songs in their instrumental scores. A very effective example is Lu Pei’s music for ‘The Scenery of Daning River’ (Daninghe fengguang 大宁河风光), a Chinese Central TV documentary, produced in 1986, in which the taped voice of a Sichuanese folk singer can be heard against a soft, atonal haze from a choir and orchestra.

AN OSCAR FOR SU CONG

Up to now, only a handful of Chinese composers have written music for foreign films. Tan Dun and Chen Qigang have accepted some important assignments, but the best known film music composer abroad is Su Cong, who virtually embarked on a new life after his successful contribution to Bernardo Bertolucci’s film ‘The Last Emperor’ (1988). Bertolucci was immediately convinced of Su’s talent when he heard his ‘Concert Overture for orchestra’ (1983). He discussed the work critically with the composer, who then rewrote it in 1986.

The ‘Concert Overture’ is probably one of Su Cong’s best works. The piece is romantic, evocative, full of magic silences and soft glissandi for strings which sound as if they were inspired by film images in the first place.
For ‘The Last Emperor’, Bertolucci asked Su Cong to write music in Chinese traditional style. He also invited two other composers to contribute to the film: David Byrne - leader of the American rock group The Talking Heads - was primarily expected to write the arrangements for synthesizer while Japanese composer Ryuichi Sakamoto was to provide the classical, orchestral sequences to accompany the dramatic highlights of the film. It is perhaps Sakamoto’s contribution in the first place, which won the music of the film an Oscar, in 1988. At the same time, one cannot but feel admiration for the three composers’ spirit of co-operation; a remarkable cross-fertilization seems to have taken place between them while they worked on their music for ‘The Last Emperor’: in Sakamoto’s orchestral pieces, there are overtones of the quiet romanticism of Su Cong’s ‘Concert Overture’ from 1983, while David Byrne’s opening music for the film sounds, in fact, remarkably Japanese.

Su Cong was the first Chinese artist ever to receive an Oscar, a circumstance which suddenly made him popular at home and earned him a host of new commissions for films and TV productions in Europe. As a consequence, he broke off his doctoral studies of ethnomusicology at the Free University in Berlin - where he was writing a PhD thesis on minority folk songs in southwest China - and started on a full-time career as film music composer.

THE RISE OF CHAMBER MUSIC
If the destitute Chinese cinema no longer makes use of vast, musical resources, financial limitations likewise hinder the further advance of the symphony orchestra in Chinese concert halls. Composers turn to chamber music because they like to see their works performed, and maybe also because chamber ensembles are, in size, closer to China’s traditional music ensembles.31

Tan Dun, Qu Xiaosong and Guo Wenjing are perhaps particularly appreciated for their orchestral music, but it was the intimacy of their chamber music which first made them stand out from their predecessors. Until the 1980s, chamber music in China was almost terra incognita. Only in the past ten years, have Chinese composers suddenly begun to produce string quartets and pieces for mixed (Western and Chinese) chamber instruments.

The early string quartets of Guo Wenjing (1981), Qu Xiaosong (1981) and He Xuntian (1983) owe a great debt to Bartók and Shostakovich; in fact, the second movement of Qu Xiaosong’s quartet is almost a straight paraphrase of the first movement of Bartók’s ‘Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta’. Yet, these works all show a concentration and intimacy of expression which, at the time of their creation, was virtually unprecedented.

Nowhere does the chamber music of the new generation sound more balanced and better controlled than in their settings for Chinese traditional instruments. In many ways, the traditional ensemble has become the medium par excellence for Chinese avant-garde composers. This is not only because these composers are eager to explore China’s musical past, but also for another reason: Chinese musicians who play traditional instruments often feel at home in contemporary music and are indeed eager to co-operate in experiments. They will accept nothing that goes against the nature and physical limitations of their instruments, but gladly seize any opportunity to try out new techniques and new sounds. In fact, they often show more affinity for modern music than their colleagues who play Western instruments. The latter are sometimes hampered by the typical limitations of their Chinese conservatory training, i.e. too

31 True enough the legendary court music of the Tang Dynasty sometimes included huge orchestras, but this tradition has lain dormant ever since. The Western symphony orchestra can hardly be viewed as the 20th century successor of the daqu - the ‘grand song and dance’ of the Tang court - nor can it bring back to life this specific genre, of which no actual music has been preserved.
much emphasis on technique and no proper training in ensemble playing. The traditional musicians are at once more flexible and far better organized when they play together. They have the advantage of operating within the bounds of their own tradition - at least, if their new music scores show a proper understanding of the distinct qualities of Chinese instruments.

Many young, Chinese composers have written music for traditional instruments, both solo and ensemble pieces. To a Western listener, their early efforts in this direction sound ‘exotic’ rather than Western or avant-gardist. A closer examination of these works, however, shows that their creators have opened new vistas in Chinese music. They have mastered the techniques of Western chamber music to perfection, but use them entirely for their own purposes.

BACK TO THE DISTANT PAST
In his student years, the composer Zhou Long probably showed more natural affinity for Chinese instruments than any of his classmates at the Beijing conservatory. True enough, he also tried his luck at full-blown Western symphonies and concertos - with poor results - but at least he wrote a number of beautiful chamber pieces for Chinese instruments. They were the fruit of a close co-operation with performers of the Chinese Music Department of the Conservatory, who recognized in Zhou Long a rare admirer of ancient musical tradition. Zhou Long’s ‘traditional’ pieces of the early 1980s continue to appeal to listeners in China, today. They are remarkable for their combination of classical elegance and contemporary statements, and some of them may well prove to be timeless miniatures of Chinese art.

After he moved to New York in 1985, Zhou Long developed a strong interest in serialism. His excursions in the field of Western twelve tone music show the same spirit of musical refinement as his earlier traditional pieces, but lack their emphasis on melody, which is sometimes regrettable.
There can be no doubt about the supremacy of melody in Chinese traditional music: a tune is at once the signature or identifying mark of a piece and the key to its overall structure. Chinese melodies, with their seemingly endless variational patterns within a limited note-range, are probably more complicated and enigmatic than any other element in Chinese music. Up to now, their anatomical essence has hardly been investigated by Western musicologists, in spite of the wealth of available materials. From the 1930s to 1960s, most composers in the People’s Republic did not show much genuine interest in the melodic riches of their traditional music; they usually worked with simplified, skeletal tunes, adapted to Western metre and tonality. However, no contemporary, artistic exploration of the hidden potential of China’s musical heritage is conceivable without according traditional melody its rightful place. In his early piece Su for flute and guqin (1985), Zhou Long takes an interesting step by more or less dissecting the guqin score of Youlan, and contrasting some of its nuclear motifs with a totally different world - that of a joyous and light-hearted flute, playing Debussian scales:


The emotional mood is one of quiet melancholy, a happy kind of sadness, so to speak, but the dialogue between the flute and the guqin is a - frequently bitonal - conversation between melodic antipodes. The juxtaposition of flute and guqin depicts the eternal rift between ancient and modern, past and present. At the same time, Zhou Long - by opposing his musical materials in this way - writes a dialectical comment on the melodic and rhythmic features of Youlan.
In another work, *Konggu liushui* 空谷流水, 'Valley Stream' (1983), for *guanzi* (a reed instrument), *dizi* (bamboo flute) and *zheng* (a bridged zither related to the Japanese koto), Zhou Long contrasts different melodies and musical movements, not vertically but horizontally, and with abrupt transitions; the piece is like a suite of which the various parts have been compressed into a single movement. Once again, their juxtaposition can be read like a dialectical comment, but this time, the different parts in the music all seem to stem from the same source, and there is no sense of conflict. Indeed, the melody flows on like a quiet brook in a romantic landscape.

In his early pieces for traditional instruments, Zhou Long was clearly not immune to Western influences but used his Western skills primarily to enhance the classical impact of his music. Tan Dun followed a similar road in works like *Nan xiang zi* 南乡子, for *xiao* (vertical bamboo flute) and *zheng*, and 'Three Autumns' (*San Qiu* 三峡), for *guqin*, *xun* and voice (1985). Eventually, other composers started to explore the musical potential of the distant past. Especially the *guqin*, the seven-stringed Chinese zither, was discovered as a major source of inspiration. Among the many imaginative, new works in which this instrument was used, Xu Yi's *Han shan si* 玩山寺, for soprano voice, *dizi* and *guqin* (1985), and Liu Yuan's *Gui yi* 鬼一, for two *guqins*, *xiao* and baritone voice (1988) should be mentioned.

By the time these works were written, Chinese instruments were no longer the domain of an ancient and revered tradition. Fiddles and shawms soon found their way into Chinese pop music, and some composers for traditional ensembles began to experiment, in earnest, with serialism and all kinds of modernistic designs: Cui Wenyu's quartet *Yun* 雲 (1987), reads like a Schoenberg score, and Zhu Shirui's quintet 'Ancient mood' (*Gu Feng* 古风), written two years earlier, sounds like a pastoral traffic jam.
In the course of time, virtually every Western genre of music was somehow recreated or imitated on Chinese traditional instruments. The development of the large Chinese orchestras and their pseudo-symphonic repertoire has already been discussed in the previous article. In this genre, too, all stylistic boundaries have been crossed. Liu Xing's *ruan* (round shaped guitar) concerto (1987) combines elements of minimal music with jazz and Western romanticism and is sometimes close in spirit to the works of Pat Metheny.

**ART AFTER ART DIES OUT**

In so far as traditional instruments symbolize the glories of the past, or the unspoilt qualities of ancient folk culture, all the music written for these instruments could be labeled 'romantic'. The four *suonas* (shawns) in Qu Xiaosong's cantata *Da pi guan* 大劈棺, 'Cleaving the Coffin' (1987) herald the joy and uncomplicated feelings of Chinese peasant life:

Ex. 13. Suona music in the first movement of Qu Xiaosong's cantata 'Cleaving the Coffin'.

They recall the local shawn bands which play at funerals and weddings and seem to share the same exuberant music for the veneration of both life and death. In this cantata, the composer - who is, at heart, more romantic than many of his contemporaries - incidentally approaches the socialist ideal of the 1960s of a 'music
for the masses', in other words, an art which is accessible to a great many listeners and
can be called innovative at the same time. The music is eloquent and poetic, its idiom at
once familiar and new. Qu Xiaosong also tells a moving and amusing story, which
would probably be equally successful as a folk opera.
In 'Cleaving the Coffin', Western romanticism and Chinese tradition solemnly shake
hands, confirming what is probably the end of an era. The sympathetic, musical
message of this piece cannot be repeated.
The language of new Chinese music in the 1990s shows no inclination towards
popular taste and often probes its way into terra incognita. In the words of the
composer Ge Ganru: 'Our music should go a little beyond the audience'.

Several artists in the West have predicted the end of musical development, or the end of
spiritual development, which amounts to the same thing. They have prophesied it in a
manner somewhat more stoical than their predecessors in the 19th century, who
thought that Wagner was the last word in music. Among contemporary artists, Milan
Kundera is such a prophet, in his novel 'Immortalité'; among composers, it is Morton
Feldman who has expressed most emphatically the belief that no new, great music will
be possible after the 20th century. 'This time I really think we've come to the end', he
said in an interview for the Dutch VPRO radio in 1983, in which he also cited the 18th
century poet Alexander Pope: 'Art after art goes out, and all is night'. 32 But Feldman
never stopped composing. Darkness only enveloped his creative talent when he died,
in 1986. His music has clearly survived him.

In China, new, expressive forms of romanticism have emerged, notably in the work of
Chen Qigang. Serialism is now completing its life cycle, less elitist and emotionally
burdened, of course, than it was in the West. There are major explorations in the field
of instrumental sonority and percussive effects, led by important composers such as
Ge Ganru and Guo Wenjing. There are continued explorations of Asian tradition and
of folk music, sometimes culminating in downright ritual. Perhaps, the time is also ripe
for a truly modern Chinese opera. Tan Dun's 'Nine Songs' (1989) clearly points
in a new direction, and a surprisingly large number of young Chinese composers
currently work on operas. However, I propose to discuss all these developments in
more detail in my third and final article, which will be published in the December 1991
issue of this journal.

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32 From the final part of Pope's 'Dunciad Variorum', Book III, first published in 1728. (Cf.'The
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IN MEMORY OF A GREAT GUQIN PLAYER

Master Zhang Ziqian
(1899-1991)

DAI XIAOLIAN
(Shanghai Conservatory, China)

He was one of the 'three heroes of Pudong', a successful businessman, and head of a large family. But above all, he was one of China's greatest performers on the guqin, the seven-stringed zither. His playing and his warm personality are unforgettable to all those who knew him intimately or who were lucky enough to hear him play in person. Early this year, master Zhang Ziqian died, at the age of 91. His niece and former pupil, Dai Xiaolian, who is presently one of the best guqin players of the younger generation in mainland China, noted down some of her vivid recollections of Zhang Ziqian.

The famous guqin master of the Guangling School, Mr. Zhang Ziqian, has died. On 5 January of this year, he quietly passed away during an afternoon nap. He lived on for as many as ninety-one springs and autumns and, in the course of his long life, was a witness to three important periods in Chinese history - the end of the Qing dynasty, the Nationalist period and the era of the People's Republic of China. Through his hard work and great zeal, he stamped his presence on the history of guqin music in the 20th century.

I learned to know Zhang Ziqian during the Cultural Revolution, when I was still a child and was only beginning to develop an initial understanding of things. Ever after, I was very near to him and, in the course of time, received my artistic education from him. This enabled me to observe at close hand his artistic activities and conduct towards other people. His whole appearance and his personal convictions made an indelible impression on me, and I treasure all my memories of him.

Zhang Ziqian was born in 1899 in Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province, as one of many children of a large family of landowners whose wealth was on the decline. In those days, it was quite common for the members of various branches and generations of one family to live together in one house. When he was only seven or eight years old, both his parents died from illness. From that time onwards, he was raised by his grandmother and an uncle, as were his two elder sisters. Zhang Ziqian ranked as the ninth male descendant of the family; my grandfather - his cousin - was the seventh.
When he was seven years old, Zhang Ziqian began to receive private education from a teacher who had been appointed by the family. This happened to be the famous guqin master from the Guangling school of Yangzhou, Sun Shaotao 孙绍材. At thirteen, Zhang Ziqian officially began to study guqin with master Sun.

**THE GUANGLING SCHOOL**

Before telling you the story of my great-uncle in further detail, let me first, very briefly, sketch the general, social background of the guqin tradition in China. I should also say a few words here about the origins of the Guangling School. After all, Zhang Ziqian, in his time, became one of the most important representatives of this school. Those who are familiar with guqin music will know that, throughout the ages, different kinds of guqin schools - actually, styles of playing - emerged in China. It is very difficult to trace the Guangling School to its earliest origins. A poem by the Tang dynasty poet Li Xin 李欣, entitled ‘Please play your qin, dear Guangling guest’『请奏鸣琴广陵客』, suggests that Guangling players already existed during the Tang Dynasty (618 - 906 AD) but, according to historical records, it was a player called Xu Changyu 徐常遇 who founded the Guangling School at the beginning of the Qing dynasty (1694 - 1911) and passed it on to subsequent generations. The playing in the Guangling tradition is characterized in particular by a strong emphasis on timbral and rhythmic variation, which sets it apart from other schools. On first hearing, it is difficult to grasp the rhythm of a piece played in the Guangling style, because it is so extremely flexible. There are other features, but I will not discuss them here in detail.

The first printed tablature of a piece played in the Guangling tradition dates from 1702 and is called *Chenjian tang qinpu* 陳建堂琴譜. From this time onwards, qin players emerged in large numbers and the art of the Guangling school was passed on from one generation to the next. Various important qin tablatures appeared in print, such as the *Ziyuantang qinpu* 自遠堂琴譜, the *Wuzhizhai qinpu* 五知齋琴譜, the *Jiao’an qinpu* 虎庵琴譜 and the *Kunsuchan qinpu* 結木緣琴譜.
LISTENING IN THE TEMPLE
Mr. Sun Shaotao, who eventually became my great-uncle’s teacher, was a Guangling master of the ninth generation. His art and style were highly acclaimed by his contemporaries. In 1915, the Guangling players of Yangzhou founded a ‘Guangling Qin Society’ with Sun Shaotao as director. It had more than fifty members, which was an exceptionally high number for a qin society in those days.

The guqin, as a musical instrument, was originally practised only by members of the Chinese aristocracy and intellectual elite, but at the beginning of the 20th century, it had already found its way to commoners and middle class people. Many Buddhist monks and Daoist priests had also developed a liking for the guqin. I remember that Zhang Ziqian told me that he often went to a temple in the city of Yangzhou to listen to an old monk performing on the qin.

Under these circumstances, Zhang Ziqian’s character and artistic temperament were formed. At an early age, he mastered as many as ten guqin pieces which were passed on to him by his teacher Sun, and soon he displayed a considerable talent for the instrument. In some of his technical abilities, he even surpassed the skills of his master, which, one day, made Sun Shaotao exclaim: ‘Ah, I cannot compete with you.’ Zhang also learned to play the xiao (vertical bamboo flute) and he often performed at the qin society of Yangzhou.

A PRE-ARRANGED MARRIAGE
Zhang Ziqian was the only son of the family. To secure continuation of the family line, his grandmother and uncle decided that he should marry and have children at an early age. When he was only nineteen years old, they selected a bride for him, a girl from a family named Xu. He and the girl did not know each other at that time. I remember Zhang Ziqian telling me the story of the first meeting with his bride-to-be: ‘When she walked in through the door, covered by a red veil, I had no idea what she actually looked like. I only saw a pair of golden lotus feet three inches long.’ The girl was selected partly because of her age - she was two years older than he, ripe enough to
give birth to a son soon. In 1919, only a year after the marriage, the wish of the family was fulfilled and a son was born. In all, Zhang Ziqian had two sons and three daughters, who, eventually, had offspring themselves. In later years, the house was filled with children, and Zhang Ziqian used to do careful calculations in order to boast about the large number of his progeny. ‘My family already spans four generations and consists of more than fifty people’, he would say, and then add jokingly: ‘I’m not exactly a model for the birth control programme.’

In order to find work and to be able to support his family, Zhang Ziqian was introduced, by a cousin, to people at the Zhongfu Bank in Tianjin. For six or seven years, he worked at this bank as an office clerk. At the end of that period, his father-in-law, who was a shareholder in the Gongmao salt factory in Pudong in Shanghai, invited him to come over and work in that factory. Zhang Ziqian accepted and traveled to Shanghai, where he started working as an accountant and later became head of a department. He stayed at the salt factory for sixteen years, and later treasured the memories of these years more than anything else. ‘It was the happiest and most meaningful period of my life’, he would often say.

THE THREE HEROES OF PUDONG

While at work in the salt factory, he established friendly relations with the staff of the Zhongfu Bank in Shanghai, which was a sister corporation of the bank in Tianjin. He often visited his friends at the bank. One day he was told that, at the office of the Europe-Asia Airlines Company, only one floor up, there was a man who played the guqin extremely well. Naturally, Zhang Ziqian excitedly went upstairs to visit him, and the two men immediately established a good relationship. Already at their first meeting, they felt like old friends. Eventually, they exchanged all they knew and thought about the art of the guqin, and, in circles of guqin players, were very soon the subject of many conversations. Zhang’s new friend was the renowned guqin scholar and performer Zha Fuxi 趙福西. Subsequently, at Zha’s place, Zhang Ziqian met yet another guqin player, Peng Zhiqing 彭志清 from Luling in Jiangxi Province. Peng was eight years older than Zhang and had inherited his knowledge of the qin and his performing skills from his family when he was very young. Later, he studied the instrument with the founder of the Jiuyi School 九嶷琴派, Yang Zongji 鄭宗羲.

Peng Zhiqing’s guqin playing was superb, and his scholarly knowledge of the instrument profound. The same was true of Zha Fuxi, and both men exerted a deep influence on Zhang Ziqian. Eventually, Zhang invited his two friends to come and live at his new home in Pudong. In the evenings, at dusk, all three of them would sit in Zhang Ziqian’s quiet little room to play and discuss guqin music, learning a lot from each other. In circles of qin players, the three were soon provided with a suitable epithet: ‘the three heroes of Pudong’ 蒼梧三杰. In praise of their performing skills, they were often also called by the name of their most favourite, most characteristic qin piece. Thus, Zha Fuxi earned the name of ‘Zha Xiao Xiang’, because he was very good at playing Xiao Xiang shui yun 潭湘云, ‘Clouds and Waters of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers’. Likewise, Peng Zhiqing was nicknamed ‘Peng Yuge’, because he was very good at playing Yuge 陽歌, ‘Fisherman’s Song’, and Zhang Ziqian was called ‘Zhang Longxiang’, after the piece Long xiang cao 龍翔操, ‘Flying Dragon Song’.

AN ASSEMBLY

In the mid-1930s, Shanghai was a very important centre of trade and industry, indeed one of the very few truly cosmopolitan cities of the Far East, with good transport and communication systems. People from all provinces settled in the city to earn a living. It was also a centre where guqin players from all over China assembled to exchange information and to perform for each other. Some of them were quite famous, such as
Xu Lisun 徐立荪, from Nantong, of the Mei'an School 梅庵琴社, and Wu Jinglue 吴景略, from Changshu, of the Yushan School 虞山琴派, furthermore Li Zizhao 李子昭, Zhou Guanjiu 周冠九, Guo Tongpu 郭同浦, Wu Lansun 吴兰荪, etc. In 1936, seven guqin performers decided to establish the 'Jin Yu Qin Society' 今虞琴社. The total number of its members, in the beginning, was 28. From the very day of its founding, this society contributed enormously to the promotion and further development of the art of the guqin in China. Most importantly, the members of the society abandoned their tradition of playing their instruments solely behind closed doors - they brought the guqin out in the open, gave public performances on the stage and in radio broadcasts and also publicized the music via articles in newspapers and magazines. Playing in public, they popularized a repertoire of nearly one hundred qin pieces which they had learned orally from their teachers, and they brought back to life another forty which, for a long time, had existed only in written form.

Moreover, Zha Fuxi and Zhang Ziqian made great efforts to dig up ancient scores of qin songs - classical poems sung to guqin pieces - and had them performed again. These songs are, in
fact, older than the purely instrumental pieces. Zhang Ziqian transcribed such songs as *Li yun chun si* 梨云春思, *Su Wu si jun* 苏武思军 and *Hu jia shiba pai* 胡笳十八拍, which can still be heard on the stage today.

The 'Jin Yu Qin Society' provided a great stimulus to qin players from all over the country, and made the art of the guqin flourish as never before. During its brief, one year existence, the society had an enormous impact on the guqin tradition in China.

**THE LAST PICTURE**

In 1937, the Sino-Japanese war broke out. In the same year, the society published the *Jin yu qin kan* 今虞琴刊, a book full of information about qin music and its performers. It was originally intended as a periodical, but the war interrupted all the activities of the society and prevented the editors from publishing subsequent volumes. Nevertheless, this one issue, published in Shanghai, was a monumental work, a reference book of historic significance. It included a complete account of all activities of the society, various scholarly contributions on the qin, introductory articles about ancient and contemporary qin masters, information on the whereabouts and present conditions of guqins, and a survey of the society’s donors and members.

The book ran to 300,000 words - more than 500 pages. Its publication was made possible by the great efforts of Zhang Ziqian, who ran around for ten months collecting materials and stimulating people to finish their contributions. Characteristically, he never claimed any merits with respect to this whole project.

One day, when I was twelve or thirteen years old, I was leafing through this book and my eye fell on a page with small portrait photos of guqin masters. Only after some careful scrutiny did I discover the face of Zhang Ziqian, on the very last picture of the very last row. When I asked him why he was in the last picture of the whole page, he laughed. The lay-out was his own, and he had deliberately put himself at the bottom. This may serve as an example of the kind of modesty which characterized him throughout his life.
In 1944, the salt factory in Pudong was badly damaged during a bombardment, and Zhang Ziqian was transferred to a silk factory in the city of Shanghai, of which he became a director. In that period, he earned enough wages to support his entire family.

**THE FIRST QIN PROFESSIONAL**
After 1949, the silk factory was partly taken over by the state. Zhang Ziqian was recognized for his achievements in the field of guqin music, which led to his subsequent appointment as a member of the Shanghai minzu yuetuan (Shanghai National Music Ensemble) in 1956. This was an association of professional musicians who performed either solo or in ensembles, in various settings. In this way, Zhang Ziqian was able to make a living as a qin player. He would often boast: ‘I was the first guqin professional of China.’ Together with other members of the group, he toured through the country on many occasions. His guqin performances were recorded and broadcast on radio and television and he gradually established his position - first in circles of traditional music performers, later all over the country - as one of the foremost guqin masters of his time. Needless to say, his example had a great impact on other qin players.

In the 1960s, the Shanghai Conservatory of Music appointed Zhang Ziqian as a teacher of guqin and a special research Fellow, and in 1961, together with Zha Fuxi and Shen Caonong, he wrote ‘A Preliminary Introduction to the Guqin’, which was published by the Music Publishing House. Today, this is still the only book in mainland China which offers a broad introduction to the instrument, intended for a general readership. Throughout the years, Zhang Ziqian also published many important articles, such as ‘The Evolution and Characteristics of the Guangling Qin School’ (广陵琴派的沿革和特点) (In Jinyu qin kan, Shanghai, 1937), and essays on his understanding of the qin piece Mei hua san nong 梅花三弄, and on the history and future of Guangling qin scholarship. Eventually, he interpreted and performed more than twenty guqin pieces which, for a considerable time, had only existed in written notation. His musical renderings were generally acclaimed as great scholarly achievements. They showed his individual talent in bringing ancient guqin scores back to life and they revealed a profound affinity for the instrument.

**SILENTLY PLAYING THE QIN IN HIS MIND**
From August 1938 up to the Cultural Revolution, Zhang Ziqian kept a meticulous record of almost thirty years of his active involvement in the traditions and performance of the qin. In his diary, entitled Cao mi an suo ji 撰缦揽记, he wrote down everything he learned about the qin and what he gained from playing this instrument. All together, the diary consists of nine or ten volumes. Unfortunately, when his house was ransacked during the Cultural Revolution, one volume was lost. The remaining volumes are now kept by his children.
During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), Zhang Ziqian, like many other guqin players, was branded a class enemy - literally a 'cow's ghost' or 'snake spirit'. He was captured by Red Guards and denounced at public meetings. His wages were cut down to a bare minimum. He had to live through many of these difficulties alone; his wife had died from illness in 1957, and his children were criticized and suffered assaults in other parts of the country.

Soon, Zhang Ziqian was no longer able to pay his rent and had to move from his flat to a communal, single-storey house. For a man of nearly seventy years old, it was a trying experience. During the day he often had to attend 'criticism meetings'. Moreover, groups of children would regularly come up to his window to swear at him and throw dirt in his room. In the evenings, he sat under his lamp and silently played the qin in his mind, softly humming the tunes.

It was in this period that I came to know uncle Zhang, because my mother often took me with her when she went to visit him and brought him some food.

MUSIC FOR PEANUTS
I was six or seven years old at that time. I still remember one particular evening in his home, when his youngest daughter had come to see him, bringing her own two little girls. I and my cousin of the same age were teasing the other girl, who was just trying to learn to walk. When Zhang Ziqian looked at us, he laughed. It was the first time since all the trouble had started that he was able to laugh. I immediately felt a great respect for this kind, old man.

In 1972, he moved to the house next to that of my parents. In that time he was already allowed to play the qin again - the instrument had not been lost, fortunately. In the autumn of that year, I officially started to study the guqin with him.

Zhang Ziqian taught in the traditional fashion, i.e. with two qins opposite each other, teacher and pupil facing each other, and then we proceeded in a simple way - he would sing and play a line and then ask me to repeat it, and so on.

In the beginning, learning to read those extremely complicated pieces was a forbidding experience for me, since I was a child of only nine years old. I remember saying to my teacher: 'I learn too slowly. I do not want to go on.' But Zhang Ziqian encouraged me to continue. In fact, he gave me little rewards in the form of peanuts if I had done well. After some time, whenever I managed to play a line from a qin score, I would ask him for peanuts myself. Then he would count them one by one, with a serious face, and say: 'You cannot have any more, first you have to play better.' Occasionally, when I had eaten all the peanuts, both of us would burst out laughing. He was a very kind-hearted and sincere old man.

ZHANG ZIQIAN AS TEACHER & PERFORMER
In the course of the years, he passed on to me the knowledge of the Guangling qin school. He always made very heavy demands on me, with respect to my musical education. Actually, his later qin students did not experience him in quite this way.

Above all, he emphasized that my playing had to be zheng 正 (correct), song 松 (relaxed) and yuan 圆 (round). Zheng means that the fingering had to be in accordance with the standards of the performance tradition: the pinky should not be bent but rather held in a straight, slightly upward position, like the beak of a bird. Song means that both hands should be relaxed, not strained. Yuan means that the fingers of the right hand, while plucking the strings, should slant slightly sideways, resulting in a circular movement of the hand if several strings are plucked in succession.

Furthermore, he taught me that players of the Guangling School often plucked the strings near the fourth or fifth hui 白 (pitch sign). I noticed that my master adopted this method, but went even further by sometimes plucking the strings up to the position of
the sixth hui. In this way he expanded the potential range of tone colours on the instrument, and I believe he did it in a very effective way. For example, there is a short motif in the piece Pingsha luo yan (‘Wild Geese Descending on the Sandbank’) which goes as follows:

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\[ \text{\texttt{\textbackslash g1\textbackslash h1\textbackslash s1\textbackslash f1}} \]
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When Zhang Ziqian played this, he plucked the first D at the position of the third hui and the subsequent D at the position of the sixth hui. Thus, the same note on the same string was produced in two different tone colours and with different dynamics. Changing finger positions to achieve such an effect is a very delicate technique, typical of Guangling-style interpretations of guqin pieces. It may also help to show that, while Zhang Ziqian’s playing was firmly rooted in tradition, he nevertheless developed his own ideas about how to play and re-create guqin music. He would often say: ‘First, you must have the idea of the music in your heart; then, after that, you will be able to bring it out in actual performance.’

**THE PROCESS OF ‘DAPU’**

People who listened to Zhang’s playing were easily enchanted and carried away by it. He made them feel relaxed and happy. His great artistic talent was particularly evident in his skilful re-interpretations of ancient qin scores. These scores are actually tablatures, with elaborate instructions for fingering and pitch positions, but only occasional and very limited indications of the rhythm, resulting in a great potential freedom of musical interpretation. The notation system used in these scores is called jianzi pu. Every guqin player will perform a qin tablature according to his own, personal understanding of the piece. This process of bringing to life a written piece of guqin music is called dapu 打譜, ‘translating’ or - literally - ‘beating’ scores.
Whenever Zhang Ziqian ‘translated’ guqin pieces in this way, he handled the rhythm of the music entirely in accordance with their underlying stories. Thus, his interpretations were rhythmically and emotionally just as varied as the myths and legends that formed the basis of the music. Sometimes, he would even neglect rhythmic indications in a score and adjust the rhythm according to his own feeling in order to bring out still better the story on which the music was based. Let me give one example of this. The piece Chu Ge 楚歌 (‘Song of Chu’) describes the agonies of a senior warrior, general Xiang Yu 项羽, who is deeply ashamed of having lost a battle and decides to commit suicide. He cuts his throat, after having taken leave of his favourite concubine. The music captures the rapid swings of his mood - from triumph and passion to shame and utter despair. In the musical score, the sixth part of Chu Ge consists of various phrases separated by rests, but Zhang Ziqian, in his own performances, disregarded some of the rest signs and tended to play the whole section in one breath, thus bringing out the agony of the old general even more convincingly. In Zhang’s interpretation, both the music and the story are beautifully expressed.

SINGING THE STRINGS
During all those years in which he taught students to play the guqin, Zhang Ziqian constantly advocated the importance of open-mindedness. He urged his pupils to keep their ears open and always try to learn from other musicians. They need not always adhere to one and the same style, as Zhang himself did not do either. In the 1930s, he asked Zha Fuxi, who was four years older than he was, to teach him to play Xiao xiang shui yun, and similarly, he asked Peng Ziqing to teach him a piece which Peng had inherited from his family, Yi guren 艺故人 (‘Remembering Old Friends’). After some time, he was able to play these pieces. One day, a qin master of the Mei’an School, Xu Lisun 徐立荪, who had heard him play, said rather unpolitely: ‘Your fingering is not very solid; the tones do not sound balanced.’ First, Zhang Ziqian was deeply shocked, but then he decided to write these lines on a scroll, in the form of an
antithetical couplet, and hang them in his room as a continuous reminder to himself to improve his playing.

As part of his teaching, Zhang Ziqian always urged his students to apply the method of chang xuan 唱弦, ‘singing the strings’, while learning a new piece. It meant that the music was memorized by singing to its melody the words which indicated the fingering of the piece. In his opinion, this method had several advantages. First of all, singing would enable a player to grasp the inner meaning of a piece even before it was produced on the instrument. Secondly, singing it in this way was very helpful in committing the fingering of a new piece to memory.

I already mentioned the fact that, during the Cultural Revolution, Zhang Ziqian had no guqin to play on. However, thanks to his method of ‘singing the strings’, he remembered the pieces and was later able to play them again. Actually, this specific method is only used by players of the Guangling School.

Zhang Ziqian in Tianjin, April 1990.

THE FINAL YEARS
In the 1980s, Zhang Ziqian, who was now more than eighty years old, was still a very energetic and lively man full of new plans and ideas in the field of guqin music. He still had many students. He always felt it was an important task to pass on his knowledge and artistic skills to younger people, and he continued to do so in old age, dedicating his remaining years entirely to the cause of the qin.

At his instigation, the Jin Yu Qin Society, which had ceased to exist more than forty years earlier, was refounded and took up its activities again. Zhang Ziqian became its director and took charge of all the activities of the society. Personally, he participated in more than twenty performances, and received many important guests from China and abroad. Students and scholars of guqin music came from France, Italy, America, Japan, Singapore and Switzerland to ask for his advice and pay him their respects, and Zhang Ziqian sincerely tried to help them all. He said to me, cheerfully: ‘The guqin is already winning international recognition!’ At the age of 86, he made a recording1, which was a musical summary of what he had achieved during his life. His art had reached the highest degree of technical perfection, and his character was pure and selfless.

1 A music cassette, Long xiang kao issued by Shanghai yinxing chubanshe, 1985. Later, a pirate copy was published in Hong Kong: ‘Guangling Qin Music Volume I’ on the label Hugo, HRP 701-4. Parts of this recording were re-issued on a CD, ‘Guangling Qin Music Series’, Hugo Records, HRP 718-2 (1988), which also contained pieces performed by Dai Xiaolian and another player of the Guangling school, Chen Gongliang.
In May 1988, Zhang Ziqian left Shanghai. He had spent almost his entire life in this city, and left many students and friends behind, as well as the Jin Yu Qin Society in which he had invested so much energy. He went to Tianjin, to spend his last years peacefully in the home of his son. Now, he could happily and quietly complete his 91 springs and autumns, with a free mind and an optimistic view with regard to the musical future. During his lifetime he never sought fame or wealth. He passed away exactly in the same way as he had lived - quietly, and with peace in his heart. In my memory he is a saint-like figure. What is left of him is the sound of the qin, which will never disappear.

Ninth uncle, all your life you were fond of fresh, bright-coloured flowers. In Holland\(^2\), the country that is called the ‘land of flowers’, I will pick the brightest flowers to present to you, my dear great-uncle, teacher and friend.

Translated by A. Schimmelpenninck, edited by F. Kouwenhoven.

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\(^2\) The Chinese name for Holland is *Helan*, which literally means ‘Lotus-Orchid’. Dai Xiaolian is currently in Holland on the invitation of the CHIME Foundation, to give concerts and lectures and to study the collection of guqin scores of the late Professor Robert van Gulik, some of whose transcriptions are now kept at the Leiden Sinology Institute.
AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON

Shuochang
(Narrative Singing)

HELEN REES
(University of Pittsburgh)

'Shuochang' is a generic term for a wide variety of genres of storytelling and narrative singing in China. The author briefly discusses some definitions of the term and provides the reader with a comprehensive bibliography of Western-language publications on musical genres of shuochang.

The two characters which make up the word shuochang 说唱 literally mean 'speak' and 'sing', and put together are defined by the standard mainland work A Chinese-English Dictionary (Beijing: Commercial Press, 1979) as 'a genre of popular entertainment consisting mainly of talking and singing'. However, the proportion of talking to singing can vary: among the 350 genres listed as 'current' by Shuochang yishu jianshi 说唱艺术简史 (Beijing: Wenhua yishu chubanshe, 1988), some are all essentially 'talk', such as xiangsheng 相声, while most have some mixture of the two. A second term, used in many mainland works since 1949, is quyi 曲艺. This is defined by the same dictionary as 'folk art forms including ballad singing, storytelling, comic dialogues, clapper talks, cross talks etc'. Often these two terms are used interchangeably: the first sentence of the preface to Shuochang yishu jianshi, for example, reads, 'Quyi is a narrative art depending on talking and singing; it is essentially a shuochang art which tells a story'. This brings in an important feature generally associated with shuochang: there is frequently a strong narrative element, although the plot is only described with minimal use of gestures, not acted out as in an opera. Like opera, and unlike folksongs, many of the shuochang genres were created by professionals, often illiterate, earning a living from it; again, unlike most folksongs, in those genres which use singing, a musical instrument is usually added as accompaniment. Thus it can be seen that a very wide variety of genres arises under these two common umbrella terms.

These are by no means the only terms used to refer to such genres: another common one is shuoshu 说书.1 Terminology in Western-language publications is no more

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1 E.g. in the article "Ting xiazi shuoshu." 听瞎子说书 (Listening to the blind storytellers) by Guan Guan 桓 (Minguo Quyi 5(1981):77-8). It is also a word I heard frequently employed by local ex-
standardized: in the bibliography which follows, the following English translations of the various Chinese terms will be found: ‘narrative arts’, ‘ballads’, ‘storytelling’, ‘popular narrative’, ‘oral recitals’, ‘folk songs’, ‘songs’ and ‘singing-narrative’. This is in addition to specialized Chinese names and English translations for individual genres.

The bibliography below is intended to be as comprehensive as possible a reference tool to Western-language publications on current and recently current musical genres of shuochang. Thus purely spoken genres, and those which died out more than a century ago, are excluded. Despite the frequent inclusion by mainland scholars of Fujianese nanguan 南管 in the category of shuochang, since this bibliography is of works mainly by authors working in the West, and many scholars outside China view nanguan as an anomaly which does not fit readily into the shuochang classification, it too has been omitted. Coverage is of books, articles and book reviews published before January 1991, and is not limited to purely ‘scholarly’ items. In the case of theses and dissertations, where these have been published, only the published version is given.

Chinese authors are listed under the form of romanization used for their names in their publications; in the annotations, romanization is according to pinyin. This includes all place-names except Hong Kong, Taipei and Peking. Characters for names and terms follow their romanized form on their first occurrence under an author’s entry. For works in languages other than English, the language is noted. Entries it was not possible to examine are left without annotation; book reviews too are not annotated.

practitioners in Changsha, Hunan Province, to describe performances in teahouses before the Cultural Revolution of Changsha Tanci 弹词, a genre with instrumental accompaniment.
Blader, Susan.
Focuses on a fifty-volume text of Longju gongian 龙图公案 from the Fu Sau-nien Rare Book Library of the Academia Sinica, Taiwan. The story was created by Shi Yukun 石玉昆, a singer of sidishu 子弟书, and the author considers this version to be a transcription of an oral performance, and possibly a changben 唱本. Although this article emphasizes textual problems rather than musical input, a description of Shi’s performance style is included. Good endnotes function as bibliography, and two appendices give samples of the Chinese text and a table of the five extant versions. Romanization is Wade-Giles, and characters follow their romanizations.

Account of one-year field-trip to Peking, Tianjin and Suzhou and of interviews and other fieldwork conducted with various quyi 曲艺 artists from all over China. A useful picture of how such work could be organized at that time in China. 4 photos. Romanization is pinyin, and characters follow their romanizations.

Chen, Chung-hsien.

Hrdlicka, Zdenek.

Detailed study of dagushu 大鼓书 from Chinese writings and the author’s own fieldwork 1950-4. Includes history, structure and performance practice. Useful in that it includes genres other than jingyun dagu 京韵大鼓. Plentiful musical information, and lengthy excerpts are romanized and translated. Many amplifying footnotes and a separate bibliography. Romanization is Wade-Giles and there is a glossary of characters at the back.

Hrdlickova, Venceslava (Vena).
Overview of nature and social background of storytelling, with sections on prompt-books, training of storytellers and their creative methods. Extensive use of Chinese sources, well documented in footnotes. Musical information is scanty. Romanization is Wade-Giles, with character list at the end.

Considers from extant Chinese sources and the author’s own fieldwork the system of apprenticeship, relationship of written materials to oral literature, existence of jiaoben 脚本 and the guild organization. Takes examples from genres all over eastern China. Useful introduction, with good bibliographical references in footnotes. Romanization is Wade-Giles, with character list at the end.
1966  
*Činti Vypravěci a Pevci Balad.* (Chinese narrators and sung ballads) 

1968  
"The Chinese Storytellers and Singers of Ballads: Their Performances 
and Storytelling Techniques." *Transactions of the Asiatic Society 
of Japan.* 3rd series, 10:97-115. 
The result of fieldwork during 1950-4 in Peking, describes currency 
and social context of *qíyí*曲艺 forms, training and performance style. 
Important because much information came directly from the 
performers, and very few accounts of this period exist. Footnotes 
provide a useful bibliography. Characters are given for names of 
people; romanization is Wade-Giles.

Liu, Chun-Jo.  
1975  
Account of five-week trip to Peking and the circumstances of 
collection of eight genres, followed by text, romanization and 
translation of one excerpt from each. Romanization is mostly 
pinyin.

Pan, Huizhu.  
1988  
*Innovation within Tradition: The Tanci (Chinese Suzhou Narrative 
Music) Style of Xu Lizian.* M.A. thesis, Music Department, 
University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

Pian, Rulan Chao.  
1976  
"The Peking Drum Song, ‘Tzu Chi Listening to the Ch’ in.’ 子期听琴.” 
In *Articles on Asian Music: Festschrift for Dr. Chang Sa-hun.* N.p.: 
The Korean Musicological Society. 
Introduction gives background to drum song (*jingyun dagu* 京韵大鼓.) 
genre and describes performance practice. Most of this article is a 
translation and partial transcription of this item. The complete 
Chinese text is also supplied. Footnotes give basic bibliography. 
Romanization is Wade-Giles.

1978  
"The Courtesan’s Jewel Box--A Musical Transcription." *Chinoperl 
Papers* 8:161-206. 
Transcription of *danxian* 单弦 piece, “Du Shiniang” 杜十娘, from a 
1962 recording. Preceded by informative explanation of how the 
transcription was made, and author gives romanization, characters and 
translation under the notes. Endnotes give useful bibliography on 
problems of transcription and on *danxian*. Romanization is National 
Romanization.

1980a  
"The Use of Music as a Narrative Device in the Medley Song: 
Brief introduction to history of *danxian* genre and origin of its tunes 
precedes musical analysis of the piece transcribed in *Chinoperl* 8. 
Endnotes function as bibliography. Romanization is National 
Romanization.

1980b  
"Feng Yeu Guei Jou." 风雨归舟 -- ‘Boat Return in the Rain.’ A 
Transcription with Commentary." *Journal of Far Eastern 

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2 A Korean publication; the Korean title is 东方学志.
Transcription from a 1962 recording of a short piece of jingyun dagu, with a discussion of the musical structure and correlation between linguistic tones and melody, and speech rhythm and musical rhythm. Footnotes function as useful bibliography. Romанизation is National Romанизation.

Translation of autobiography of illiterate Peking drum song (jingyun dagu) singer Zhang Culfeng 张萃凤, ghosted and amplified by journalist Liu Fang 刘芳. Includes account of the social condition of singers in the 1920s and 1930s, and of Zhang's career. Translator examines in preface the trustworthiness of the account, and Zhang's student Kate Stevens gives her side of their relationship and some historical context in an afterword. Important as the only autobiographical account in English, 6 photos; preface gives a brief bibliography. Pian's romанизation is National Romанизation; Stevens' is pinyin, and characters are given.

Discusses erenzhuan 二人转, which features simultaneous singing, dancing and story telling. Most of the essay consists of a detailed description and discussion of all aspects of the form as exemplified in the item "Sister Yang No. 8 goes for a spring outing" 姐姐唱二人转. The text of this is translated in the appendix. Musical examples and extensive footnotes. Romанизation is National Romанизation, with a character glossary.

This is a transcription of the Suzhou tanci 苏州弹词 piece "Ba xian shang shou" 八仙上寿, as sung in a 1965 recording by Lui Tsun-yuen, presently a faculty member at UCLA. A brief introduction explains what a kaipian 开篇 is and refers the reader to an earlier Chinoperl article for more information on this genre. The characters, a romанизation of the Suzhou dialect in the International Phonetic Alphabet and an English translation are all supplied. It would have been helpful to have had information on the performer and about the availability of the recording. Romанизation is National Romанизation in the introduction and IPA with numerical tone markings for the Suzhou dialect.

Prusiek, Jaroslav.
Description of history, verse forms and plots of the form zhuishu 踏点书, based on a Chinese study, Henan Zhiishu 河南踏点书, by Zhang Changgong 张长河, published in 1951. Little mention of the music, but comments on social context and performance practice. Deals mainly with texts and plots. Footnotes function as bibliography. Romанизation is Wade-Giles, and characters are listed at the back.

92
Rebollo-Sborgi (Ferguson), Francesca.
1988  *Dualistic Relationships in Northern Chinese Narrative Arts.*
Ph.D. dissertation, Music Department, University of Washington.
Examines four forms of *quyi* 曲艺 commonly found in Tianjin; the result of one year’s fieldwork while affiliated to Nankai University in 1986. Discusses the social environment of narrative arts in Tianjin and the interaction of delivery style and textual message. Much useful information, with plentiful photographs, transcriptions and texts given. Romanization is *pinyin*, with extensive character glossary.


Shadick, Harold.
Amid a diary of cultural events, two pages are devoted to an account of the *Zhongguo beifang quyi xueyuan* 中国北方曲艺学校 (School for the Traditional Vocal Arts in N. China) newly opened in Tianjin, its curriculum and facilities. Not intended as a scholarly article, but a rare account, albeit anecdotal, of modern training methods. Romanization is *pinyin*, and characters are included in the text.

Shih, Hwa-fu.

Stevens, Catherine (Kate).
This dissertation, based on four years’ fieldwork as a student of the *jingyun dagu* 京剧大鼓 performer Zhang Cuifeng 张翠凤 in Taiwan and later research, covers written and discographical sources and how to locate them, training, performance practice and literary techniques of performers, the biography of the most famous, Liu Baoquan 刘宝全 against the historical context, and one piece, “Changban po” 长坂坡 (Slopes of Changban), is analyzed in detail. An appendix volume contains 22 photos, translation of a further piece, a character-finding list, footnotes, exhaustive bibliography and a tape. The dissertation is very well organized and an excellent reference tool; the major inconvenience is that publishers are not consistently given in the bibliography. It is inevitably influenced by the fact that most data had to be collected among a few exiles in Taiwan, to which the genre is not native. Romanization is National Romanization.

Report on an interview with five members of the troupe; discussion of troupe, recent changes in text and musical accompaniment, impact of the Cultural Revolution and establishment of the Peking Arts Academy to institutionalize training. Political controls underplayed. Romanization is Wade-Giles.

Most accessible overview in English of different types of the genre from all over China, their subject-matter and musical structure. Brief bibliography. Romanization is Wade-Giles.

1982
Chronicle of events during seven-month trip to Peking and Tianjin in 1981-2; useful tips on technical recording and problems of etiquette: a good picture of the political and practical problems of being a foreign fieldworker in China in those days. Romanization is pinyin.

1983
Text in characters and English translation of one short pattettale (Shandong kuashi 山東快书) as performed by Zhang Lijun 张丽君 in Taipei, 1960. Followed by brief biographical information on Zhang and a discussion of changes in the piece as found in the mainland today. Romanization is pinyin and characters are mostly simplified.

1990
“The Slopes of Changban, a Beijing Drumsong in the Liu Style.”
Chinese text and annotated English translation of “On the Slopes of Changban” as sung by Zhang Cuifeng, pupil of the ‘King of Drumsingers’, Liu Baoquan, with informative introduction on Liu, etc. Extensive footnotes. Romanization is pinyin, and characters follow their romanizations.

Tsao, Pen-yeh.
1976
Overview of textual and musical features of Suzhou tanci 萧州弹词, with discussion of some ‘schools’ (diaopai 调派), performance practice and formal structure of music. List of records and tapes; brief bibliography; appendix gives partial transcription of three examples. Romanization is Wade-Giles, and characters are given in the text.

1986

1988
Based mainly on secondary sources and recordings, this study was originally an M.A. thesis. It documents the history of Suzhou tanci, components of performance and singers’ training, and includes 12 transcriptions and analyses of Suzhou dialect and of texts and music. A major focus is the relationship between speech tones and melody. Well organized, with good footnotes and bibliography and a thorough glossary of characters. One photo. Romanization is Wade-Giles.

1989
Following a general introduction and historical overview of storytelling, systematic treatment of musical structures and textual and linguistic features in a variety of genres. Bibliography; romanization is pinyin, with character glossary.
Walls, Jan W.
1977
Description of literary and musical features of *kuabanshu* 快板书, including the technique of the accompanying bamboo clappers. A sample post-1949 tale is given in characters, romanization and translation, and a few traditional verses by three performers precede the main part of the article. 2 photos; one musical transcription by Bell Yung; endnotes function as brief bibliography. Romanization is *pinyin*, and characters, mostly simplified, follow their romanization.

Walm, Nora.
1958
Personal, anecdotal account of a blind performer from Hebei before 1949 (genre uncertain), his performances in a rich family’s home, wide-ranging travels in the course of his work and persecution by the government after 1949. Author helped him arrange stories to music; no concrete details on this or any musical aspect. Romanization is Wade-Giles.

Wang, Hong (translated by Antoinette Schimmelpenninck).
1990
“A Collector of Narrative Song Reports on the Big Anthology.”
*Chime* 2:43-51.
Account by fieldworker from the Jiangsu Province volume of the “Anthology of Chinese Quyi Music” currently in preparation. Discusses the organization of the project and practical and methodological problems encountered. A valuable insider’s view. 4 photos; informative endnotes. Romanization is *pinyin*.

Whitaker, K.P.K.
1972
“A Cantonese Song Entitled ‘Creoy Keok Lrio Aa Gao.’”
Considers three variant texts of this *nanyin* 南音 piece and problems of authorship. Despite reference to a Hong Kong Radio broadcast, the treatment is almost exclusively textual, and there is no discussion of the music. Excellent footnotes give sources and bibliography. Romanization is National Romanization for Mandarin and Barnett/Simon for Cantonese. Chinese characters follow their romanization.

Wivell, Charles J.
1975
Examines several narrative genres against the work by Parry and Lord; concludes that most Chinese forms fall into the pseudo-oral, semi-literate category, and that a genuine oral tradition is largely defunct. Important as one of the few articles to relate Chinese genres to Western genres and theories. Endnotes function as bibliography, largely of Chinese and Japanese language materials. Romanization is Wade-Giles.

Yung, Bell.
1976
“Reconstructing a Lost Performance Context: A Field Work Experiment.”
*Chinoperl Papers* 6:120-43.
Describes experiment in recreating former context for performance of the *nun jen* 南音 kind of Cantonese narrative (Mandarin: *nanyin*) by organizing performances by the surviving
blind singer Dou Wun 杜焕 in a Hong Kong tea-house. Includes
history of genre, biographical sketch of the singer and a
description of the literary and musical aspects of the form. Also
exposition of the rationale behind and difficulties involved in the
field work. 4 photos; 1 musical transcription; useful footnotes
and a list of pieces recorded as a result of this project.
Romanization is Wade-Giles for Mandarin and Wang Li system
for Cantonese (as set out in Guangzhouhua Jianzhuo 广州话简说,
Peking 1957). Characters follow their romanizations on first
appearance.

1982-3  “Popular Narrative in the Pleasure Houses of the South.” Chinoperl
Main part of article is transcription and translation of the text of
the baan ngaan 坊姐 (Mandarin: banyan) piece “Rotten Big
Drum” 烂大鼓, with analysis of its structure. Preceded by
overview of five kinds of Cantonese popular narrative and
biographical sketch of singer Dou Wun. 2 photos; footnotes and
list of works cited. Romanization is Wade-Giles for Mandarin
and Yale system for Cantonese.

Papers 14:61-75.
This is a translation of a report entitled “Guangzhou Shiniang”
广州师娘 and published in Guangdong Quyi Ziliao 广东曲艺资料
printed by the Guangdong Quyi Troupe in June 1980. The report
was based on an interview of May 18, 1963, with the blind female
singer Wen Liang 溫麗容 and written up by Chen Binghan 陈炳翰. It
is a rare autobiographical account of the blind singers’ training and
working conditions, rather overlaid with political rhetoric and with
little direct musical information. Translator adds useful footnotes on
sources and other related articles. Romanization is pinyin; the first
appearance of a romanized term is followed by the characters, mostly
in simplified form.
SEVEN YOUNG COMPOSERS MEET IN HOLLAND

A Historic Concert

FRANK KOUWENHOVEN
(Leiden, The Netherlands)

In April 1991, seven young Chinese composers met in Holland for an important concert. All of them had new works commissioned and performed by the New Ensemble in Amsterdam. Some of the composers had not seen each other for over six years, not since they left the People’s Republic of China to further their studies in the West. The new pieces of Xu Shuya, Qu Xiaosong, Tan Dun, Chen Qigang, He Xuntian, Mo Wuping and Guo Wenjing were enthusiastically received by the Dutch audience. The music provided very interesting insights into the current diversity of styles and directions among Chinese composers in the mainland.

The New Ensemble is one of Europe’s most distinguished ensembles of contemporary music. It was founded in 1980 by some twenty musicians who co-operated in a theater music project led by the Dutch composer and jazz musician Theo Loevendie. Loevendie wrote music for a somewhat unusual combination of winds, strings, percussion and plucked instruments - harp, guitar and mandolin. The sound of the ensemble appealed so much to the players that they decided to form a permanent group and build up a new repertoire for this specific combination.

INTEREST IN CHINESE MUSIC
In the course of the 1980s, the New Ensemble rapidly established its reputation in contemporary music circles with excellent performances at important European music festivals, like those of Donaueschingen, Strasbourg, Huddersfield and Venice. The Ensemble is particularly known for its adventurous programming. It has given various concerts dedicated to the works of a single composer, such as György Kurtág, Mauricio Kagel and Pierre Boulez, and produced compact discs with works by Franco Donatoni, Brian Ferneyhough and Theo Loevendie. A new compact disc, with the contemporary Chinese pieces played in Holland in April of this year, will be issued in the course of 1992.

The ensemble’s interest in Chinese music started in August 1988, when its artistic director, Joël Bons, visited the Far East. In that year, the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM) held its annual festival in Hong Kong and presented many new works by Chinese composers.
SPICY DISHES

Joël Bons was impressed by the high quality of the Chinese compositions he heard and travelled on to the People’s Republic to talk with composers in Beijing and Shanghai. Amongst others, he met Mo Wuping, a young artist who had just finished his music studies at the Central Conservatory in Beijing, and who introduced him to many of his colleagues.

Bons was fascinated, not only by the musical achievements of China’s new generation of composers - which had passed almost unnoticed in the West - but also by the general ambiance of life in the Chinese capital. He vividly recollects the good time he had with Mo Wuping in Beijing.

‘One day, together with Mo’s wife, we went by bicycle to the Temple of Heaven. On our way there, we stopped at some small music shops. For thirty cents, Mo Wuping bought me a pocket score of the First String Quartet by his friend Tan Dun. We roamed around, took pictures and bantered. His wife spoke only seven words of English, Mo just two or three. Together, they lived at the Conservatory in a shed with a tiny little window - a mere stone cabin, without water or kitchen or anything. China is poor, the West is rich, and I felt a braggart. But Mo Wuping generously paid for the entrance fee to the park, for the soft drinks, for the underground, even for a delicious meal in a Sichuan Restaurant with tasty, spicy dishes and - not to be missed - a very special fish-head soup. Back home again, we copied each others’ music tapes and Mo sang folk songs from Hunan, the province where he was born - with a vigorous and passionate voice, unrestrained and heartrending.’

CAMPUS ATMOSPHERE

Joël Bons’ trip to China marked the beginning of an interesting project. Two years later, Mo Wuping, Tan Dun and five other young Chinese composers visited Holland to attend the rehearsals of a concert in which their new works were to be performed by the New Ensemble. The concert took place on Monday, 2 April, 1991, in Paradiso in Amsterdam and was repeated later that week in various concert halls in Utrecht, Rotterdam and Groningen.

Merely to watch the composers arrive and meet each other in Amsterdam was a moving experience. Tan Dun and Qu Xiaosong came by plane from New York. For the first time in many years, they saw some of their former classmates from the Central Conservatory: Chen Qigang - now living in Paris - and Guo Wenjing - again living in Beijing, after a stay of several years in Sichuan, in southern China. The conservatory campus atmosphere was perhaps too vividly re-created by having all seven composers - plus one soloist singer for the concert - share a single room in the very noisy Leidse Plein Hotel. Originally, much better accommodation had been arranged, but something had gone wrong with the arrangement. The composers’ reactions to their humble living quarters varied from light amusement to downright indignation, reflecting their very different personalities. Chen Qigang’s spontaneous outcry ‘Incroyable!’ was probably justified, and for subsequent nights the artists were invited to stay at the homes of musicians and friends of the New Ensemble, which worked out very well.

During the day, the seven composers could be seen roaming around Amsterdam, trying Mexican, Italian and Indonesian food, taking pictures of each other and excitedly buying Dutch newspapers with their own biographies in them - the concert of new Chinese music had been well publicised and even led to a brief television appearance by Tan Dun and Mo Wuping. A public meeting with the composers in ‘De IJsbreker’ in Amsterdam on 1 April attracted much attention. In the press, the seven were summarily announced as ‘young Chinese Beethovens’ or - some of them - as courageous young artists who had fled the 1989 bloodshed in Beijing, which was not true. Much attention was given to their musical education and to the surprising fact that
most of them had not come into contact with any Western classical or contemporary music before 1978. How could they have assimilated Western influences so fast? was the ever-returning question of Dutch journalists. At the 'Studio Korte Leidse' the composers listened to the New Ensemble rehearsals, under the baton of conductor Ed Spanjaard, and frequently added their own useful comments and requests. Beyond that, it was a matter of waiting for the actual concerts to come - a nerve-racking business for some, mere routine for others.

Guo Wenjing and He Xuntian (from Sichuan) are the only two composers of the group who still live in China. For them, a ten-day stay in the West was hardly enough to see anything of Europe, let alone to get properly acclimatized to the rhythms of Western life. All the others had come to the West in previous years, to study music and to learn more about contemporary developments in Western art. That was also true for Mo Wuping, who started his music studies in Paris late last year.

GROWN AWAY FROM EACH OTHER
The meeting of the seven in Holland was probably a moment suprême in the history of Chinese contemporary music. True enough, in the past few years, there had already been a few performances of new Chinese music in Europe, even a whole festival dedicated to Chinese avant-garde in Glasgow in 1988, organized by BBC producer Mike Newman.
What made things different this time was the fact that the seven composers had grown away from each other stylistically. It was fascinating to compare their works, especially because most of them had originally covered much the same musical ground while still in China in the early 1980s.
The Dutch concerts enabled the composers, perhaps for the first time, to gain some impression of the major directions in which Chinese contemporary music is moving. Most of them have now matured and seem to feel confident about their own style. At the same time, all of them now express essentially different things in their music and show distinctly different approaches to the technical and artistic problems of musical composition. The pieces they presented in Amsterdam offer a good sampling of what has happened in the field of Chinese avant-garde music in recent times.

What a striking contrast, compared with only five or six years ago! In the early 1980s, all these composers started off with brief periods of Western-inspired romanticism and enthusiastic imitations of 20th-century Western giants like Bartók, Stravinsky and Webern. Nearly all of them eventually (re-)discovered the power of Chinese folk and ritual music and incorporated elements of it in their own music. In spite of the differences, several pieces from the mid-1980s - like He Xuntian's 'Sounds of Nature', Qu Xiaosong's 'Mong Dong', Tan Dun's 'On Taoism' and Guo Wenjing's 'Ancient Coffins' - were closely linked because they all borrowed from folk and ritual music. Each of these early works gave listeners the impression that the music arose directly from the Chinese soil - from the rumbling sounds and hidden, eruptive forces inside the belly of Mother Earth, so to speak. No such thing could be said of the music that sounded in Amsterdam. Those who were already familiar with some of the earlier works by the seven composers, had to renew their acquaintance with them after listening to the very different new works that were premiered by the New Ensemble.

SOUND ECONOMY
Where had the rough-hewn and frequently euphoric Qu Xiaosong of the old days gone - the composer of 'Mong Dong', the piece for which he is still best known in Beijing? The new work that Qu presented in Amsterdam, 'Yi', for flute, clarinet, piano, percussion, violin, viola and bass, was at once the most quiet and the most radical work of the whole concert: an almost 'empty' score, marking space only by brief and
isolated single tones and sporadic conjunctions of two or three instruments. The music was an essay in sonic economy and, most of the time, was so quiet that the audience could hear their own heartbeats. The ‘climaxes’ were marked only by two loud glissandi in flute and clarinet, and later by a single drum stroke, much like an exclamation mark in a silent movie. A very bold piece. Qu Xiaosong pursues the quiet atmosphere which he first explored in his work for piano and orchestra Huan from 1985 - with long, sustained chords as a basis - and which he later sought to condense in some of his chamber music, like Y aya, for six musicians (1990).

By contrast, He Xuntian had probably altered his style the least of all the composers represented in the concert. The Sichuan-born composer continues his experiments with quietly shifting sound layers in his new piece ‘Phonism’, for flute, oboe, clarinet, mandolin, guitar, harp, string trio and percussion. The procedure is basically the same as in some of his older orchestral works, such as ‘Four Dreams’, for erhu and orchestra (1987) and ‘Telepathy’ (1988). The music would seem to be rather indebted to Ligeti, but the composer - who still lives in China - says that he has heard very little of Ligeti’s music and that the similarity is probably coincidental.

In an attempt to use the space of the concert stage creatively, He Xuntian divided the players of his new piece into four groups, three of which played on platforms at different heights. Musically, it seemed to make little difference, but it certainly added to the visual impact of the performance. The music seems to consist of a single, long drawn-out breath; just like in ‘Four Dreams’, it rises and falls slowly, all tension depending on the density of the layered texture.

A very terse piece, which can easily be destroyed when performed without sufficient concentration. In the rendering of the New Ensemble, a moment of sheer magic came towards the end of the work, when the players accompany their own instrumental parts by soft singing. The unisono melody contains mostly augmented fourths, which seem to have become He Xuntian’s trademark.
During the rehearsals. From left to right: conductor Ed Spanjaard, Shi Kelong (back view) and three composers, Mo Wuping, Xu Shuya and He Xuntian.

Xu Shuya left Shanghai for Paris in 1989 after having finished several compositions inspired by autumn. 'Chute en Automne', for flute, clarinet, mandolin, guitar, harp, piano, percussion, violin, viola and bass, is one of the pieces which he wrote while studying at the Paris Conservatory. Again, it refers to autumn, but this piece turned out to be the most abstract work of the whole concert. Compared to his earlier works, which seem to create images of landscapes or express a subdued, melancholy mood, 'Chute en Automne' appears to focus entirely on the interplay of delicate timbral and rhythmical effects, free from extramusical associations. It is an extremely complicated piece, quite demanding on its performers. One wonders how much of his previous 'Chinese style' the composer has had to sacrifice in the process of mastering such a sophisticated Western technique. Repeated listening reveals how carefully and beautifully each gesture in the music is balanced. 'Chute' compares favourably to Xu's earlier 'autumn' pieces, written in China, which contain some imaginative moments but are also too dependent on Penderecki, Ligeti and Stravinsky.

A HUNAN FOLK SONG
Mo Wuping, now a colleague of Xu Shuya in Paris, attracted attention with his unorthodox rendering of a Hunan folk song in Fan 1, for voice, flute, oboe, clarinet, mandolin, guitar, harp, percussion, violin and bass, in which Mo himself sang the solo part. Lasting a bare five minutes, it was the shortest work of the concert. The singing may have impressed Western listeners as very traditional, but actually had some overtones of Chinese pop music. The contrast of the rough-hewn song with the delicate instrumental effects that preceded it was remarkable. The music was as direct and touching as its simple programme, which could be summarized in the composer's own words as 'searching for the spiritual in daily things'.
The only work not actually a première (except for Holland) was Tan Dun's 'In the Distance', for piccolo, harp and big drum. The piece dates from 1988, and effectively contrasts three instruments which are mutually very different in sound and pitch range.
The composer skillfully combines or alternates fast atonal sequences with soft wavered glissandi reminiscent of traditional Asian music - one of the many ways in which he creates 'distance' between the instruments. The composer himself played the drum part and added to the visual aspect of the performance. Some listeners judged the piece to be too theatrical or too much the work of a musical handyman, but one can only admire the sincerity, playfulness and classical lucidity of the score.

Possibly, the highlights of the concert were Chen Qigang’s beautiful, romantic rendering of a poem by Su Shi, ‘Poème Lyrique II’, and Guo Wenjing’s straightforward and very percussive She Huo, inspired by an ancient rural ritual to thank the gods.

Chen Qigang, a former student of Olivier Messiaen and no doubt one of the most important talents of the younger generation, surprised the audience with his sensitive and brilliant setting of a classical Chinese text about loneliness and separation. The work was written for voice, flute, oboe, clarinet, mandolin, guitar, harp, percussion and string quartet (including bass). The vocal part, performed by the baritone Shi Kelong, skilfully employs techniques of Peking Opera falsetto singing and declamation, but at the same time creates an atmosphere of Western, classical operatic grandeur. The purely instrumental passages frequently take over the vocal line to expand on it and to continue its argument, which results in a ‘singing’ quality of the music throughout. Chen Qigang has never grown away from romanticism and eschews no strong sentiments, but his treatment of the vocal line is strikingly original and his command of the instrumental resources entirely convincing.

A VARIETY OF CYMURALS
A bigger contrast with Chen’s sophisticated poem than Guo Wenjing’s She Huo is hardly imaginable. This Sichuan-born composer is fond of folk music and of percussive rhythms, and recreates the sounds and music of popular peasant ritual in an ensemble of a very unusual nature: flute, clarinet, two mandolins, four percussionists, piano, and a string quartet (including bass), the stringed instruments having an unusual tuning. In all his previous works, Guo Wenjing consciously took inspiration from his great Western examples, Shostakovich (notably in his Cantata Shu dao nan, 1987) and Bartók. In She Huo, Guo Wenjing has come into his own. He has assimilated Bartók’s love for primitive tunes without resorting to imitations of Bartókian melodic contours, and no reminiscences of Shostakovich can be detected in this work. The music is rough, cheeky and very direct.

It was an unconventional conclusion to an avant-garde concert. Guo’s work confused some critics (‘We know too little about Chinese traditional music to judge this piece properly’) but led others to remark that the only revolution which has so far turned out to be successful in China is apparently a musical one.

The pieces of the seven composers won the critical acclaim of most Dutch reviewers. For the New Ensemble, it was their first acquaintance with new Chinese music. The members of the ensemble were able to cope with most of the technical demands, although it turned out to be very difficult to bang the Chinese cymbals in Guo Wenjing’s piece - the composer had brought along a variety of Chinese percussion instruments himself - exactly in accordance with the score. The ensemble was enthusiastic enough to plan an encore of this concert next year, as well as an extra concert of other Chinese avant-garde works. Preparations are underway for a big festival of new Chinese music, which is to take place in Holland in the course of April 1992. One or two symphony orchestras, various chamber ensembles and soloists will participate in the festival, which will be jointly organized by the Rotterdam Art Council, De IJsbreker in Amsterdam, the CHIME Foundation, and others.
LECTURES ON CHINESE MUSIC AT

SEM, Oakland, 1990

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From 7 to 11 November, 1990, the annual meetings of the American Musicological Society (AMS), the Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM) and the Society for Music Theory (SMT) were jointly held at the Hyatt Regency Convention Center in Oakland, California (USA). More than one thousand music scholars attended the meeting in Oakland, where nearly four hundred papers and workshops were presented - a meeting of truly American proportions. Some twenty reports and papers dealt with Chinese music. The author, who had hoped to attend them all, discovered some of the disadvantages of a mammoth meeting.

The AMS, SEM and SMT decided to join hands in a music meeting of unprecedented dimensions, and chose sunny San Francisco as the ideal site for a conference in wintertime. An optional outing to the vineyards north of the city and the splendid scenery of Muir Woods, Sausalito, was included in the programme. The bright sunshine must have tempted many participants of the conference to explore the Bay Area extensively, instead of sitting inside all day.

Bringing together musicologists and ethnomusicologists was, of course, an excellent idea, but the overloaded and haphazardly arranged programme made it impossible for scholars to attend even all the lectures within the compass of their own field of research. On one occasion five different sessions dealing with Schoenberg and serial music were held at the same time. Various sessions in which Chinese music was discussed were also held simultaneously, leaving the audience no choice but to miss part of the presentations. A meeting of such huge dimensions is as yet unthinkable in Europe, even if the European Seminar in Ethnomusicology (ESEM) and various chapters of the ICTM were to join forces in organizing one. Hard to say whether that is a pity or not. The great advantage of the Oakland meeting was that almost everybody with interesting musicological work in progress turned up and could be met in person - at least, theoretically; the crowd was so big that it sometimes took people several days to trace each other. Some only came to know of each others’ presence through the programme book or the list of participants.

REFRESHING EXPERIENCE
True enough, many scholars must have felt tempted to slip away from sessions dedicated to their own field, occasionally, to listen to presentations on completely
foreign subjects - probably a very refreshing experience, and one that is only possible in a meeting on the scale of the Oakland conference. Musicologists stepping into rooms where ethnomusicology was discussed: surely, that must have provided very interesting insights to some people. One musicologist, after hearing one of the plenary lectures, complemented his colleagues in ethnomusicology for ‘finally taking up the subject of Western pop music’ and was told that ethnomusicologists had in fact been studying Western pop music for some twenty years. Such discoveries alone were probably worth the effort of combining AMS and SMT with SEM. Another positive consequence of bringing together a thousand freaks of musical scholarship was that it attracted over fifty commercial publishers of music books, records, videos and computer programmes, who came to Oakland to present their stock in what was probably one of the the largest exhibitions of scholarly materials on music in the world. An ideal occasion for music shopping - for those who could afford it. At times, walking around the exhibition was a pleasant relief from the overburdened programme of lectures, workshops and demonstrations, and the exhibition hall turned out to be an ideal place for meeting people.

During the conference, more than twenty papers on Chinese music were presented, most of which will be briefly discussed. (Summaries of the lectures, as presented below, were mostly taken from the conference book of abstracts compiled by Gerard Béhague et al.)

**DUNHUANG MANUSCRIPT**

One session during the first afternoon (8 November) dealt with Problems and Methods in Historical and Historiographical Research of Chinese Music and was organized by Professor Bell Yung of the University of Pittsburgh, USA. It featured papers by Rulan Chao Pian, Joseph Sui-ching Lam, Robert C.Provine, Bell Yung and Han Kuo-huang (the last one read by someone else because the author was absent).

Professor Rulan Chao Pian (Harvard University, USA) discussed *The Study of the Tenth-Century Dunhuang Musical Manuscript*. In her report, she summarized the efforts of the numerous scholars who have tried to explicate the so-called ‘Dunhuang Pipa Notation’, a tenth century manuscript containing what is now generally recognized as the tablature notation for the four-string lute, pipa. Discovered only at the very beginning of the twentieth century in the Dunhuang caves of Western China, this body of musical material, totalling twenty-five pieces, has aroused intense interest among scholars from China, Japan, and the West. While the notational symbols are identical with those still used in present-day Japanese court music, *Gagaku*, they have so far not been found in any other musical sources in China. As tablature notation, only the plucking methods and stopping positions of the finger-board of the instrument are indicated; the tuning of the strings becomes a major topic of research. Debates also surround additional symbols in the form of small dots and squares placed at the right-hand side of the tablature, which are interpreted variously as indicating beats, ornaments, and techniques of plucking the strings. This musical document is of great interest to scholars in Japan where, besides the identical *Gagaku* scores, several other comparable historical documents dating back much closer in time to the Dunhuang documents exist. It is also of great interest to the historians of Chinese literature because the pieces, each of which has a title, could be related to certain kinds of poetic songs and dances mentioned in Chinese literary and historical sources. Finally, the so-called Dunhuang Caves where the manuscript was discovered are in the extreme Western Gansu Province; its location is of great interest from the point of view of musical transmission between historical China and the Near East.

Joseph Sui-ching Lam (Chinese Univ. of Hong Kong) presented a paper called *In Search of the Niche for the State Sacrificial Music in Chinese Music Historiography*. He pointed out that a reassessment of this subject has become necessary, certainly since the recent reemergence of approximately 700 state sacrificial songs from the
Southern Song (1131-1279) and Ming (1368-1644) dynasties which has provided a wealth of new data. According to Lam, the task of researching these is fraught with problems, because of the widely divergent opinions in China and the West with respect to the interpretation and social context of the music. In his lecture, Lam attacked communist views on state sacrificial music. ‘Unless Chinese music is viewed as a musical culture with distinct but related subdivisions belonging, respectively, to commoners and literati, no commensurate appraisal is possible’, he argued.

CHINESE MUSICAL SOURCES IN KOREA
The paper by Robert Provine (University of Durham, England) was called Relying on Authority: Reading Chinese Musical Sources in Korea. It examined the historical influence of Chinese musical sources in Korea, focussing on an example taken from the fifteenth century when Korean musical scholarship was at a pinnacle. This example concerned the modes used in ritual music (Chinese yayue, Korean aak) in state sacrificial rites. Starting from a classical text of Confucianism, the Zouli, the Koreans fashioned a practical implementation of their interpretation of the meanings of the Chinese modes, taking into account the later commentaries of Song dynasty scholars (e.g. Chen Yang), as well as notated music imported from China (Dachengyue). In the end, the Koreans would appear to have deviated from the classical prescriptions, the Song dynasty theory, and the notated tunes, but the whole enterprise was accomplished in an attitude of effecting something practical which could be said to rely on the authority of the Chinese sources. The working out of the modal system for ritual music (and many other court music topics relating to Chinese precedent) concerned the Korean music theorists for nearly three quarters of a century, culminating in the important 1493 treatise Akhak kwebom. This treatise set the standard for Korean practices, and the 500 years following have seen little alteration in the modes used in sacrificial rites (and indeed may still be heard today at the semi-annual Sacrifice to Confucius). ‘Whether the reconstruction of Chinese musical practice and theory in Korea was a realistic one, is, in itself, not a very important question’, Provine said. ‘After all, we also do not argue about the question whether our European baroque operas were acceptable reconstructions of Greek tragedy.’

INTERPRETING GUQIN MUSIC
Professor Bell Yung’s paper dealt with problems of interpreting guqin tablatures. It was called Preparing a Modern Edition of ‘Niezhenh Assassinates King Han’ from a Fifteenth-Century Notation for the Chinese Seven-String Zither. The peculiar characteristics of the notational system for guqin, which gives detailed instructions of the finger movements but leaves some of the pitches ambiguous and much of the rhythm unspecified, allow and encourage a performer to be flexible and creative. To play a piece from notation, the performer must first conduct a process called dapu, which involves the study of the programmatic content of the composition and the meaning of some of the symbols, the determination of ambiguous pitches, and an imposition of the rhythm, meter, and tempo to the music as implied by other aspects of the notation. Bell Yung discussed in particular the problems involved in preparing a modern edition of Guanglingsan, based upon the tablature notation from the 1425 collection Shenqi Mipu (‘Divine and Precious Notation’), and the result of the dapu process and performance by the qin master Yao Bingyan (1920-1983), with whom Bell Yung studied guqin between 1980 and 1982. Yao’s version deviated from the Shenqi Mipu score both in terms of form (certain parts of the music were left out) and of melodic detail. Bell Yung counted 72 note-changes, of which 38 were based on artistic considerations and a fair number were unintentional or erratic.

The paper by Professor Han Kuo-Huang (Northern Illinois University, USA), Musical Thought and Institutions in Early Twentieth Century China (read by Wei-Hua Zhang)
examined the ideas of Chinese intellectuals about music in the beginning of this century and discussed the impact of musical institutions in the 1920s and 1930s.

FIELD REPORTS & CHINESE IMMIGRANT MUSIC
On Thursday evening, 8 November, the ninth semi-annual meeting of the Association for Chinese Music Research ACMR) was held. There were no full-blown lectures but a number of very useful reports on fieldwork and practical study experiences instead. The following reports were presented. John Myers (Simon’s Rock of Bard College, New Hampshire, USA) - Field Report: Studying pipa with Professor Lin Shicheng of the Central Conservatory of Music (Beijing, Summer 1990). Sau-Yan Chan (Chinese University of Hong Kong) - The initiation of a performing stage: some fieldwork reflections. Antoinet Schimmelpenning (Leiden University, Holland) - Field work report: Collecting folksongs in Southern Jiangsu in 1990. Terrence M. Liu (National Endowment for the Arts - Folk Arts Program) - Chinese Music and Scholarly activity in the USA. Wei-Hua Zhang (Univ. of California, Berkeley) - Chorus: The Most Popular Musical Activity Among the Chinese-Americans in the San Francisco Bay Area. Larry Witzleben (Chinese University of Hong Kong): Instrumental music in Hong Kong Taoist rituals. The only theoretical subject discussed during the evening was presented by Siu-Wah Yu (Harvard University, Cambridge MA): How fixed is a ‘fixed tune’ in Cantonese opera?

Terrence Liu drew attention to the existence of a very rich culture of Chinese music within the United States, which has largely been neglected by American scholars (who prefer to carry out research in China) and ignored by record companies, who are not interested in the music of the Chinese immigrants. According to Liu, this immigrant culture is well worth closer investigation. The performers are not under any political pressure to change or adapt their music, nor is their music influenced by the commercial considerations of the record industry. Although one would expect it to be of considerable interest to ethnomusicologists, so far, very few scholars have attempted to learn more about Chinese-American music. This is also partly due to suspicion on the part of the performers, but Liu argued that this should not be a serious obstacle for ethno-musicologists, who are, after all, trained to do fieldwork under such circumstances. Besides, a whole new generation of Chinese Americans is now emerging which is more open to the curiosity and interest of American scholars and quite willing to co-operate with them in research projects. Liu’s presentation was adequately supplemented by Zhang Weihua’s report on choral activities among Chinese living in the San Francisco Bay area.¹ Later during the Oakland conference, Su de San Zheng (New York University) presented a lecture entitled A Chinese Immigrant Group in New York: Soft Boundaries and Situational Strategies, in which she discussed changes in musical style and the concept of music-making among Chinese immigrants in New York through interaction with their host culture.

THE ORIGIN OF NANGUAN
Friday, 9 November, during a session on Historical Studies in Ethnomusicology, Kyle Heide (Indiana University, Bloomington) presented a lecture called Identifying with Glories Past: Tang Dynasty Music as Rhetoric in Nanguan Music Research. He examined Chinese musicological writings on nanguan, a centuries-old chamber music tradition from southeast China now spread throughout Taiwan and several nations in southeast Asia. One central concern of these writings is the origin of nanguan, and

¹ Elaborate summaries of the papers by John Myers, Terrence Liu and Zhang Weihua were published in the latest issue of the ACMR Newsletter (Vol.4, No.1, Winter, 1991).
many authors attempt to link nanguan with musical genres of the Tang dynasty (618-907AD), a cosmopolitan period of creative achievements in the arts which established distinctive features of Chinese cultural identity for centuries to come. Heide compared historical and iconographical sources relied upon for evidence, the specific features of nanguan instruments and musical pieces highlighted, and the variety of ancient musical forms treated as precursors. Heide's conclusion: the assumption of a connection of nanguan with Tang music, as made in China, is solely based on the way in which the pipa is held in both traditions - horizontally, instead of upright. Other 'evidence' could apply to many other genres of Chinese music as well, also to music which is known not to be related to the Tang at all.

WEN AND WU IN CHINESE MUSIC
In the afternoon, John Myers (Simon's Rock College, USA), during the session on Ethnoaesthetics, presented a paper called Wen and Wu: Applying the Dialectical Aesthetic of Chinese Music. He discussed the wenwu or 'civil-military' division in Chinese music, taking examples from pipa music and drawing major inspiration from Jacques Attali's 'Noise, The Political Economy of Music' (1977). According to Myers, wenwu is only one of many reflections in China of the dialectical concept of yin and yang. This concept incorporates the polarities of passive and active, darkness and light, male and female, and so on. In his writings, Mao Zedong tried to use this polarity to claim a Chinese intellectual precedent for dialectical materialism. In terms of the identity of opposites in the natural world, there is a strong similarity between Western and Chinese notions of polarity, but there is also a notable difference of emphasis, which demands the attention of scholars who try to understand Chinese music.

For over 1500 years, the Chinese scholar's instrument was the qin, a zither so soft it could scarcely be heard. Gradually, a few of the literati also began to use the pipa, a Chinese fretted lute with a much greater dynamic range more suited to expressing the 'military' side of the musical aesthetic. The Hua Collection (1818), which was the first mass-produced edition of solo music for the pipa, helped to establish the legitimacy of solo performance and self-cultivation on instruments other than the venerable qin zither. Myers argued that the study of this collection, which is rich in both aesthetic allusions and musical notation, can serve as a window into the possible relationships between aesthetic categories and compositional structure in Chinese music.

'CANTOPOP' AND TIANANMEN PROTEST MUSIC
Quite another type of 'wen versus wu' was demonstrated on a video by Valerie Samson (San Francisco): Music and Chant of the 1989 Uprising in Beijing, China. Valerie Samson was caught in the middle of the protests while studying in China in 1989. Finding it impossible to continue her studies in the middle of all the excitement she followed most of the demonstrations with her video camera. She witnessed the eve of the 4th of June on Tiananmen Square and kept her camera running for as long as practically possible. From the many tapes she filmed during the 'Beijing Spring' - only a few were lost after being dispatched by diplomatic post - she assembled all the fragments in which music played a part, and presented them at the Oakland conference. Her film gave an impression of the fraternizing role of pop music, and, to a lesser extent, of revolutionary songs, during the demonstrations for freedom and democracy.

Looking again at the images of the 1989 uprising, many people in the audience were deeply moved. From a distance of two years, the atmosphere of fraternity and optimism among the protesters in June 1989 has achieved a special meaning for those who know how the movement ended. Valerie Samson's film gives only a fragmented impression of the impact of music during the democracy protests, but it is a unique document nonetheless.
Joanna Lee (Columbia University, New York, USA) later supplemented this video session with a paper on the political role of 'Cantopop', *The Rise of Pro-Democracy Popular Music in Hong Kong in Response to the Chinese Student Movement 1989*. Cantopop (Cantonese popular music) is Hong Kong's version of commercial urban youth music. Formerly a purely entertainment genre, it has assumed a political motive since the events in China in May-June 1989. An unprecedentedly large number of Hong Kong citizens participated in four day-long pro-democracy rallies between May 20 and May 28. The third of these rallies was a 'Concert for Democracy in China', organized in a similar vein to Live-Aid. More than 150 local stars performed in this politically-charged musical celebration, while 200,000 fans emotionally sang along, waving yellow ribbons. The concert formalized a new genre. Many of these newly-composed songs became overnight chart-toppers. Their lyrics are blatant political commentaries, or pledges to 'free' China. 'All for Freedom', a Cantopop variation on 'We are the World', is unique for its juxtaposition of Putonghua (in the refrain) and Cantonese. It was broadcast in Tian'anmen Square in late May. The hunger-strikers' banners inspired 'Mamma, I've Done Nothing Wrong', while the massacre of June 4 set a darker tone to others. Lee's paper traced the genre's development, measured its 'billboard' popularity, and examined its socio-political implications in a British colony that will become Chinese in 1997.

On the last morning of the Oakland meeting, six papers on Chinese music were read in three simultaneous sessions. A frustrating experience, especially because two papers on the relationship between language and music in two vocal genres of Chinese music were read at the same time! One was by the author of this article, the other by Francesca Rebollo-Sborgi. There was a serious drop in attendance at various sessions on this last day of the conference. Apparently, many people had arranged return flights on Sunday afternoon. The corridors of the conference centre were filled with the bustle of people dragging around luggage and hasty departing, while the various sessions going on inside the lecture rooms were attended by only a handful of loyal supporters—not exactly an inspiring conclusion to this mammoth meeting.

**NARRATIVE SINGING AND FOLK SONG**

In the session on Ethnomusicological Theory, Francesca Rebollo-Sborgi (University of California, Berkeley) talked about *Beijing Drumsong and Tianjin Popular Tunes: A Study in Language-Music Relationships*. The Northern Chinese narrative styles are often characterized as both 'singing while speaking' (because of the inherent 'melodic' character of a given line or phrase) and 'speaking while singing' (because of the manner in which the tonemic contour of the line of text tends to dictate the melodic line). The purpose of Rebollo's paper was to explore the ways in which a balance is achieved between preserving linguistic comprehension and creating a melodically beautiful line in two of the most popular genres in Tianjin: Beijing Drumsong (Jingyun Dagu) and Tianjin Popular Tunes (Tianjin Shidiao).

The language and music in folk songs of Jiangsu Province was discussed in two papers by Antoinet Schimmelpenninck and Frank Kouwenhoven (Leiden, Holland). Interestingly, the relation between speech tones and music in Jiangsu songs is not nearly so evident as in other genres of Chinese vocal music or in folk songs in other parts of China, judging from the results of Schimmelpenninck's research. She developed a new method to investigate the relation between speech tones and pitch and tonal direction in folk melodies with the help of advanced computer analysis. This method may serve to provide a more reliable picture of the complexity of speech and music relationships in general, and may also invoke a critical re-evaluation of the results of earlier studies in this field.

In his paper *The Birth of a Folk Tune in Southern Jiangsu*, Frank Kouwenhoven discussed the Wu area in Jiangsu as a suitable playground for some fundamental
research into the nature of melodic and musical creation. In many of the villages in this region there is only one tune to which most of the local song texts are sung, regardless of their contents: love songs, erotic songs, political songs, dirges, wedding songs, jokes and riddles, all are performed to the same melody. In one of Kouwenhoven's experiments, the singers were confronted with a familiar fragment of text sung to unfamiliar music (in fact music borrowed from remote villages within the same region). The singers were invited to continue the text where the fragment broke off. The results shed some light on the meaning and extent of musicality in a local folk song culture where, on first acquaintance, the texts appear to be of far greater importance than the music.

YELOW RIVER CONCERTO & DIZI MUSIC

L.JaFran Jones (Bowling Green State University) presented a paper called Music in the Ebb and Flow of Political Change: The Yellow River Concerto, in which he attempted to reconstruct the way in which this model concerto was created during the Cultural Revolution. Of the original composers of the Yellow River Concerto, Liu Zhuang is the only one still living in China. In 1989, she was officially requested to remove the Mao tunes from the concerto. Jones discussed Liu Zhuang's personal account of the tensions between social commitment and artistic integrity in China.

Frederic Lau (during the conference still working at the University of Illinois, but now teaching at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo) presented a paper on early-20th-century dizi (bamboo flute) music. His paper was titled Lost in Time. Lau argues that present-day dizi music in China is based largely on a number of regional ensemble styles and not on the dizi music of earlier times. He drew his evidence from interviews with informants and from a careful analytical study of eight collections of dizi music dating from the first half of the 20th century.
NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

The editors of the CHIME Newsletter 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: Amy Catlin (AC), Aleksei Skanavi (ASK), Chen Lei (CL), David Hughes (DH), Dai Ning (DN), François Picard (FP), Huang Bei (HB), Heinz Dieter Reese (HDR), Hartmut Pilch (HP), Helen Rees (HR), Jin Jingyan (JJ), John Thompson (JT), Kyle Helde (KH), Li Shuqin (LS), Peter Micle (PM), Qiao Jianzhong (QJ), Qian Rong (QR), Stefan Kuzay (SK). These announcements were compiled by Antoinet Schimmelpenninck (AS) and Frank Kouwenhoven (FK).

Two of the Chinese students working at the institute as well as one Korean student are planning, or already preparing to devote their M.A., theses to Chinese music. Ms. Yun-Chen Sroweile from Taiwan is researching on Chinese folk songs, Ms. Chen Li-Ya (also from Taiwan) plans to deal with xiqu music. Ms. Yang In-Jeong from South Korea has not yet decided the exact topic of her thesis. (HDR)

DISSERTATION STUDY ON NUOXI

Since September, 1990, Stefan Kuzay (32) has been studying at the Central Academy of Drama (Zhongyang xiqu xueyuan) in Beijing. He will stay there for one year to collect materials for his dissertation study on the libretti of performers of nuoxi (exorcism theatre) in Anhui province. Kuzay finished his M.A. thesis at the Sinologisches Seminar in Göttingen with Professor Rosner. It was titled Das Nuoxi-Theater von Guichi, Anhui. This thesis was the result of many months of a close cooperation with Professor Wang Zhaowian from Anhui, who has researched nuoxi in Southern Anhui since the early 1950s.

Nuoxi rituals are exclusively performed during the Chinese New Year. They are intended to expel demons and epidemic illness, as well as to invoke good luck, a rich harvest, etc. Typical for all forms of nuoxi, both in Anhui and in other parts of China, are the wooden masks which are worn by the performers. Kuzay's thesis dealt with the historical development of nuoxi, from the earliest sources in the Houhuan shu and Zouli to the present day, as well as with textual analysis.

In his dissertation study, Kuzay aims at a full translation of the Juben (libretti) of one particular clan of nuo performers in Anhui province. He obtained these libretti during a four months' fieldwork project in Guichi, Anhui, under auspices of the Sinological Seminar and the Ethnomusicological Seminar of Göttingen. Participants were Professor Rudolf Brandl and his wife (equested with a video camera) and Stefan Kuzay. The outcome of this trip was, amongst others, a 20-hour video registration of nuo operas, dances and rituals.

Kuzay will not only translate and annotate the collected texts but also probe into the religious and mythological background of the rituals. He has a whole series of libretti with identical titles at his disposal, each performed by a different clan. There are astonishing textual and musical differences between these libretti. Since all the libretti are handwritten, the reading is extremely laborious.

Another fieldwork project is planned in the summer of 1991 under the guidance of Professor Rosner. After his dissertation, Kuzay hopes to write a monograph about the various forms of nuo opera, masks and exorcism dances in all parts of China. (SK)

PEOPLE & PROJECTS

CHINESE MUSIC RESEARCH IN COLOGNE

The Institute for Musicology (Musikwissenschaftliches Institut) of Cologne University has three separate departments, one of which is the Department of Ethnomusicology (ethnomuskologische Abteilung) headed by Professor Robert Günther. Dr Heinz Dieter Reese works in this department as assistant lecturer. Both Günther and Reese have a strong interest in East Asian music research. For many years they have been busy building up a special archive of research material (records, books, journals, video-tapes etc.) on traditional Japanese music. However, they also pay special attention to Korea and China when collecting materials for their archive and in their researching and teaching activities.

Professor Günther recently published a paper entitled 'Die Poesie des Unhörbaren: Von den Konnotationen der altchinesischen Musiksprache' (in Die Sprache der Musik - Festschrift für Klaus Wolfgang Niemöller zum 60. Geburtstag, ed. J.P. Frickl, Regensburg: Bosse, 1989, 217-237). In 1987, Reese was author, producer and presenter of an eight hour broadcast show entitled 'Chinesische Musiknacht' (München: Bayerischer Rundfunk) which included the presentation of different kinds of traditional music genres (e.g. a complete scene from jingju (Beijing Opera), a complete dagu-song (narrative singing), a Buddhist morning service, Confucian Shrine music, various kinds of solo and ensemble instrumental music etc.). He is now working in cooperation with two Chinese students on a documentation and analysis of one actual performance of the (famous) eighth scene of the Beijing opera Bawang bie ji (King Ba takes leave from his concubine), based on a video-tape and a (published) recording of a guest performance of that place in Tokyo in 1979.
CHINESE MUSIC ARCHIVE IN AUSTRALIA
A Chinese Music Archive was established in 1989 in the Department of Music, Monash University in Melbourne, Australia. The Archive, headed by Peter Micic, currently houses a modest collection of materials pertaining to traditional, folk and contemporary music of China. These materials include recordings, music scores, slides, videos, musical instruments and other relevant materials, such as concert programmes and press cuttings.

It is expected that the Archive will attract students from interstate and overseas to carry out research and encourage visiting Chinese scholars, and other visitors, to the Archive to play and active role in collecting and depositing materials related to Chinese music.

A strategy for the computerization of the sound recordings is based on two stages of implementation: the first involves the entry of discographic information (which also includes the record company and ethnicity of performer), while the second stage involves the entry of musical stylistic information. (PM)

CHINESE POP MUSIC
Catherine Capdeville Zeng is a student of the Sociology Department of Paris University VIII. In 1989, she finished a thesis about young pop musicians in China, notably in Beijing: 'Jeunes Chanteurs de Variété en Chine: la voie du succès dans la fin des années 1980'. It was written under the guidance of M. Julien. Catherine Capdeville is currently in China for a six months' visit, as part of her work on a PhD dissertation about Chinese pop and rock music. The main focus of her study is sociological. (FK)

CONCERT OF TANG MUSIC
Dr. Laurence Picken (81), Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, visited Shanghai in October, 1990 to attend a performance by the Chinese Ancient Music Ensemble of some of his transcriptions of Tang dynasty pieces. The ensemble, consisting of some twenty performers, played under the baton of Dr. Noel Nickson, (Queensland University, Australia). In general, the reactions to Dr. Picken's interpretations - quite different from the 'arrangements' of Tang music that are usually performed in China - were very positive. Especially among students, the music was well received, and Picken's visit to China was given attention in various Chinese music journals. Frank Kowenhoven, one of the editors of the CHIME Newsletter, had an interview with Dr. Picken after his return to England, to hear more about his musical and general experiences in China, and his deep interest in Tang music. The Interview will be published in the next volume of the CHIME Newsletter, which is scheduled to appear in December of this year. (FK)
CONTEMPORARY MUSIC & GUQIN
Jinmin Zhou, from Beijing, is currently a graduate student at the University of Maryland in Baltimore. He is studying ethnomusicology with Professor Mantle Hood. Recently, he started work on a PhD dissertation about contemporary Chinese composition, and attended meetings in Hong Kong and Marseille. As part of his studies, he compiled a 500-entry bibliography in Chinese on Chinese modern music since 1949, basically drawing on materials from major music journals in China.

Jinmin Zhou is also active as a composer himself, and wrote various works for guqin, a seven-stringed Chinese zither. He also did research on guqin music. His article 'Timbre, Playing Technique and Structure: A Microscopic Analysis of Samples from Two Works for the Qin' was published in 'Progress Reports in Ethnomusicology', Vol.3, No.3, 1991, Dept. of Music, University of Maryland, Baltimore. It is a comparative analysis of timbral aspects of a traditional versus a contemporary piece for guqin, with the help of computer transcriptions. The samples were eight note phrases from a performance of Meihua San Nong ('Three Variants on Plum Blossom') by Zhang Ziqian and a brief section of Xiao Yao You ('Leisurely Cruise'), a piece written in December 1985 by Jinmin Zhou and performed by the composer. (FK)

VISITING SCHOLAR
Yang Xianning, ethnomusicologist, ethnolinguist, member of the Chinese Ethnology Society, member of the Chinese Ethnolinguistic Society, member of the Society for Bronze Drum Research in China and member of the Chinese Minority Nationalities' Musicology Society, came to France for a two months' stay from December, 1990 to February, 1991. He was invited by the Laboratoire de phonétique de l'Université Paris III. Formerly a researcher at the Music Research Institute in Beijing, he is now working at the Yunnan Nationalities Research Institute in Kunming. In China, he wrote a 132 page thesis, entitled 'Comprehensive Survey and Study of the Phenomenon of Tailing Instruments'. It was written under the guidance of Guo Nai'an and finished in July, 1988. Yang now focuses on the subject of 'whistling language'. (FP)

RESEARCH ON NANGUAN
Kyle Heide (32), a PhD candidate in Anthropology and Ethnomusicology at Indiana University (Bloomington, USA), will be in Taiwan during 1991-92, doing research for his dissertation on nanguan music associations. During his year as a Research Student at the Chinese University of Hong Kong (1988-89), he visited fifteen different nanguan associations in Hong Kong, Fujian, Taiwan and the Philippines. (KH)

COMPUTER-STEREED KEYBOARD
Jiang Kui, an Associate Professor of the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing has developed a computer-steered keyboard which can be tuned in every possible temperament system. The keyboard will be used for educational purposes, as part of the aural training of ethnomusicology students in Chinese music conservatories, to introduce them to different temperament systems of Chinese minority people in various parts of the country. So far, only the piano was used for aural training. As a consequence, music students who engaged in studies of minority music and tried to transcribe minority melodies, frequently disregarded the specific features of local temperament systems and interpreted all tunes according to the twelve tone equal temperament system. During his long teaching career, Professor Jiang Kui was constantly confronted with these problems. Ten years ago, he started working on his project for a computer-tuned keyboard, with support from the Ministry of Culture. The sample instrument was completed in 1989. Last year, it became an official part of musicological training at the Beijing Central Conservatory. The instrument can also be used for practical research purposes. It has a maximum deviation of 0.5 cent. (QR)

PLUCKED INSTRUMENTS
Xu Fengxia (28) is a soloist of plucked instruments (sanxian, zhenq, guqin and liqin) and member of the Shanghai Chinese Music Ensemble. She graduated from the Department of Chinese Musical Instruments of the Shanghai Conservatory in 1985. In January and February of this year, Xu gave lectures and workshops on Chinese plucked instruments at Bielefeld University in Germany, and in April she visited the 'Freies Musik Zentrum' in Munich for further concerts. Xu Fengxia was the first Chinese musician ever to give a concert entirely consisting of sanxian solo pieces. The sanxian is a three-stringed lute. (FK)

MUSIC OF THE HMONG
Amy Catlin is Visiting Assistant Professor at the Department of Ethnomusicology in Los Angeles. She is currently working on an extensive monograph on the music and sung poetry of the Hmong, a minority people in Southeast Asia (known in China as 'Miao'). Two other writings on the subject are in press: 'Why Do They Sing? A Semiotic Approach to Interactive Rituals of the Hmong', 25 pages, in: Selected Reports in Ethnomusicology, Ed. A.Catlin; Vol.9: Text, Context and Performance in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam; UCLA Ethnomusicology Publications, Fall 1991, and 'Hmong Music', in: The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music, Volume 7, Southeast Asia, 1991. In the past few years, she already published the


COURT MUSIC OF THE MING

Hartmut Plich is a graduate of Sinology in München, Germany. He is currently working on a PhD dissertation about Chinese court music in the Ming dynasty. Previously, he wrote an M.A. thesis about the same subject. (HP)

INAUGURAL LECTURE

Edward Ho has worked in the School of Music of Kingston Polytechnic (UK) since 1975 and has been its head since 1978. During this period he has been responsible for the development of the BA Music Education/Music course to the point where it has become one of the leading programmes of its type. Amongst others, this has involved the blending of university and conservatory music traditions. Edward Ho has also been active as a composer, and has brought Chinese and Western musical traditions together in his own creative work. In December, 1990 the Polytechnic recognized these achievements and appointed him as Professor of Music. Professor Ho gave his inaugural lecture on 17 April of this year, for an audience of some 120 people. The lecture was entitled 'Creative Process in Chinese Music Making - Is it all that inscrutable?' and discussed Edward Ho's musical experiences and reflections on Chinese music in the last ten years.

His interest in Chinese music began in 1981 after hearing a performance by a group of Taiwan musicians in the old Kingston Hill Place. The rediscovery of his 'roots' took Ho to Hong Kong, where he studied Chinese music intensively for one year. The pursuit of his interest was not from the view of an ethnomusicologist, but from a composer's viewpoint. He was particularly interested in the aesthetics of music and the creative process in the performance of Chinese classical music. Ho developed a cordial relationship with the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, which performed several of his new compositions.

In England, Ho began to take lessons on a variety of Chinese instruments from Ray Man, a seller of oriental musical instruments in Soho in London. Ho was fascinated by the process of learning and by the aesthetic principles which govern Chinese musical practice. In his lecture, he discussed a number of these principles and demonstrated them with the help of Chinese poems and music pieces, both classical and modern. Amongst others, he explained the fundamental four-step principle of 'Start - Continuity - Change - Synthesis' which plays an essential role not only in music, but also in painting, calligraphy, poetry and dance. Furthermore, the importance of re-creation and improvisation, the dualistic principle of yin and yang, the impact of Confucianism and Taoism and the specific role of the composer in Chinese music were discussed to some extent. (FK)

MONOGRAPH ON BLIND SINGERS

Professor Bell Yung, associate professor of the Music Department of the University of Pittsburgh, USA, has received a National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship for 1990-1991 to complete a monograph on the blind singers of China. He is currently also working on another study, 'Music of the seven-string zither of China: the Shenzi Mipu Collection of 1426', to be published by A-R Editions, Inc. (FK)

MUSIC AND ASTROLOGY

For many years, Liu Daoyuan, a television reporter of the Zhejiang Broadcasting Company in China and private scholar, has carried out research on relationships between musical scholarship, astronomy and astrology in ancient China. He published an article about the origins of the ancient Chinese Twelve
Pitches in The Journal of the Shanghai Music Institute (1988 no.3), in which he discussed the twelve  
li in the context of classical concepts such as yin and  
yang, masculine and feminine. In this article, he also  
paid attention to relationships between ancient tuning  
experiments and methods of calendar-setting, as  
discussed in Ban Gu's The History of the Han  
Dynasty (in the chapter on 'The Pitch Calendar'). Liu  
Daoyuan reconstructed various tuning and calendar-setting  
experiments and found an explanation  
for the hitherto unsolved mystery of 'ash-flying' that  
is connected with these experiments. Liu asserts  
that the twelve li were formerly used to mark or  
symbolize time and that they served as standards,  
not only for tuning or calendar-setting, but also for  
the marking of all kinds of weights and measures.  
Liu Daoyuan would like to get in touch with other researchers  
interested in this particular field. His address: Jiaxing People’s Broadcasting Station, Jiaxing, Zhejiang, P.R.China. (HB)

GUQIN SOCIETY
Chen Lei, a young guqin performer from Shanghai,  
currently living in Lyon in France, has started a  
European guqin society called "Yang He, L'Ecole  
du Qin." The society aims at popularizing the traditional Chinese arts, more specifically the performance practice of the guqin, the classical Chinese zither. Annual membership fees: 200 French francs (100 for students). Address: 21 place Tolozan, 69001, Lyon, France. (CL)

LI XIANGTING AT SOAS
Li Xiangting, one of the most respected guqin players of China, has been made an Associate of the Centre of Music Studies of the School for Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London, for the academic year 1990-91. He is teaching guqin and vertical bamboo flute at SOAS.

Li Xiangting was born in 1940 in Jilin Province. In 1957 he began playing the guqin, and took lessons from famous guqin masters like Zha Fuxi and Wu Jinglue. He also studied at the Central Conservatory in Beijing, where he was appointed as a teacher in 1993. At present, Li belongs to the most important guqin players of his own generation, and he has undertaken much to propagate the instrument and its music abroad. Since 1989, he has carried out research at the University of Cambridge on the element of improvisation in guqin music. In the past three decades, Li Xiangting gave solo recitals in France, Germany, England, Italy, Singapore, Holland and Hong Kong. The French, Swedish, Danish and British Radio all paid attention to his performances. He made several recordings, the most recent one being a compact disc, issued on the label Ocora in France. Li also studied traditional Chinese painting and calligraphy and exhibited his works of art in
Beijing, London and Taiwan. He has also been active writing poetry. In 1987, he was appointed Vice-President of the Research Society for Guqin Music in Beijing. In June, 1991, Li Xiangting visited New Zealand on the invitation of the School of Music, Victoria Univ. of Wellington, for a concert tour organized by Karen Chang and Jack Body. (FK)

TIAN QING SET FREE
Tian Qing is Vice Chairman of the Music Research Institute in Beijing and associated with various Buddhist Music Societies in China. He is Chief Editor of the 'Yearbook of Chinese Music' and took part in various international meetings on Chinese religious music. As Chief Editor of the Buddhist Music Section of the 'Audio and Video Encyclopedia of China', he published two sets of audio-cassettes with Buddhist music, one by the Wutai Shan Buddhist Music Ensemble and one by the Tianjin Buddhist Music Society. Between September 1989 and March 1991, Tian Qing was held in custody by the Chinese authorities for giving information about the military intervention during the Tiananmen men protests in June 1989 to participants in a musicology meeting at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. He was released in March of his year and immediately returned to his work at the Music Research Institute. He is in good health. (FK)

RESEARCH ON CLASSICAL SONGS
Kathryn Lowry, of the Department of East Asian Languages of Harvard University, Cambridge M.A., is on a two months' visit to China (May-July) to collect materials on the performance of classical songs and drama in the Wu area in Jiangsu Province. She hopes to interview older people in Suzhou and Shanghai, to learn more about different kinds of opera and popular songs in these urban centres and how they relate to rural performance practice. This fieldwork is part of her dissertation study in progress on popular songs of the Ming dynasty. (FK)

TRANSLATION AMIOT
Professor Frederic Lieberman (University of Californi-  
a, Santa Cruz) is currently working on a complete  
English translation of M. Amiot’s writings on Chi- 
inese music (Membre de la Musique des Chinois  
tant anciens que modernes, first published in 1776,  
with various supplements). The translation will be  
elaborately annotated and accompanied by previ-  
ously unpublished illustrations that Amiot took with  
him from China.

Liebermann is also preparing the third edition of his  
own 'Chinese Music: an Annotated Bibliography'  
edition will omit a number of trivial writings which  
were mentioned in previous editions, and concen-  
trate more on the scholarly writings. No date for  
publication of the new edition has yet been set. (FK)

RESEARCH ON SHEN QI MI PU
John Thompson (45), currently living in Hong Kong,  
began to study the guqin, the seven-stringed Chi- 
inese zither, in 1974, while he was still in the United  
States. As a graduate student of Chinese culture,  
with a B.A. in Western musicology (with emphasis  
on medieval and renaissance music), he was frus- 
trated by the lack of reliable information on Chinese  
music history. He began to take a specific interest in  
the guqin. The repertoire and the history of this  
instrument are well-documented, and there are  
possibilities to study this instrument with guqin  
masters in China. While only a few dozen composi-  
tions for the guqin have been handed down to the  
present in performance, thousands more exist in  
manuscript form. The Shen Qi Mi Pu (1425 AD) is  
the first large collection of music for this instrumen-  
t. Its compiler, claims, and modern experts generally  
agree, that most of the 64 pieces collected in this  
book hand down music from Tang and Song Dy- 
nasty originals (7th to 13th centuries). The music  
totals approximately six hours. After studying the  
guqin with a teacher in Taiwan, John Thompson  
travelled to Hong Kong in 1976, and began to take  
an active interest in the Shen Qi Mi Pu repertoire.  
Only three of the 64 pieces in this collection have  
maintained a recognizable form into the modern  
repertoire, and Thompson took these as a point of  
departure for his own studies. He won the advice  
from the Hong Kong based scholar Tong Kin-woon,  
and began to study and play pieces from the collec- 
tion that may have been ignored for centuries. The  
tabulatures only give finger positions and finger  
movements, including ornamentation, but they do  
directly indicate note-time values, which leads to  
problems of interpretation. This did not prevent  
Thompson from studying the pieces, and he even-  
tually arrived at the conclusion that the tabulatures  
give a number of important clues with respect to  
rhythm: there is a historical dominance of quadruple  
meters; ornamented notes tend to be longer; passages  
with awkward fingering are slower, runs faster; fur- 
thermore, finger patterns repeated on separate sets  
of notes, and/or repeated melodic contours, may  
indicate repeated rhythmic patterns. Finally, similari- 
ties and differences of later versions also yield  
clues.

While he became an artistic coordinator for the  
Festival of Asian Arts in Hong Kong, John Thomp- 
son spent all his remaining time on studying the  
Shen Qi Mi Pu and decided to master all the 64  
 pieces in this collection. In 1989, he completed his  
initial transcriptions and was able to play all the  
pieces from memory. He also made a first, tentative  
recording of the pieces in the first folio of the book  
two hours of music, on two cassettes. Because he
was aiming at independent interpretations, he made
his recordings with minimal reference to versions by
other players, although he had studied some in the
earliest phase of the whole project. Eventually, he
also began to take a look at the repertoire of qin
songs (classical poems sung to guqin pieces), which
modified the results of some of his transcriptions
(with respect to the rhythms). In particular, he went
through the Zheyinshizhi qinpu, which adds texts to
the notes of pieces from the Shen Qi Mi Pu.
Thompson wants to finish learning the pieces in the
Zheyinshizhi qinpu, before returning to the work of
recording the Shen Qi Mi Pu. For the future, he is
planning to publish his results in the form of commer-
cial quality recordings and a book of musical and
historical analysis, with some two hundred pages of
music transcriptions. The actual work of analysis
—including a comparison of different interpretations
of some of the pieces—may still take up several years.
Thompson also hopes to compare his transcriptions
with other early surviving Chinese music, both from
the guqin repertoire and from other sources, such as
the Chinese melodies reconstructed from Japanese
and Korean court music by Professor Laurence
Picken and his former students at Cambridge Univer-
sity in England. So far, the project has been a
private undertaking, but Thompson would like to
continue it as doctoral dissertation research. (JT)

GUQIN CONCERTS
Mrs. Dai Xiaolian, born in Shanghai in 1963, was
initiated in the secrets of guqin by her great-uncle,
the qin-master Zhang Ziqian, when she was nine
years old. She also received private lessons from
two other great guqin performers, Lin Youren and
Gong Yi. From 1981, she studied history, theory and
performance practice of guqin at the Shanghai
Conservatory of Music. Already at an early age she
gave many successful performances, and was
noticed for her powerful and idiosyncratic inter-
pretations of ancient qin-scores. After her graduation,
the Hugo Record Company in Hong Kong issued a
CD and a cassette of her music, in a successful
series on qin-players of the Guangling school. In 1997,
she toured and lectured in Australia. Dai
Xiaolian transcribes ancient guqin scores herself,
and has published many writings on the history and
development of qin schools in China. Recently, the
CHIME Foundation in Europe invited her for an
eight months’ period of research on the collection
of guqin tablatures of the late Prof. Robert van Gulik,
now kept at the Sinological Institute in Leiden. In
September 1991, Dai Xiaolian will visit the Archive
International de Musique Populaire (AIMP) in
Geneva, Switzerland, for the production of another
commercial CD.
In Holland, Dai Xiaolian featured in a small festival
of guqin music, organized with support from the
CHIME Foundation, at the Volkenkunde Museum in
Leiden on 19 May, the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam
on 22 and 23 May, and the RASA Intercultural
Centre in Utrecht on 31 May. Other master-per-
formers playing at the same Festival were Li Xiang-
ting (from London), and Chen Leiji (Shanghai).
Furthermore, Dai co-operated with Mrs. Huang Bai
(50), a well-known singer from the Shanghai Con-
servatory, in the performance of various qin ge
(guqin songs). Dai Xiaolian played on a qin from
the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368 AD) which has been
part of the imperial collection. The concert halls in
Amsterdam and Leiden had full houses and Dai’s
performances were well received by the audience.
In Newspaper reviews, Dai’s playing was generally
praised for its depth and emotional vigour. Her style
was even compared to that of pop guitarists like Ry
Cooder and Jimmy Hendrix. The success of the
festival has led to invitations for Dai to perform again
in Holland later this year, and probably also next
year in April, during a big festival of contemporary
Chinese music. (FK)

VISITING SCHOLAR
Liu Jingshu, a teacher of the Central Conservatory
in Beijing, is currently in Berlin to study musicology.
During his own student years at the Central Conser-
vatory (1978-1986) he carried out fieldwork in Jiang-
su and Heilongjiang, collecting folk songs, and he
wrote a number of papers on guqin music and
Chinese folk instruments. In 1986, he became a
teacher in the History Department of the Conserva-
tory. He wrote various articles in Chinese music journals about contemporary Chinese music and new Chinese opera. Currently, his main interest is focused on ancient Chinese musical aesthetics. He hopes to be able to write a PhD dissertation on the subject. (FK)

NEWS & REPORTS

CHINESE ARTISTS IN AUSTRALIA

A great number of people turned up at Melbourne University's Melba Hall in December last year to attend a concert of Chinese music. A young composer from Beijing, Julian Yu, conducting the Melbourne-based Chaoteng Chinese Orchestra, was congratulated by the Chinese and foreign audience. Amid the sweltering heat and the occasional sound of players tuning up behind the scenes before the concert, there was an atmosphere of achievement and pride.

The concert itself seemed to picture aptly both the humble successes and continuing disappointments that face Chinese music in Australia, and in particular those Chinese musicians from Mainland China who have loosely affiliated themselves with the orchestra. Many are struggling for recognition and attention, for some 'concert hall space'. Now they face obstacles and walls that restrict their own artistic freedom.

Many Chinese artists and musicians have found their way to Australia in the past few years. They have been drawn by the promise of greater freedom and the seemingly infinite opportunities to continue and expand their art abroad. But the ruthless and commercially competitive art worlds they have encountered as well as the limited understanding of Chinese art and music in Australia, are proving to be a source of frustration among Chinese artists.

There are those who have yet to learn the art of self-promotion. Usually, they have a limited command of English, a strong desire for material possessions but only a small income to support themselves. Many are slowly waking up to the realization that the ability to la guanxi (establish connections) is a major avenue to success in the West as it is in China. They did not anticipate the degree to which money magically opens doors and creates opportunities. In China, artistic restrictions were controlled by their cultural commissars allowing for the long pern-persuit waters of impatience, frustration and disillusion to flow where they would; in Melbourne, the inability to find a market is providing musicians with similar feelings of frustration.

The problems of marketability which face musicians of both western and traditional Chinese instruments from Mainland China appear to reflect the cold, harsh realities of back home: struggling to maintain or achieve any degree of independence as an individual artist in a socialist system as well as the as yet unchanged Australian economic situation which does not allow for any scope to develop their talents.

Shen Pan'geng is one of many musicians who is trying to find a market for Chinese music. Shen, an erhu player and teacher, is a native of Suzhou, Jiangsu province. Raised in a poor family, Shen showed little interest in music as a child. Following his graduation from the Department of Music, Nanjing Normal University in the early eighties, he spent some years studying at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music under the careful guidance of Wang Yi and Min Hui. Shen first came to Australia in 1980 where he was invited to perform and give a series of lectures on Chinese music. He also took part in many concerts and workshops organized by the Chao Feng orchestra and the Museum of Chinese-Australian History, and made several recordings with the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC). More recently, he has been performing several nights a week with other musicians at a restaurant in the heart of Chinatown.

The young composer and arranger Julian Yu (Yu Jingjun), who, like Shen, is eager to establish his credentials in Australia, is still struggling to find a successful blending of East and West that appeals to a Western audience. Julian has won many international honours, including the highest award in the international New Music Composers' Competition in 1998 in New York and also the Koussevitzky Tanglewood Composition Prize the same year. Last year in London, Olivier Knussen conducted a performance of Julian's Greater Fugue Canonica, with the BBC Symphony Orchestra. A native of Beijing, Julian Yu studied and taught at the Central Conservatory of Music before settling down in Australia with his wife Marion Gray in 1985.

Although many musicians find it difficult to reconcile themselves to their sudden anonymity in the west, some have met with resounding success. Yu Jixing, a 35 year old tenor from Beijing, caused a sensation and became nationally famous when the Victorian State Opera gave a charity concert in May 1989 entitled 'A Night in Paris' at the Melbourne Concert Hall. He is now attached to the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in London.

Yang Mu belongs to another group of Mainland Chinese in Melbourne: those who are primarily engaged in the research of Chinese music. Following his graduation from the Central Conservatory in 1983, where he obtained a BA in ethnomusicology and a certificate in qin performance, Yang spent some years with the China Broadcasting Service as a programme manager and editor as well as doing some conducting, composing and teaching. His main interest is in ethnomusicology; he obtained a PhD in Ethnomusicology from the University of Queensland in 1990 for his doctorate thesis on Folk...

While the majority of Chinese musicians from the Mainland who play Chinese instruments have yet to make a real splash on Melbourne’s music scene, there is some patronage from overseas Chinese to give them a consistent platform. Many are still plagued with insecurity, financial strains and the harsh reality that there is, as yet, no real market in Australia for their kind of musical professionalism. (PM)

14TH SHANGHAI SPRING FESTIVAL
Since its founding in 1960, Shanghai Spring, the first music festival in China, has promoted talented composers and musicians in Shanghai. Up to the present, the biennial festival was held fourteen times. The latest edition was organized in May of this year, as a joint effort of the Shanghai Musicians’ Association, various cultural organizations and the Shanghai Broadcasting Company. The festival featured concerts of symphonic music, chamber works and traditional music, as well as a national competition for erhú (Chinese fiddle) players, in which more than two hundred candidates participated. The concerts of symphonic music featured, amongst others, two symphonies by Zhu Jian’er, his Symphony no.4, for bamboo flute and 22 strings (with Yu Xunta as soloist) and his Symphony no.6. Furthermore, new works by Zhao Xiaosheng, Pan Guoxing (Symphony no.2), Lu Pei (Symphonic Overture), Chen Qiangbin (Violin Concerto no.1) and Liu Yuan (Symphonic Rhapsody) were performed.

In addition to this, there were performances by an orchestra of traditional instruments. The programme featured solo concertos (by Jin Fuzai, He Zhanhao and other composers) for pipa, erhú, zhongguan and yangqin, played by well-known local soloists. (FK)

CHINESE MUSIC-ARCHAEOLOGY

CHINESE MUSIC AESTHETICS
From 9 to 13 April, 1991, the Fourth National Conference on Music Aesthetics was held in Beijing. More than sixty experts attended the meeting, which focused on the current knowledge in the field of music aesthetics and its philosophic principles. The papers presented at this conference were of higher quality and kept more in line with the major theme than those of previous conferences. At the first conference, in 1979, there was an all-round inven- tablishment of the state of affairs in music aesthetics in China. During the second conference, in 1992, some of the major topics were: aesthetic education through musical education, the class character of music and programme music versus absolute music. The 3rd meeting, in 1985, focused, amongst others, on ancient Chinese versus Western music aesthetics. At the end of the April 1991 conference in Beijing, the new board of the Chinese Research Society for Music Aesthetics was elected. Professor Yu Renfang became its new president. (JW)

MUSIC PHYSICS & PSYCHOLOGY
From 27 to 29 March, 1991, the First National Conference on Music Physics and Music Psychology was held in the Research Centre for Modern Physics at Beijing University. Some sixty papers were read, dealing with subjects like musical acoustics, experimental research in the field of aural music reception, music therapy, computer music etc. (JW)

FIELD RESEARCH OF FOLK MUSIC
A symposium on Minsu yinyue shilu (Field research and documentation of folk music) was held from 11 to 15 December, 1990, at the Research Institute of Music in Beijing. Sponsored by the editorial board of Zhongguo yinyue xianjian (The Yearbook of Chinese Music), the symposium was presided over by Qiao Jianzhong, director of the Research Institute of Music, and Han Zhong’en, Associate Editor of The Yearbook of Chinese Music. Twenty people participated, coming from Heliangjiang, Liaoning, Fujian, Xinjiang, Yunnan, Inner Mongolia, Hunan and Beijing. Discussions focused on nine key papers on the music and its documentation among the following national minorities: Yao, Tong, Man, Yi, Menggu and Dulong. There was also an extensive discussion of the methods of field research and the writing of field reports. The symposium has special significance for the development of Chinese music research in the 1990s because of its promotion of systematic and scientific methods of field research and documentation. (OJ/ACMR)
CHINA AND THE WEST
A symposium on Zhongxi yinyue jiaoliu guanxi (The mutual influences of, and relationship between, music genres of China and the West) was held from December 18 to 22, 1990, at the Research Institute of Music in Beijing, sponsored by the Editorial Board of Zhongguo yinyue nianjian (The Yearbook of Chinese Music). Some 25 people participated in the meeting to discuss, review and evaluate the history of East-West musical influences since the turn of the century. (QJ/ACMR)

THE CHAOFENG ORCHESTRA, AUSTRALIA
The Chaofeng Chinese Orchestra was formed in 1982 by a small group of Overseas Chinese who were keen to play Chinese music together. They met on an ad hoc basis in each other's homes. By 1984, the group had mushroomed to a size that needed a larger venue. At the time, Peter Clinch, a music teacher at the Institute of Education, Melbourne University, offered them support and provided a room at the Institute. The orchestra now boasts to be the largest Chinese orchestra in Australia comprising about twenty-five members who gather for rehearsals once a week. Apart from the few musicians from Mainland China who have loosely affiliated themselves with the group, the majority of members come from all walks of life including engineers, nurses, computer programmers, factory workers, university students, a pathologist and a pharmacist.

One feature of this non-professional orchestra is its frequent meetings as a social club as well as a music group. The group meetings have an atmosphere somewhat akin to that of a teahouse, a meeting place for discussion, a place to relax and be with friends, drawing Chinese people from all over Melbourne into its steady embrace. Apart from the Chinese who make up the overwhelming bulk of the group, the "teahouse" is occasionally patronized by a few interested or, perhaps, curious, foreigners. English, Mandarin and Cantonese are spoken during rehearsals. The music itself is usually taken from existing scores, the various parts hand-copied by either the conductor or a volunteer from the group.

In most cases, the music is a product of someone's arrangement of a tune or a medley of tunes; the notation is usually written in Arabic numbers. Although members of the orchestra may boast of the ever-increasing engagements schedule, the fact that the group is always taking in new members as well as losing them, has meant that the standard of playing has never reached a very high level. Naturally, the standard of performance depends on the availability of players at any given time.

There is another aspect too, that directly influences the standard of performance. Splits and divisions, usually over some political issue are a cause for much conflict and tension, most blatantly obvious in the repertoire. Title pieces that bring across the rabid themes of class struggle, titles containing the character 'red' or titles that conjure up political overtones from Mainland China are meticulously avoided.

Chaofeng is aware of the difficulties and mundane problems of running a self-funded orchestra. Often the players on the committee have a poor idea, or worse, a wrong idea of what the orchestra should be doing. Some argue that as a non-professional group, their prime concern is to play Chinese music, and that nobody should expect too much from its members. Others, perhaps more ambitious, argue the group should strive to work hard and achieve a fairly high standard of playing. The group is far from united and indeed is likely to splinter further once members, especially those professional musicians from Mainland China, begin defining their long-term objectives and programmes more precisely. For the time being, the Chaofeng Chinese Orchestra will continue to play Chinese music and attract a steady flow of people who have a mutual interest in Chinese music. (PM)

COMMENORATIONS OF COMPOSERS
LI SHUTONG AND SHEN XINGONG
From 1 to 2 November 1990 the Shanghai Conservatory and the Shanghai Buddhist Association jointly commemorated the centenary of composer and art teacher Li Shutong's birth. Li Shutong was not only a pioneer in Westernized Chinese music, but also a practicing Buddhist monk of the Lü sect, where he was known by his Buddhist name Hongyi Faishi. Together with two other composers, Zeng Zhimin and Shen Xingong, he propagated the composition of xuetang yue ge, 'school songs', i.e. songs written for educational purposes and taught as an optional subject in primary schools and teachers' training institutes, especially in girls' schools. The three composers were all educated in Japan and brought back from Japan various European and Japanese tunes. They began to set Chinese texts to these tunes and to Chinese melodies, which eventually became the "school songs". These school songs - together with military band music which was imitated by Chinese army groups towards the end of the 19th century, after Western models - mark the beginning of Western influence on Chinese 20th century music. Of the three school song composers mentioned, Li Shutong was perhaps the most talented. He is remembered for expressive songs like 'Spring Outing' and 'Farewell'. During the November 1990 commemoration of Li Shutong in Shanghai, a concert was held, two cassettes with his music were published and a reprint was presented of The Complete Collection of Lu Shutong's Art Songs. It was the first time that Li Shutong, who died on 13 October 1942, has been commemorated in this extensive way.
In December 1990, the Central Conservatory in Beijing organized a concert in memory of the 120th anniversary of Li Shitong's colleague, Shen Xinggong. Shen, who lived from 1870 to 1947, was less productive than Li, but he wrote a number of songs which became very popular during his lifetime and continued to be sung by school children in the late 1940s. His works have, to some extent, influenced the revolutionary songs of the composer Nie Er. Shen is particularly remembered for songs like 'Military Exercise', 'The Beautiful China' and 'The Yellow River'. He edited and published 'A Collection of School Songs' (1904, reprinted in an extended edition of six volumes in 1911), 'An Anthology of Republican Songs' (1912, 4 Vols.) and 'An Anthology of Songs by Shen Xinggong' (1937). Both Li Shitong and Shen Xinggong contributed much to the professionalization of music education in China and laid the foundation for modern Chinese concert life. (DN/LS/FK).

SUCCESSFUL LECTURE SERIES
The international lecture series on Chinese music, jointly organized this Spring by the CHIME Foundation and the Universities of Leiden and Amsterdam in Holland, was very successful. More than three hundred people attended one or more lectures, and the average number of people present at each lecture was fifty. The series was intended primarily for students of Sinology and Musicology, but also caught the attention of students of Art History, Japanese, Korean, Anthropology and Theatre Studies. The subjects of the lectures varied from opera to folk song, from Buddhist music to Nanguan balladry, and from Chinese avant-garde to the sound experiments of John Cage, inspired by Chinese philosophy. The lectures were illustrated by slides, music recordings, video tapes and live demonstrations, while the students were sometimes invited to take an active part in performances by singing folk songs, imitating the singing exercises of a Peking opera singer or dancing the dance steps of the Yi minority in Southern China. The lectures were supplemented by various concerts of traditional and contemporary Chinese music, by the instrumental ensemble 'Ya' from Nanjing, the New Ensemble from Amsterdam and various guqin performers (Dai Xiaolian, Chen Lei and Li Xiangting). Fifteen students decided to write a paper, by way of concluding the course, and chose subjects like Chinese romantic piano music, musical instruments depicted in the Dunhuang caves, the functions of rhythm in Peking opera, the migration and development of the yangqin (Chinese dulcimer), the process of learning and transmitting musical performance skills in Chinese traditional music, and textual aspects of Chinese folk songs. In general, the lectures were very well received. Possible 'highlights' were Professor Gerd Schönfelder from Dresden, who presented a fascinating paper...
about the musical structure and essence of Peking Opera, Professor Kristofer Schipper from Paris who brought along beautiful examples of Nanguan music, Professor Alan Thrasher from Canada who demonstrated the various instruments of a Jiangnan sizhu ensemble, and made his students dance to minority music, Professor Huang Bai from Shanghai, whose lecture was so successful that a separate course on Chinese folk song was started on Thursday evenings, and Dai Xiaolian from Shanghai, who enchanted her audience with her own performances on the guqin and provided a very clear introduction to the instrument.

As a follow-up to the series, Antoinet Schimmelpenninck of the Centre of Non Western Studies in Leiden will give a course on folk song for Sinology students in the Spring of 1992. (FK)

CONCERT IN MEMORY OF ZHA FUXI
On 10 December 1990 a concert was organized by the Chinese Musicians' Association in memory of the 95th anniversary of guqin master Zha Fuxi's birth. In his early days Zha Fuxi helped in establishing and directing the Jinyu Qin Society in Suzhou and Shanghai. After 1949 he worked for an Airline Company in Shanghai. Since 1953 he was on the board of the Chinese Musicians' Association, of which he was elected Vice President in 1969. During the fifties, Zha Fuxi led a special guqin research group, organized by the Chinese Musicians' Association and the Ministry of Culture. He visited ten different cities to collect materials on guqin music and laid the basis for in depth research on the history and practice of the instrument. He cooperated in a number of important publications on guqin music, such as the Jinyu qinjian (Periodical of the Jinyu Society), the Qinfu jicheng (Anthology of qin pieces), and Lidai qinzhuan (Biography of qin masters through history). Zha Fuxi died in 1976. During the concert, several pieces were played from his personal transcriptions, like his favourite piece Xiao Xiang shui yun (Clouds and Waters of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers). (From: Wenyibao, 15 December 1990). (AS)

SCMTM MEETING HELD IN SHANGHAI
The sixth biennial meeting of the Society of Chinese Traditional Music (Zhongguo chuantiang yinyue xuehui) was held at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music from 21 to 25 December 1990. The main themes of the meeting were: 1) The role and effect Chinese traditional music should have in Chinese music education and how it should be taught; 2) The study of gongdiao (scale and mode) in the current practice of Chinese traditional music. The conference received 88 papers, of which 56 were selected to be read and discussed during the conference. About 70 scholars attended the meeting, of whom more than 20 gave lectures at the main meeting and more than 30 at side meetings. The lectures reflected the most important research work done since 1988 by the nearly 300 members of the Society of Chinese Traditional Music. Approximately one third of the papers dealt with the first topic. The music education system was discussed on all levels, from kindergarten to high grade conservatories, art institutes and teacher training colleges. In general, the Chinese education system pays very little attention to music education, traditional music being virtually neglected. All speakers at the conference expressed their regret about this situation. They suggested that more attention should be given to traditional music education, and came up with some practical suggestions about how to achieve this. Approximately two thirds of the papers dealt with the second topic, viz. the characteristics of modes and scales in current genres of traditional Chinese music. The emphasis on current musical practice led to new insights in Chinese scales and to new ideas on how to research them. Previously, most research in this field has been too much biased by pre-existing theories.

The Society of Chinese Traditional Music was founded in 1986, and originated in a conference on ethnomusicology held at the Nanjing Art Academy in 1990. The Society organizes biennial conferences. The current director of the Society is Professor Huang Xianpeng. The 7th Meeting of the SCMTM will be held in 1992 at the Chinese Conservatory of Music in Beijing. (DN/JJ)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY ENSEMBLE
Recently, some twelve students from different parts of the Chinese-speaking community at Cambridge University (UK), supplemented by other performers, have founded the 'Cambridge University Chinese Music Society'. They organize concerts of traditional and contemporary music. The ensemble includes both Chinese traditional and Western instruments. (DH)

M E E T I N G S

31ST ICTM MEETING, JULY 1991
The 31st World Conference of the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM) will be held from July 3-9, 1991 at the newly-completed Hong Kong Cultural Centre, 10 Salisbury Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong. The following sessions are planned to take place: Session 1 (July 3rd): Official Opening followed by Key Paper The return of the native ethnomusicologist, read by Rulan Chao Plan. Session 2: Round table. Outsider-Insider: Issues In Ethnomusicology / Social Dimensions of Music / Shamanism and Ancestor Worship. Session
3: Korean Studies / Politics, Policy, and Methodology / Shamanism and Ancestor Worship (cont.)

EMAS 3RD ANNUAL MEETING (JANUARY 1992)
The third annual meeting of the Dongfang yinyue xuehui (Eastern Music Association, Shanghai) has been postponed: it will be held from 5 to 9 January 1992 at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. The main theme of the conference will be 'Chinese Music and Eastern Culture'. This theme will be discussed from the following angles: 1. Characteristics of Chinese music and of Eastern culture, their contribution to the music and culture of the rest of the world, and future development in this field; 2. The place of Chinese music in Eastern music; 3. Cultural exchange between Chinese and other Eastern music cultures in history; their evolution, mutual influences and assimilation; 4. Research of Eastern traditional music genres. Participants are requested to send in the title of their paper before October 1991. Contact address: Secretariat of the Eastern Music Association, Shanghai Conservatory of Music, 20 Fengyang Road, Post Box 47, 200031 Shanghai, China. (AS)

PUBLICATIONS

CHIME MEETING IN GENEVA, SEPTEMBER 1991
The first annual meeting of the European Federation for Chinese Music Research will be held in conjunction with the 8th annual meeting of the European Seminar in Ethnomusicology (ESEM), which takes place from 23 to 29 September 1991, in Geneva, Switzerland. There is no special theme for the one-day meeting, but there will be particular emphasis on practical reports and results of recent fieldwork, illustrated with live recordings, video, or life performances. So far, proposals for papers have been received from Jonathan Stock, Belfast (erhu music), Stephen Jones, London (Rural Ceremonial Music), François Picard, Paris (Buddhist music), Huang Bai, Shanghai (Chinese Folk Song), Dai Xiaolian, Shanghai (the Van Gulik Qin Scores) and Frank Kouwenhoven (Chinese Tonality versus Western Harmony). Scholars of the Music Research Institute in Beijing will possibly attend the meeting as special guests. The CHIME Foundation has also invited Dr. Lawrence Piccin (Cambridge, UK) to participate in the meeting as guest of honour. In addition, there will be lectures on Japanese, Korean, Indian and Indonesian music. During the evening, there will be a guqin recital by Dai Xiaolian. Detailed information on the meeting will be sent to all subscribers to CHIME in the course of August. (FK)

MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS
- Bösker, Gerd - 'Die Taiwan-Oper Gazeixi, Folklore oder Fakelore'. Eine Untersuchung über Konstanz
- Jinmin Zhou - 'Timbre, Playing Technique and Structure: A Microscopic Analysis of Samples from Two Works for the Qin.' Progress Reports in Ethnomusicology, Vol. 3 No.3, 1991, Dept. of Music, University of Maryland, Baltimore. 54 pp., music, illus., computer graphics.
- Lü Ch'ul-K'uan - 'Enquête préliminaire sur la musique taotiste de Taiwan.' Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie 4, 1988, pp. 113-126.
- Yee, Edmond - 'Ming Drama: A Selected and Annotated Bibliography.' Ming Studies 28, 1989, pp. 42-56.

JAPANESE MUSIC
MA AND MM THESIS IN THE USA SINCE 1980

The latest issue of the Newsletter of the American Association for Chinese Music Research (ACMR), Vol.4, No.1, Winter 1991, contains a list, compiled by Helen Rees (University of Pittsburgh), of M.A. and M.M. Theses on Chinese music from U.S. Universities since 1980. The list has been compiled from the responses to a questionnaire sent out to ACMR members in spring/summer 1990. It contains the following M.A. Theses:


In addition, the following M.M. Theses are contained in the list:


SOUND RECORDINGS

TEAHOUSE DIALOGUES & POLYPHONIC SONGS FROM SOUTHERN CHINA

The Asia Pacific Archive (School of Music, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand) has published an important cassette tape with field recordings of teahouse courtship dialogues from Guiyang and polyphonic folk songs from the Dong, Buyi, Zhuang, Yi, Mulao, Yao and She minorities in Southern China. The tape is accompanied by a 47-page booklet with translations of the texts and transcriptions of (part of) the music. The courtship dialogues fill one side of the cassette tape. They were recorded in January and February 1987 by Jack Body and Gong Hong-Yu (researchers at Victoria University) in Hebing Park, Guiyang, and in teahouses in Guiyang and Huaxi. The polyphonic songs on the other side of the tape were recorded by Professor Zhou Deji of the Wuhan Music Conservatory, during
the 'Symposium of Polyphonic Songs of the Minorities in Some Districts and Provinces of China', a conference jointly sponsored by the Musicians' Association of China and the Ministry of Culture, and held in Nanning, Guangxi Province from 13 to 23 April, 1982. Six scholars spoke at the conference, including Professor Zhou, and singing troupes from eleven provinces performed. Professor Zhou supplied Jack Body with a copy of his recordings, and gave permission for them to be used for a publication. Subsequently, transcriptions of the songs were made by Nicholas Wheeler, another researcher at Victoria University.

All the transcriptions of the polyphonic songs were based on a single performance. Little was known of the significance of the music or its cultural context. Some contextual information was gleaned from commentary that was recorded at the conference, but for the most part such data were not available. Because no translators of the sung languages were available, the compiler of the booklet have had to rely upon the commentary descriptions of the texts. In spite of these limitations and some regrettable omissions - the Chinese texts of the teahouse courtship dialogues are not included in the booklet - , the publication of this cassette is a very important event in the history of Chinese music research. It is for the very first time that mainland Chinese polyphonic minority songs and local teahouse music are given serious attention through the publication of genuine and properly documented field recordings of good quality. The booklet contains elaborate introductions to most of the recorded items, including texts, music transcriptions and recording circumstances, and is supplemented with nine photographs and helpful, analytical comments. The Asia Pacific Archive must be congratulated with this initiative, and Zhou Deyi gratefully acknowledged for his decision to put his recordings at the disposal of the Archive. The recordings themselves perfectly underline the importance of the preservation of minority music on sound documents, and the need to study this music in further detail - the songs are strikingly beautiful, and full of surprises for those who think that they know what Chinese music sounds like.

The tape (with the somewhat unimaginative title 'Aspects of Chinese Music') and the booklet (issued as Asia Pacific Archive number 004, April 1991) are available from the Asia Pacific Archive, School of Music, Victoria University of Wellington, P.O.Box 600, Wellington, New Zealand. (FK)

TAIWANESE MUSIC
The Swiss phonographic editor Jecklin has started a new series, called Music of Man Archive, with ethnic music under the label Jecklin-Disco. This new series of compact discs presents traditional music from the field collections of Wolfgang Laade, founder of the Music of Man Archive, in which recordings of various peoples of the world are collected. The series started with recordings of music from Corsica and Sri Lanka in 1990. In the course of 1991, two compact discs with music from Taiwan will be issued: one with Confucian temple music and one with minority music. For details and further information, contact the publisher: Jecklin Musikhaus, Rämistr. 42, CH-8024 Zürich, Switzerland. (FK)

XIANG YUE
"Xiang Yue: Regional Music and Folk Songs" is an audio-cassette with a live recording of a concert by the ensemble 'Music from China' in October, 1990 in the Merkin Hall in New York. The 60-minute cassette contains Han folk songs by Wang Zuoxin and Chen Shizheng, a pipa solo by Wu Man, Cantonesse 'silk and bamboo' music, arrangements of Xi'an percussion music ('Quarrelling Ducks' and 'Mencocing Tiger') and a modern composition by Zhou Long, 'Suzhou Bailadic'. The cassette costs $ 8 plus $ 2 for shipping, and can be ordered by sending a cheque payable to Music From China, 170 Park Row, £12D, New York, NY 100038. (FK)

ENSEMBLE YA
In 1983, four young musicians from Nanjing - two men and two women - founded the instrumental ensemble 'Ya'. In the early 1980s, they all met at the Music Department of Nanjing Normal University, where they studied traditional Chinese instruments. Ya ('Elegance') refers to aesthetic principles of ancient Chinese court music and indicates a mellifluous and sophisticated type of music, but the four players of the Nanjing Ensemble do not attempt to recreate the sounds of the ancient court. They are more at home in various Chinese folk traditions of instrumental music, such as Cantonesse music and the Silk-and-Bamboo repertoire of Shanghai teahouses, which they re-create in their own, refined style. Most of the melodies in their repertoire are traditional, but the arrangements are new. Musical inspiration is drawn from all parts of China, including minority areas and the Islamic cultures of China's far West. The Instruments of the ensemble are: yangqin (zither), erhu and gaohu (Chinese fiddles), dizi and xiao (horizontal and vertical bamboo flute), xun (vessel flute), bawu (bamboo flute with metal membrane), zhongguan (round-shaped lute) and small percussion instruments. In May, the ensemble was in Holland on invitation of the CHIME Foundation, to participate in various concerts, lectures and practical demonstrations. After one of the concerts, a private recording was made, of which copies can still be ordered (US $ 10, postage included) from the CHIME Foundation.
Sundanese music in the Cianjuran style

WIM VAN ZANTEN

What sort of music is Tembang Sunda? Who sings and plays this music and what effect is aimed for? Why is this genre of music significant in the lives of the Sundanese? These are some of the questions addressed in this book.

Tembang Sunda Cianjuran is solo singing accompanied by one or two zithers, a bamboo flute, and sometimes a two-string bowed lute. Cianjuran music enjoys great prestige in West Java (where most of the 25 million Sundanese live), and is considered an important expression of Sundanese identity. By listening to Cianjuran music, and by participating in making the music, people become conscious of their common past and their changing position in present-day society.

The different Sundanese terms for vocal music are discussed in the first part of the study, along with the social position of the musicians, how they learn to play the music, and some institutions pertaining to Cianjuran music. A detailed look at the content and form of the lyrics, as well as the instruments and stories about them, shows that Cianjuran music can shed a great deal of light on Sundanese culture. The idea of music as a creative force, for instance, is reflected in the 'marriage' of the player to his zither.

The second part of the book takes a musicological approach. The prevailing theory on Sundanese music is shown not to accord with musical practice. To complete the musicological analysis, the different ornaments used in Cianjuran music are surveyed. The classification of these ornaments by the musicians themselves is compared with the results of a computer analysis.

A cassette tape, obtainable separately, contains a number of musical examples discussed and analysed in the book.

Wim van Zanten (1942) graduated in theoretical physics, and taught mathematics at the University of Malawi, Central Africa, from 1967 to 1971, where he also investigated the music of southern Malawi. Since 1971 he has been lecturing at the Institute for Cultural and Social Studies of the University of Leiden. Van Zanten began research on Tembang Sunda Cianjuran in 1981, and Sundanese music remains his primary interest.

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CHINESE MUSIC RESEARCH IN EUROPE (CHIME)

Major aims
CHIME is a foundation for the promotion of Chinese music research in Europe. 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.

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CHIME co-operates closely with the European Seminar in Ethnomusicology (ESEM). It organizes special, annual meetings, drawing together experts on Chinese music both from Europe and other parts of the world. It supports regular workshops on specific topics in the field of Chinese music.

Biannual Newsletter
CHIME publishes a Newsletter, which appears twice a year, supplemented with extra news bulletins if necessary. It contains articles about fieldwork and study experiences in China, information on books, records, scientific journals, concerts, seminars and meetings, current research projects, university programs and possibilities for scholarships. The newsletter functions as a platform for the exchange of ideas, news and information. Readers' contributions are welcomed.

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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 archive of commercial and field recordings.

Support for research
CHIME is financed mainly by private funds and by the contributions of subscribers to the Newsletter 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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