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Gods and Fairies

Chinese music is a world of gods and fairies. The sounds of qin and pipa are invariably accompanied by poems or stories, and a good tune is frequently no more than a suitable vehicle to pass on a literary message.

Chinese music always expresses a real and palpable world, a spiritual landscape crowded with heroes, emperors, battlefields, mighty forests and mountain ranges and fantastic stories about love and death. Chinese listeners often seek these elements in Beethoven sonatas or concertos in Western music and are baffled if they cannot find them. Chinese and Western concepts of ‘program music’ are not dramatically different, but in China virtually all music is program music.

For Western audiences, a story may explain some of the contours and emotional or onomatopoeic gestures in a piece of music, but even where it determines the overall lay-out of a symphonic poem it cannot ‘explain’ the music as such – it cannot be fully equated with its ‘meaning’. In the 20th century, music in the West is primarily accepted – for better or worse – as ‘creative sound’. Musicians will play the Pastoral Symphony without thinking of birds or murmuring brooks. They will rely on a score, and their colleagues – the musicologists – may well consider that score as the major key to a deeper understanding of the music.

But birds and murmuring brooks are essential for the understanding of music in China. Abstract representations such as scores do exist, but they are frequently objects of mystic veneration rather than practical performance tools. Chinese traditional musicians follow the conventions and performance techniques of their masters; their music is orally transmitted. If they have scores, they will keep them as precious relics of the past, often without studying them. This is true for local opera performers and for village instrumental musicians as much as for ‘elite’ musicians like guqin players.

This is probably where programmatic elements in Chinese music begin to achieve wider importance. Guqin players, for example, must learn to appreciate the poems and stories behind the music before they can hope to render a piece faithfully in performance. It is no exaggeration to say that these poems and stories serve in fact as ‘mental scores’. The soul of a piece of music is in a cruel murder, or in the autumn leaves that fall down. Chinese musicians know this and will gladly talk about it.

The story is the true domain of the Chinese artist. Over very long periods, China’s greatest achievements in art have been in literature. The oral and written stories and poems from ancient times still dominate every-day language and cultural life in China to an extent that would be unimaginable in the West. The spoken word and the written character as symbols have deeply affected the meaning of musical art. Traditional Chinese music without literary aspects is hard to conceive. Music without a title, without even a cursory reference to nature, heroes or gods is unthinkable. Virtually all of it is ritual or dramatic by nature, implying hidden symbolic messages and non-musical meanings. In spite of emphatic Westernization, 20th century Chinese traditional music is still closer in spirit to the world of the ancient Greeks than to that of present-day Europeans.

It is regrettable that so few sinologists have tried to study Chinese musical pieces from a ritual and literary perspective, examining the many intricate links between music and
religion, music and poems, music and stories – notably with respect to their combined impact in performance. China’s oral literature in particular – the cradle of a great many traditional music genres, from religious chants to epic songs and folk ballads, from opera to instrumental ensemble music – is a grossly underrated field of study in the West. It is respected in Western sinology, but mainly as a reservoir of raw materials for the Chinese popular novels and stories of the 16th century and later periods, not so much as a cultural world in its own right. The founding of the American-based journal Chinoperl (‘Chinese Oral and Performing Literature’) in 1969 and the Popular Culture Project undertaken at the University of California in Berkeley were very important steps in the upgrading of this field, but Europe has not followed suit – with the exception of the excellent work of a very small number of folklorists and religion specialists.

Today, the songs of a Chinese Homer may well live on in rural China while virtually no Westerner pays attention to them. Why is the number of sinologists active in this field so very small? The hardships and the adventure of fieldwork in rural China may frighten people. Some scholars don’t want to get their feet wet, or they may shrink from the idea of having to master local Chinese dialects. And there may be still other reasons. In Germany, the once venerated field of ‘folk literature studies’ received a bad reputation after its preposterous glorification by the Nazis. It is no longer an ‘unsuspected’ field of research.

One can only regret the situation. How can we collect music without paying attention to folk stories and ritual contexts? How can we hope to understand Chinese traditional music if we continue to think of it as ‘music’ in its narrow, 20th century Western sense of ‘organized sound’? Chinese music is a form of literature. The projected Chime Conference at SOAS in London, in September 1994 – see the announcement elsewhere in this journal – will perhaps stimulate new research and new attitudes in this field. Let us communicate with gods and fairies – before they escape us forever!

A NOTE ON CHIME NO. 6

Until autumn 1992, the annual subscription period for Chime coincided with the academic year. Starting from 1993, the new subscription period runs parallel to the calendar year, while the frequency of the journal remains unchanged. Chime 6 appears as the Spring issue of 1993, and no.7 (due out in November) will appear as the Autumn issue. There are no changes in format and lay-out, but the journal recently started an editorial board (see inside front cover) which serves as an informal advisory committee. Formally, the board will be effective as from Chime no.7 onwards. It will meet for the first time in Barcelona, in September of this year, in the framework of the IXth European Seminar of Ethnomusicology (ESEM). The Editorial Board will evaluate back issues of Chime and discuss new topics and policies for future issues. Final responsibility for the contents of the journal remains with the two chief editors. The Editorial Board contains a number of specialists on Chinese music next to experts in Japanese, Korean, Cambodian and Tibetan music. This reflects our broad view of Chinese music – as a world closely related with, and embedded in, the wider musical and cultural traditions of the Far East. This wider Asian perspective is also retained in the contents of Chime 6, where an article on Himalayan lute music features next to articles on various Han-Chinese musical genres.
Jiangnan sizhu, the 'silk and bamboo' music of southern China, is easily recognizable for its uninterrupted melodic flow and characteristic mixed sound of bamboo flute and plucked (silk) strings. During a peaceful afternoon in one of the crowded teahouses of Shanghai, it is not unusual to hear a sizhu ensemble play the same piece several times in succession. The musicians will occasionally switch instruments — they can be good at more than one instrument — but the joy of their performance is not derived from an original programme or any virtuosic display. It is mainly the cosiness of playing together with friends that inspires them, and — on a purely musical level — the seemingly endless possibilities for melodic variation. The author examines variational mechanisms at work in one piece, Zhonghua liuban, and distinguishes three types of variation.

'Variation' (bianzou)\(^1\) is a subject of enormous importance in Chinese music. China's leading scholars on instrumental ensemble music, including Gao Houyong (1981, 1982), Li Minxiong (1988) and Yuan Jingfang (1986), have all written on this subject. Their emphases, however, have been upon structural principles employed in the creation and growth of repertoire — such as the development of 'ban variation'-type suites, 'derived variation'-type suites, and others.\(^2\) These are organizational principles. But 'variation' is also a performance ideal and system of techniques. Surprisingly little has been written about this aspect. One older source of interest is the early twentieth-century publication Xiange Bidu by the Cantonese musician Qiu Hechou (1917). Xiange Bidu is primarily a collection of notated instrumental and vocal music popular in South China at the time. In his preliminary notes (1917:39 ff), Qiu notates twenty selected short motifs together with suggested 'variations'. The first page of these variations is reproduced in Appendix A, together with their transcription into staff notation. Unfortunately, the author suggests only one variation for each motif. Musicians actually play with much greater flexibility, some of which is shown in Chen Deju's later book, Guangdong Yueque Goucheng (1957:7 ff). Both sources are restricted to Cantonese music, though there are similarities with practices in central-eastern China. Of the massive outpouring of publications within this past decade, only

\(^1\) I believe 'variation' to be the best translation of bianzou because it suggests the actual process. The term 'improvisation' is less appropriate because of its imprecise meaning (often taken to mean free, unstructured invention). 'Embellishment' also seems inappropriate because it is sometimes considered to be a stylistic addition, something to be added if time permits.

\(^2\) For examination of four types of bianzou structure, see Li 1988:23ff. A slightly different perspective is found in Gao 1982:14 ff. and Yuan 1986:37 ff.
A bamboo flute player in the Huximing teahouse in the Yuyuan gardens, Shanghai.

A few authors (such as Chen 1985 and Gao 1982) document 'variation' in the performance context, but their treatment is brief and usually fails to differentiate among types. My fieldwork for the most part was conducted in Shanghai and Hangzhou during the spring of 1990, with other observations drawn from earlier trips. Examination of the topic will be restricted to sizhu ('silk-bamboo') instrumental chamber music of the Jiangnan region of central-eastern China. In illustration of these principles, the piece Zhonghua Liuban will be analyzed. Zhonghua Liuban (also known as Xinfeng Qu) is one of the most representative pieces in the Jiangnan sizhu repertoire.

VARIATION IDEAL: 'IF YOU PLAY THIS LIKE ME, IT'S WRONG'

Writing in reference to 'variation' as an ideal, Lawrence Witzleben quotes a most appropriate statement made to him by his erhu teacher, the Shanghai performer Zhou Hao: "if you play this exactly like me, it's wrong" (1987:252). Well put. Skilled performers of sizhu, whether in central-eastern or southern China, consider their musical activity to be both interpretative and creative. The Jiangnan sizhu repertoire is small relative to similar traditions of South China – only about one dozen pieces in regular performance. During musical meetings, ensemble musicians typically play the old melodies again and again. I have attended sessions in Shanghai where as few as

3 I wish to thank Li Minxiong, Yu Xunfa and Shen Fengquan for many hours of discussion of the subject of performance practice. I also acknowledge the assistance of Huang Jirong and Zhou Li, and a University of British Columbia research grant which made this trip possible.
Taking a break in a teahouse in Hunan Street, while the music is going on.

four or five pieces were played in alternation over a three-hour period, with the most popular pieces (Zhonghua Liuban and Huanle Ge) each played as many as three times.\textsuperscript{4} How do skilled musicians sustain interest when there is so much repetition in performance? Aside from the fact that some participating musicians change instruments between pieces, the primary reason is that musicians attempt to vary the details of their performance each time they play. Thus, performance is more than mere repetition of the old tunes—it is creation as well. They call this creativity ‘variation’ (bianzou), and consider it essential to the performance of music in the traditional style.

At least two conditions are necessary for the success of performance variation. First, the melodies must be well known to the musicians. The sizhu repertoire is based upon a group of old tunes called qupai (‘named tunes’), melodies which are short in length and typically of fixed beat-count.\textsuperscript{5} The common-practice repertoire in sizhu is constructed of variations on these qupai, either singly (e.g., Zhonghua Liuban, which is based entirely upon Lao Liuban) or in sets or suites (e.g., Xingjie, based upon a chain of different qupai). Performers are so familiar with these tunes that they do not use notation. Indeed, in the traditional setting of teahouse or clubroom, use of notation

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\textsuperscript{4} Witzleben has reported the repetition of single pieces to be as high as five per session (1987:247). His article contains especially important insights into the aesthetics of ‘variation’.

\textsuperscript{5} Examples include Lao Liuban (60 beats in the Shanghai tradition) and Linqingniang (30 beats). For more on these structural aspects, including the relationship between qupai and derived repertoire, see Thrasher 1988 and 1989.
Pipa (pear-shaped lute), *xiao* (vertical bamboo flute) and *yangqin* (hammer dulcimer).

would inhibit the imaginations of performers and destroy an essential ingredient of the music. As a second condition, the musical system itself must be flexible enough to accommodate change. The texture of Chinese music is heterophonic (*zhisheng ti*). Heterophony is often assumed to be a rather simple system and, as a result, is not treated critically in either Chinese or Western scholarship. In *sizhu*, however, it is a complex melodic system in which all musicians (except percussion) perform the same basic melody with simultaneous variations suitable to instrumental idioms and, most importantly, established principles of the heterophonic texture. These will be introduced below. Reinforcing this texture is the pentatonic modal structure. The Chinese pentatonic structure, with its consonant major 2nds and minor 3rds, permits a similar degree of latitude in pitch substitution — an important feature in the variation process. In other systems, such as homophonic texture and heptatonic scale organization, the flexibility to perform concurrent variations by all or most musicians would be considerably more difficult because of the functional separation between melody and accompaniment, and the strength of the harmonic underpinnings (which restrict the choice of substitute pitches). The heterophonic and pentatonic systems, as will be seen, allow performers an enormous degree of flexibility to contribute in different and varied ways.

How does variation work as a performance process? Musicians say they retain in their memories a basic skeleton of each piece of music, together with performance options. The basic melody is known as *guganyin*, ‘melodic skeleton’. Closely related to the *qupai*, the ‘melodic skeleton’ becomes the foundation upon which variations are
created. Chinese scholars use this term without explaining its exact meaning. In general, ‘melodic skeleton’ refers to the basic structural pitches of a melody and the rhythms of these pitches—usually in quarter- and eighth-notes. Based upon notations I have examined, however, it is apparent that the concept includes some passages of greater melodic significance as well, such as short motifs in sixteenth notes. It is also clear that ‘melodic skeletons’ commonly exist in more than one version and details differ from one to another. Shown in Example 1 are two superimposed versions of the ‘melodic skeleton’ for Zhonghua Liuban. The first, from a 1985 collection by Gan Tao (1985:58), is identified by the collector as being for ‘silk-bamboo’ instruments, meaning for entire ensemble. This version is shown with stems up. The second is from the 1920 collection in gongche notation, Qudiao Gongche Daguan (Zhang 1920:2). Only those passages which differ from the first version are shown, with stems down and small note-heads for comparative purposes. Note the points of pitch correspondence on beats 1 and 3 of most measures, and the differences on beats 2 and 4, as well as on many afterbeats.

Example 1. Zhonghua Liuban, melodic skeleton of two 60-beat versions:
a) Gan 1985:58 (stems up), b) Zhang (stems down, differences only).

* repeat not notated in Zhang 1920
In performance, ensemble musicians elaborate upon the ‘melodic skeleton’. Elaboration (or ornamentation) is known as *jiăhua*, ‘adding flowers’. *Jiăhua* is a general term used in reference to the addition or substitution of neighbouring pitches and melodic interpolations. There are other variation techniques as well, especially rhythmic variations, which are not thought of as ‘flowers’. These will be discussed within their appropriate contexts.

**VARIATION TYPES**

‘Variation’ possesses important guiding principles, *guilü*, which I will translate as ‘inner rules’. Since little has appeared in Chinese scholarship about these ‘inner rules’, I will put forward my own three-part explication based upon discussion with performers and observations. Performance variation can be divided into: 1) idiomatic variation; 2) interactive variation; and 3) interpretive (or creative) variation. These three types are different enough to allow for separate examination. In practice, however, their principles are inter-related to a considerable extent.

1. **Idiomatic Variation**

The sound ideal in the *sizhu* ensemble requires heterogeneous distribution of instruments – that is, instruments of mixed timbres together in one ensemble. One instrument per part is normal. Associated with each instrument type are specific idiomatic techniques which distinguish that instrument from any other. Identified
below are the ensemble roles and performance characteristics of the major instruments (excluding ban and biqigu percussion instruments):

*Dizi and xiao flutes. Important lead instruments, with ranges of over two octaves; capable of playing trills, turns, distinctive finger articulations, and passages requiring speed and dexterity.

*Sheng mouth-organ. Accompanying instrument, with relatively small range; has some finger and special tonguing articulations, but because it is played in parallel-5th harmonies, the instrument is not given to fast-passage performance.

*Erhu fiddle. Important lead instrument; while capable of a large range and great virtuosity, in traditional music it is seldom called upon to extend its range to more than about one octave or its techniques to more than legato bowing and upward or downward portamento. The zhonghu is occasionally used in some pieces.

*Pipa lute. Important instrument with large range; capable of extended finger rolls and other types of pitch reiteration, portamento resulting from string pushing, and harmonics. Other plucked lutes (such as sanxian and qingqin) are primarily instruments of accompaniment with more limited technical capabilities.

*Yangqin dulcimer. Accompanying instrument with wide performance range; techniques include tremolo rolls and pitch reiteration in octaves.

When these instruments are performed together, their combined idiomatic techniques form a large part of the heterophonic texture. Some of these techniques can be seen in the four instrumental parts of Zhonghua Liuban transcribed in Example 2a. Attention should be called to the special finger articulations and rhythmic density in the dizi part, parallel-5th harmonic system and rhythmic simplicity in the sheng part, legato bowing and use of portamento in the zhonghu part, and pitch reiterations (often with octave jumps) and relatively steady sixteen- and eighth-note rhythms in the pipa and yangqin parts. Similar idiomatic techniques can be seen in the xiao, erhu and yangqin parts of a different rendition transcribed in Example 2b, though it must be noted that the transcriber (Jin Xiaoobo) did not show finger articulations for the flute part and seemingly omitted some subtleties in the string parts as well.6

2. Interactive Variation
The second type of variation within Jiangnan heterophonic practice arises from the relationship of instruments to each other and the dynamic of their interaction. As identified above, the lead instruments are usually dizi (or xiao) and erhu, though pipa often occupies a strong performance role as well. Lead instruments in particular typically perform variations which, to be effective, must be performed in interaction with other instruments. At the root of this practice is the principle known as ‘complex-simple’, in reference to the heterophonic division of a melody into simultaneous variations of greater and lesser complexity. Local musicians say “if I [play] simple, then you [play] complex” (wo jian ni fan) and its reverse, “if I [play] complex, then

6 In using ‘score-order’ transcriptions appearing in Chinese repertoire collections (such as Jin n.d. and Zhou 1986), the reader is faced with other problems as well. In particular, it is seldom clear whether the instrumental variations transcribed have been taken from the heterophonic context of ensemble performance or from idealized parts known to the transcriber. The former transcription process is particularly difficult because of the need to record each instrumental part simultaneously and clearly. The latter process is considerably easier and it is most likely the one used in the Jin Xiaoobo manuscript. Of course, if this is the case, the ‘interactive variations’ shown in Example 2b may not necessarily reflect the performance context.
you [play] simple” (wo fan ni jian). The several sub-types are improvised during performance and are still in common practice among Jiangnan musicians. For their description, I will follow the terminology of Gao Houyong (1981:97 ff), though with some reorganization and new examples:

a. ‘Complex-simple’ principle (fanjian fa). ‘Complex-simple’, as a specific technique, is based upon the flexible distribution of rhythmic density between instrumental parts, whereby one instrumentalist performs the melody with rhythmically fast interpolations (sixteenth and possibly thirty-second notes) while another instrumentalist at the same time reduces his rhythmic movement to the bare skeleton (usually in quarter and eighth notes). The resultant effect is one of contrast between ‘complex’ and ‘simple’ (or active and passive) forms of the same melody performed simultaneously. This principle can be seen in Examples 2a and 2b (‘active’ passages identified). While ‘complex-simple’ is probably the most important of the interactive techniques, its usage within any given piece is intermittent.

b. ‘Broken-unbroken’ principle (duanlian fa). In ‘broken-unbroken’, one instrumentalist temporarily interrupts or ‘breaks’ his forward rhythmic movement with rests while another instrumentalist continues playing the melody. Such ‘breaks’ are usually quite brief (such as one beat or half-beat in duration) and may occur in either accented or unaccented positions. When they occur as half-beat breaks in accented positions, the

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7 Another reference to this practice is ‘complex above, simple below’ (shang fan, xia jian), and its reverse.
second half of the beat usually forms a 'pickup' note into the next passage. This is a common feature of *pipa* and *yangqin* performance style in particular, and can be seen in Example 2b.

c. *High-low* principle (*gaodi fa*). This type of variation is effected by one instrumentalist changing his register while another maintains the original register. Register change may last from a few notes to one or two phrases, and is most usually elected by performers of *dizi* (or *xiao*) and *pipa*, as these instruments have large ranges. Since the high register typically projects over the ensemble better than the middle register, 'high-low' is also an important factor in determining which instrument is active and which is passive. High register contrast can be seen in the *dizi* and *pipa* parts of Example 2a, the *xiao* part of Example 2b, and the *xiao* part of Example 2c.


Example 2b. *Zhonghua Liuban*, heterophonic texture, 3 parts (Jin Xiaobo, ms).

d. ‘Alternation’ principle (jiaoti fa). There are several sub-types of ‘alternation’ in Chinese heterophonic practice: the alternation of melodic pitches, the canonic imitation of motifs or phrases, and free imitation. In the first, two instrumentalists divide a short section of melody and play its pitches alternately. This technique is not especially common and is usually reserved for just one or two pieces in the repertoire. I have not heard it used in Zhonghua Liuban. In the second sub-type, an instrumentalist will cease playing while another musician starts a motif or phrase, and then will canonically imitate it after an appropriate number of beats. Imitation seldom lasts more than two or three cycles, and may then be followed by other variation techniques. Known as ‘alternate performance’ (lunzou), this type is commonly used in some pieces (or versions of pieces), though seldom in others. For example, it is usually employed in the Hangzhou versions of Huanle Ge, but seldom in the Shanghai versions of the same piece. In Zhonghua Liuban it is not common. The third sub-type is ‘free imitation’ (ziyou mofang). ‘Free imitation’ is employed as irregular imitation of a motif by a performer during a point of repose in the melody. An example of this can be seen in Example 2c, where the xiao flute (and pipa) freely imitate the preceding motif at a point which would otherwise be the location of melodic repose. Gao Houyong (1981:101) states that these last two imitative techniques are recent introductions into Jiangnan performance style.

3. Interpretive Variation

In addition to implementation of the above techniques, instrumentalists attempt to vary performance details each time they play. This type of variation may be identified as ‘interpretive’, or even ‘creative’, because it is more individual in nature and is influenced by performers’ moods. In practice, performers enliven melodies by smoothing rhythmic movements and creating twisting melodic contours. The old ideal, usually identified as ‘covered and controlled’ (hanxu), is traditionally interpreted to mean that flowing and curving melodic variations be interesting but not overdone. Moderation is still a valued ideal in traditional expressive culture, and overly-showy performance is considered to be in bad taste. There are several ‘inner rules’ for this individual creativity. Again, these are old, established, and well known to musicians:

a. Rhythm. Flowing and continuous rhythmic movement is ideal. Performers accomplish this by adding melodic interpolations (‘flowers’) to the skeletal melody, thus increasing rhythmic density in their variations. For the most part, this is an individual process. In Example 3, the opening beats of eight variations of Zhonghua Liuban are transcribed. All are flute variations (dizi or xiao) by the most famous performers in the Jiangnan area. The variation reflecting the most continuous rhythmic movement is that of Chen Chong (3a); the least active is that of Jin Zuli (3b), though this may be a ‘simple’ variation to allow for interaction with a ‘complex’ variation by erhu or other instrument. It will be remembered that since rhythmic motion is also divided amongst the instruments (see principles 2a, 2b and 2d, above), the resulting ensemble texture is one of nearly continuous movement, occasionally even concealing weaker cadences.

b. Contour. In melody, a twisting contour is ideal. While this is partly effected by adding melodic interpolations, performers may also freely substitute other pentatonic pitches for weak (unaccented) melodic notes. The melodic goal is to create a ‘wave’-like, undulating contour that is constantly turning back on itself. The ideal melodic motion is essentially conjunct (major 2nds and minor 3rds within the pentatonic framework). Small intervallic jumps, which are appropriate to the older style, are usually followed by a step back in the opposite direction (Gao 1981:223,231; Chen 1985:42), though this is not always the case. ‘Wave’-like contour and essentially conjunct motion can be seen clearly in the conservative Chen Chong variation (3a).

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8 For other examples of these principles, see Gao 1981:231 ff.
Example 3. Zhonghua Liuban, eight dizi / xiao variations.

The variation of Sun Yude (3c) is more imaginative, with relatively jagged contour employing a wider range of intervals. Some bold dizi performers of the twentieth century, such as Lu Chunling (3d) and Yu Xunfa (3e), achieve even more exaggerated twisting motion by using occasional large intervals as well, such as 6ths and 7ths. But these two performers, both of whom have achieved the status of ‘concert artists’, have also moved away from the old ideal to a certain degree.

c. Mode. To the standard sol-la-do-re-mi pentatonic structure, fa and ti are commonly added as neighboring or passing tones, though sometimes in substitution for other tones as well (fa for mi, ti for la or do). Usage of these extra-modal pitches as neighboring or passing tones is a valued aesthetic option and freely employed by all instrumentalists. The Yu Xunfa variation (3e) employs ti (c#) as both neighbouring tone (meas. 2) and as passing tone (meas. 3), though these are common in other variations as well. The pitch fa (g) is used less often (though see Example 2b). Usage of fa and ti in substitution for other pitches (rather than together with them, as above) is generally reserved for specific, commonly-agreed locations in the music.

It must be emphasized that, while the music of Jiangnan sizhu has an identifiable modal structure, it is a system without harmonic foundation. Therefore, its melodies can be varied quite freely. In ‘adding flowers’, each performer will at the same time

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9 Note that jumps of one octave or more constitute a performance option usually identified as the ‘high-low’ principle (examined in principle 2c).
add melodic interpolations (increasing rhythmic density), substitute other pentatonic pitches (creating twisting melodic lines), and use neighboring/passing pitches fa and ti (for additional interest). Shown in Example 4 is one short motif from the beginning of Zhonghua Liuban (starting at beat 3 as transcribed in Example 1). The 'skeleton melody' appears on the top staff. This is followed by eleven selected dizi and xiao variants, most of which have already appeared in this study. They are presented in order of increasing angularity, from the conservative to the bold (a through k). Similar comparative listings could be compiled for all other motifs as well, though the variants of other instruments (especially erhu and pipa) would need to be presented separately for idiomatic reasons.

CREATIVE BASIS FOR VARIATION
What is the creative basis for this type of variation? The 'inner rules', after all, are fairly flexible and each individual rendition differs to some degree from preceding renditions. How are decisions made as to what elaborating pitches and rhythms are chosen?

Chinese artists, both visual and musical, assign great importance to emotional states and associations with the natural world and ancient heritage. Human conditions of happiness, longing, grieving, etc., and natural phenomena such as the seasons of the year, the beauty of flying birds or blooming flowers, and the majesty of mountains and rivers, etc., have occupied central positions in the aesthetic system of the Chinese arts for centuries. References to these (and other) emotive states and natural phenomena are regularly found in the titles of music (and painting), such as 'Song of Happiness' (Huanle Ge) and 'Warm Breeze Melody' (Xunfeng Qu), which is the secondary name for Zhonghua Liuban. Of equal importance is the fact that the 'spirit' of these states and phenomena is thought to be embodied in the music itself. This 'spirit' is known as quyi, literally 'spirit of the song'.

Each piece of music is thought to have a 'spirit', which is identified in the title, and this 'spirit' is used by performers as a general reference guide to their variations. They may then interpret the 'spirit' according to their own moods or feelings. In 1990, Yu Xunfa (dizi soloist with the Shanghai Minzu Yuetuan) demonstrated this process for me by playing Xunfeng Qu with different variations. These are transcribed (by myself) in Examples 3f, 3g and 3h, following his own notated version in Example 3e. The subtle differences among these variations, which reflect only a small range of performance options, can be clearly seen and heard. What is not clear is how variations are thought to reflect both the 'spirit' of the melody and mood of the performer — that is, in specific referential terms. In performing 'Warm Breeze Melody', musicians use the image of

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10 When the concept of 'spirit' is applied to qin zither music, it is more commonly identified as yijing.
‘warm’ (or ‘comfortable’ using another translation) and ‘breeze’ as general guides to their performance style. To most musicians, these images suggest a relaxed (rather than animated) state and a smoothly-flowing (‘breeze’-like) melodic line. The ‘Song of Happiness’, on the other hand, should be performed with exuberance and animation. These associations are only general, but their recognition is widespread. Individual interpretations of performers are based upon a more private symbolic system – a system (according to my informants) in which melodic associations are assigned by individuals and their specific details changed with each performance. Thus, the three variations by Yu Xunfa (3f, 3g and 3h), while reflecting the general ‘spirit’ of the music, also reflect the mood of the performer (whether he is feeling happy or sad, agitated or relaxed, etc.). In this respect, the associations between mood and music are so individual (and so complex) that specific, consistent correspondences are virtually impossible to identify.

PERSPECTIVES
The Jiangnan system of heterophony is, therefore, the result of not one but several types of variation. These variation types function together organically to form the whole texture. An instrumentalist’s specific idiomatic capability in part determines his role in the ensemble (particularly the nature of his interaction with other musicians) and the creativity of his variations. For example, the *dizi*, *erhu* and *pipa* have soloistic qualities, with distinctive idiomatic techniques, virtuoso capabilities and projecting sounds. The interaction amongst these instruments is more pronounced than amongst the others.

Since variation is an essential element in *sizhu* music, its transcription must be handled with great care. Performers create variations which are sometimes conservative, sometimes highly imaginative – but at any rate, usually different for each performance. Most early twentieth-century notations of Jiangnan *sizhu* repertoire (such as Zhang 1920 and Zheng 1924) are of ‘melodic skeletons’ only. They are not intended for performance without application of variation techniques. Transcriptions of individual parts (such as Sun Yude’s method for *xiao*, 1962) and later ‘scores’ of ensemble music (especially the large repertoire collections of Gan 1985 and Zhou 1986) are important recent publications. But, even here, we must remember that these are not more than transcriptions of a single performance. The next performance by the same musicians will differ in detail. Transcription must take into account these essential features.

The final point concerns musical training and its effect upon performance. It was shown above that, in the traditional setting, the decision to create variations and interact with other musicians is made impromptu and during actual performance. Performers are guided by the melody’s *qunyi* and their own feelings. There are still a good number of traditionally-trained performers in the Jiangnan area who perform in this way. Most are active in the teahouses and music clubs (especially in Shanghai); some are active as teachers in the music conservatories and as professional performers in the state ensembles.

There is now another larger group of younger, conservatory-trained musicians and untrained musicians who have learned primarily from transcriptions. Their approach to performance is to imitate the variations of their teachers or those given by compilers of repertoire collections. Indeed, some variations by famous performers have become well known throughout the Jiangnan area and are widely imitated – especially if they have been legitimated by appearing in published transcription. Most younger musicians are satisfied at being able to perform the variations of others and they stop at this point. A smaller number move through the stage of imitation into that of creation. Yu Xunfa, in explaining his own development, states that at the beginning of his career he also

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11 For a slightly different perspective and good social observations, see Witzlben 1987:250 ff.
imitated the variations of his teacher (the *dizi* virtuoso Lu Chunling). Then, after learning the older traditional system and becoming established as a performer, he began to create his own variations (Yu 1990). Other creative performers have succeeded in bridging this gap as well, though my impression is that this number is relatively small. One informant estimated that, for the several dozen students majoring in Chinese music at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, fewer than 40 percent ever achieve this independence. A major difficulty, of course, is in changing from the visual orientation of following transcriptions (and following it is) to the aural orientation of changing performance details and creating variations. For those who have made the change and for the traditionally-trained, variation is the life-blood of the music and one of the primary determinants of good performance style.

APPENDIX A

Selected 'variations' of short motifs, *gongche* notation from *Xiange Bidu* (Qiu 1917) and transcription.
APPENDIX B

Zhonghua Liuban (here named as Hualhua Liuban), gongche notation from Qudiao Gongche Daguan
(Zhang 1920), 'melodic skeleton'.

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AN EMBLEM OF TIBETAN CULTURE

The Dra-nyen
(The Himalayan lute)

IAN COLLINGE
Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal

Media images of Tibet, the ‘Land of Snows’ on the great Himalayan Plateau, with its desolate mountains, vast grasslands, deep blue skies – and its many Buddhist monasteries – do not often leave the average Western observer with much recollection of a rich musical culture. At times the striking timbres of ritual music feature: the distinctive sound of rows of maroon-clad monks chanting, rising and falling like the waves of the ocean, or the commanding resonance of a pair of long Tibetan horns. Rarely, however, are European viewers and listeners aware of the secular traditions. Visits by Tibetan performers from China or India have occasionally given us a taste of its variety and character, its elegance and its energy. This article gives attention to one instrument which seems to have come to symbolize Tibetan folk music more than any other – the Tibetan lute, the dra-nyen.

The Tibetan spelling for ‘dra-nyen’ is sgra-snyan. The Chinese pinyin spelling is zhanian¹. Its companion instruments in a typical traditional ensemble are the two-stringed fiddle (the ‘pi-wang’, pi-wang), the hammer-dulcimer (the ‘gyü-mang’, rgyud-mang, or yang-chin, pinyin yangqin), the flute (the ‘ling-bu’, gling-bu) and sometimes the small pellet-bells, known as ‘E-ka’ (g. yer-ka). In comparison with these and with the shawm, cymbals or drums in other secular contexts², the dra-nyen appears to many to be the most distinctively Tibetan in its shape and its timbre. Furthermore, the dra-nyen takes pride of place among the folk music instruments of many Tibetan ethnic groupings. In particular, it is the principal instrument in most of the folk-songs and dances of Central and Western Tibet (much of Tibet Autonomous Region). In addition it is sometimes played in Tibetan areas of Sichuan, Yunnan,

¹ The phonetic rendering dra-nyen has been adopted in this study because of its use by Tibetans in the English-language context, its recognition of the separate syllables, and its ready comprehension among Western readers. Its pinyin equivalent is zhanian, and the word is pronounced in a variety of ways according to dialect, for example ‘dranyen’, ‘dramyen’ and ‘dumnyen’ (where ‘dr’ indicates the retroflex plosive). In this article, Chinese pinyin and other romanization systems are italicized, while the transliteration of Tibetan spellings (Turrell Wylie system) are shown in expanded printing. Pronunciation is expressed by means of inverted commas.
² These include the sur-na (also bsu-rna) and ‘daman’ (brda-ma or lda-ma) of the Ladakhi and Gar shawm and kettle-drum ensembles, as well as the cymbals (sбууб-’chai) and frame-drum (rnga) used, for instance, in Tibetan opera.

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Qinghai and Gansu provinces. Outside of present-day China, it also takes priority among the Chang-pas of Ladakh, India, some groups such as the Sherpas and Manang people of Northern Nepal, and the Bhutanese. Its construction and performance techniques vary from place to place but in each of these areas it owns the same name: dra-nyen – ‘beautiful sound’. It could, therefore, be identified as the Himalayan lute. In this paper, however, it is the Central Tibetan lute which is the main focus of attention.

The findings of this article seem to indicate that the dra-nyen is an emblem of Tibetan culture. In the modern era, this inevitably reflects the socio-political environment of the dra-nyen on either side of the Himalayas. First, a description of the instrument and an account of its possible origins is given. Then attention will turn to its traditional position within Tibetan culture and its use in the modern world.

**THE TIBETAN DRA-NYEN**

The Central Tibetan dra-nyen of outside of the Tibetan homelands. craftsmen, it has been developed Tibetan refugees in Dharamsala, factories in China, such as in of a 6-stringed, long-necked, It appears in several sizes, modern length seems to and 115 cm. It is by a strap over the player’s right shoulder, and with the today is manufactured both within and Apart from those made by village over the past three decades among India, and in musical instrument Beijing. Its classification is that fretless, plucked lute, but the standard be between 103 usually held
'waist' of the instrument nesting around his or her right thigh, when the player is seated. The strings are struck with a bamboo plectrum in the performer's right hand and the strings are stopped by the index and middle fingers of the left hand. There is no left-hand position-changing technique.

Diagram of a Central Tibetan Dra-nyen (Dharamsala model).

The strings are arranged in pairs and for Central Tibetan music these double-courses are tuned to the solfège designations of La-re-soh (or in cipher notation 66 22 55). Generally speaking, Tibetan specialist musicians pitch the tonic around the note d, and tune the dra-nyen as follows: BB ee AA. This 're-entrant' tuning, the instrument's limited range of a seventh and the consequent need for frequent octave transposition are distinguishing features of Central Tibetan dra-nyen music. Some instruments have 3 single-courses, and some players in China follow a 'modern' system of 5 or 6 single courses tuned in consecutive fourths ([B] e a d' g' c'').

Tuning and Fingering.

Perhaps two of the most striking features of the dra-nyen's appearance are its waist and bowl. The major part of the instrument is constructed out of one or two pieces of wood. This can be walnut, poplar, willow, rhododendron, pine or sandalwood, depending on the availability of the woods and the preference of the maker. The wood is hollowed-out and traditionally the lower-neck is opened up and covered with a flat

top-plate made from the same kind of wood. The belly of the instrument is made from animal skin, usually goat- or snake-skin, which covers the hollowed-out bowl end of the instrument. The result of this hollowing-out process is an instrument with one continuous sound-chamber, extending from the bowl to the upper end of the neck. However, the lower-neck is characterized by a prominent point on either side. This creates a ‘waist’ between the points and the skin-covered bowl section. Acoustically, therefore, the sound-chamber is divided into three differently-shaped sections, the rounded bowl, the lower-neck with its points, and the long, hollow (slightly tapering) upper-neck.

The sound-hole traditionally appears as a crescent-shaped slit at the junction of the skin and the lower-neck. Chinese factory-made instruments and some other designs feature the ‘rose-hole’ in the centre of the lower neck between the points. A hard wood such as sandalwood is chosen for the bridge. The back of the bowl and lower-neck usually have a ribbed design. Strings have traditionally been made from gut, but more recently nylon (in India and Nepal) and metal-wound string (in Beijing) have been used.

The head and tuning-peggs are also distinctive features of the Central Tibetan models. The former is called a ‘horse-head’ (‘tan-go’, rta-mgo). The heads of dra-nyens from other regions often depict the actual features of a creature’s head, and some Tibetan fiddles have horse-head finials, but the Central Tibetan dra-nyen retains this characteristic only in its barest outline. A curved ‘horse-neck’ and flattened ‘head’ serve as a front-opening peg-box for six long conical tuning-peggs, with their distinctive vase-shaped heads.

The external decoration of the modern Central Tibetan dra-nyen is comparatively simple. Rather than paint their instruments, craftsmen in Dharamsala prefer to make use of the natural grain pattern of the wood (described as the ri-mo, ‘picture’), while dra-nyens made in Beijing are more heavily varnished. Dharamsala makers often use two natural wood-colours, ‘red’ wood for the main body, including the fingerboard section of the neck and ‘white’ wood for the top-plate covering the lower neck and sometimes a thin plate covering the head-terminal (head-plate). A goat-skin belly is sometimes painted green. They also like to emphasize the instrument’s ‘water-drop’ shape by narrowing the waist. Beijing models are often decorated by the addition of a white rose-hole and head-plate of bone or plastic, both in a star-shaped design.
Older Central Tibetan instruments, many shorter in length (around 63 – 86 cm), were frequently painted in reds and greens, with floral and/or Buddhist motifs adorning the lower neck. Some finger-boards had a blue background decorated with intersecting lines forming small diamond shapes. Some instruments had zoomorphic head-terminals. Similarly, most older instruments had back-opening peg-boxes, where the strings were attached to the pegs via a slit at the uppermost point of the neck, a feature retained by nearly all other regional forms of the instrument (i.e. in Ladakh, Nepal and Bhutan). Although, prior to Chinese rule, dra-nyens made in the area around Shigatse and Lhatse (Xigaze and Lhaze) were sought after, the variety demonstrated by these older instruments suggests that performers and village craftsmen often made their own instruments and that by a similar means the various regions of the Tibetan world developed their own distinctive dra-nyens. Today, players of the Central Tibetan dra-nyen often look for instruments made by specialist makers in Dharamsala or Beijing.

Many of these features (e.g. the shape and position of the sound-hole, the style of the ‘horse-head’, the size and outline of the tuning-peg, the tuning and number of the strings, the contour of the lower-neck with its protruding points, barbs, scallops or bulges, and the type and degree of decoration) distinguish the Central Tibetan instrument from its counterparts in Ladakh, Nepal and Bhutan.

**DRA-NYENS FROM OTHER AREAS**
The Ladakhi dra-nyen (pronounced ‘damnyen’), played by a Tibetan-related group called the Chang-pas, is fairly short and has a horse-head finial. Some of these

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4 A number of Tibetan-related musical instruments are kept in museum collections in Europe, including dra-nyens of the older type. I am particularly grateful to the staff at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, the Horniman Museum, London, and the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, for allowing me to examine their Tibetan stringed instruments.
instruments have up-turning barbs, while others have broad points at the lower end of the neck. The lower neck is sometimes hollowed-out but left open, not covered with a topplate. Instruments with a very similar appearance are bowed and are called ‘pi-wang’ (pi-wang). The bowed tube spike-fiddle common in other Tibetan areas, known as the ‘pi-wang’ (sometimes called by the Chinese name hu-qin) is not known among the Chang-pes in Ladakh. The accordatura of the Ladakhi dra-nyen is three double-courses of sequential fourths, i.e. § 11 44. The dra-nyen played in Western and parts of Southern Tibet is also tuned in rising fourths.\(^5\)

The ‘Nepalese’ dra-nyen\(^6\) (pronounced ‘dam-nyen’; Nepali name: Tung-na), is that played by musicians of Tibetan-related ethnic groups in Northern Nepal (areas like Lo Mustang, Dolpo, Nyishang and Yolmo). It is often characterized by a zoomorphic head-terminal (usually that of a horse, lion or bird). Sometimes one head is surmounted upon another. The number of strings varies (usually four or five) and the tuning might be a mixture of single and double courses (eg. § 11 4). Here in Nepal, the dra-nyen is very small in size (58–70 cm long). Here, too, is the greatest variety of shapes, and embellishment is primarily a matter of motifs carved into the wood. Within this category falls the short sgra-snyan found within Central and Western Tibet itself, some of which have found their way across the Tibet-Nepal border with Tibetan refugees. For example, a former nomad from the Chang-Thang region, who now lives in Nepal, plays a 5-stringed short dra-nyen tuned in sequential fourths (§ 22 55). It features a peacock-head and lotus designs, carved into the wood. The bowls of some short dra-nyen from Southern Tibet display a ring of animal designs.

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The Bhutanese dra-nyen\(^7\) (pronounced ‘drannyaen’) is the most elaborately decorated. Several features make this model quite unmistakable: a ‘head’ of a makara (a mythical sea-monster, chu-srin); a seventh peg along the left side of the long neck; a scalloped lower-neck; a figure of Sarasvati (Tibetan: yan-chen-ma, Dbyangs-can-ma, goddess of melody) playing a lute in front of a Buddhist stupa (Tibetan: ‘chorten’, mchod-rten) and cloud motifs painted onto the lower-neck, which also incorporates ‘ram’s-horn’-shaped sound-holes. Furthermore, the skin is painted green and much of the instrument is red, while the Chinese character for ‘long life’ often appears on the back. This seven-stringed instrument is tuned in an unusual arrangement of fourths and octaves (5 1 1 4 4, for example e E a A a d d). There are two sizes of Bhutanese dra-nyen, the larger one (about 115 cm long) for solo playing and the smaller one (eg. 84–95 cm long) for the player to accompany his own singing. Both, in other words, are fairly long.

POSSIBLE ORIGINS OF THE DRA-NYEN

Common features of these different types of dra-nyen indicate, therefore, that as a genus the dra-nyen is a long-necked fretless plectrum-plucked lute used in the folk music traditions of the Himalayas. The ‘waisted’ shape (or at least the presence of some distinctive protrusion at the lower end of the neck), a zoomorphic head and a skin belly are specific identifying traits. Geographically, it is particularly associated with the Himalayan region, i.e. with today’s Tibet Autonomous Region and its neighbour-regions to the South and West.

Long-necked lutes do not appear in Indian culture until the 10th century AD. Likewise the existence of the Chinese san-xian (a three-stringed long-necked plucked lute) is not well attested prior to the 13th century AD\(^8\). The history of the Tibetan lute, however, precedes these dates. For this reason and in view of the primary areas of the instrument’s distribution, it is perhaps to Central Asia that we should look for clues to the dra-nyen’s origin.\(^9\)

It is well established that ‘barbed’ short-necked lutes were to be found in Central Asia during the 1st century AD in the area to the North West of present-day India, depicted in the reliefs and sculptures of Gandharan art.\(^10\) The culture of this area brought together people from NW China and the Persian world. The barb also features in certain present-day Central Asian long-necked lutes, perhaps most notably in the Kashgar rubab of Xinjiang Province\(^11\). This lute, however, differs from the dra-nyen in several important respects: it is fretted, solid-necked, with a back-turning peg-box. Furthermore, its barbs are solid.

The two instruments which appear to bear the closest resemblances to the dra-nyen are the Pamir robab and the Bulanzikum. The former is a 6-stringed, fretless, waisted lute, made from one piece of wood, with a tapering hollow neck, curved peg-box, skin

\(^7\) The Horniman and Victoria and Albert Museums in London both have examples of Bhutanese dra-nyens. Also see notes for the disc: Tibetan and Bhutanese Instrumental and Folk Music, John Levy 1973, Lyricord LLST 7257–58.


belly, protruding spurs and is played with a small wooden plectrum. Its tuning is re-entrant (d' a d g g). The latter is also a 6-stringed, long-necked, fretless, waisted lute. Its lower-neck sports points and a scalloped waist. The head curves in a concave direction and the tuning is also re-entrant (c# a e c# f# f#). These are both Tajik instruments.\(^{12}\)

The horse-head finial of the dra-nyen is another feature which associates it with Central Asia, especially with those cultures we could call 'horse cultures'. Horse carvings appear on instruments, especially fiddles, across a definable Eurasian area, from the Balkans to Tibet and Mongolia.

Design features and geographical distribution, therefore, seem to indicate that the dra-nyen's origins lie more within Central Asia than in other areas. Indeed, the resemblances between the Tajik and Tibetan lutes suggest the existence of a series of high-mountain lute types in a special region at the roof of the world'.\(^{13}\)

The first historical records of the dra-nyen are those describing elaborate royal celebrations during the reign of the famous king Songtsen Gampo (Srong-btsan sgam-po; 620–649 AD).\(^{14}\) An eighth century document describes the dedication of the first Tibetan monastery, Samye (Bsam-yas) between the years 775–779 AD.\(^{15}\) The lute that was played for these celebrations is referred to as a pi-wang, a term now more often applied to the two-stringed fiddle (huqin), but which in classical literature denotes the plucked lute, including that represented in Buddhist iconography.\(^{16}\) This period of Tibetan history saw much cultural interaction between Tibetans and their neighbours on all sides. According to these records, music and entertainments of many different types and from different cultures were performed under the auspices of the royal Tibetan court.\(^{17}\)

Other historical and musical considerations fairly clearly suggest the Central Asian origin of the dra-nyen. It is significant that the principal Central Tibetan musical genres with which the dra-nyen is associated are all thought to have been brought from South and/or Western Tibet.\(^{18}\) These are the 'Khar' (Gar) music and dance tradition, and the styles known as 'nang-ma' (nang-ma), 'tö-she' (stod-gzhas), and 'gor-she' (sgor-}

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\(^{12}\) Tajik areas include parts of Afghanistan, Tajikistan (CIS), and the extreme West of Xinjiang Province, China.


\(^{14}\) Kun-beang Rgyal-mtshan, Gar gyi Lo-rgyud dang 'byung-khun Mdo-tsam ('A brief history and origin of Gar') in Mchod-prin Gar-rol, Lhasa 1985, p. 5.


\(^{16}\) Tsong Kha-pa (1357–1419), cited in Ter Ellington, 'Meditative Realization of the Melodious Goddess', in Asian Music 1979 Vol.10/2 p. 1–2. The term pi-wang appears in the Mahāvyupatti, the well-known Sanskrit-Tibetan dictionary of the early 9th century AD; see Alexander Cōma de Körös, Sanskrit-Tibetan English Vocabulary, being an edition and translation of the Mahāvyupatti, ed. E.D. Ross and M.S.C. Vidyabhusana, Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol.IV no.1, Calcutta 1910, pp. 182–3. It is also referred to in the Amarakosa, translated into Tibetan in the 13th century (see Dr. Lokesh Chandra (ed.), The Amarakosa in Tibet, being a new Tibetan version by the great grammarian Si-tu, New Delhi 1965: folios 12–14). In both places the word translates the Sanskrit word viśā "the Indian lute" (Körös, ibid. p. 183).

\(^{17}\) See Ter Ellington, Mandala (ibid) pp.7 3–78; David Snellgrove and Hugh Richardson, A Cultural History of Tibet, 1968, repr. by Shambala 1986, pp. 64–65.

gzhas). It is generally agreed that the first three of these were introduced into the Tibetan court and capital (Lhasa) during the 17th century. There is also a view that certain types of Tibetan music (especially these genres) have traditionally travelled from the West ('Ngari, Mnga-ri) to Central Tibet ('u-Tsang, Dbus-gtsang) and then on to Eastern Tibet ('Kham' Khams and 'Amdo', A-mdo).

Tibetan and Ladakhi musicians themselves express the belief that the dra-nyen had its origin in South-Western Tibet. If they are right, and these other considerations are taken into account, the evidence seems to confirm the opinion that the dra-nyen is a Himalayan lute, related most closely to the Central Asian long-necked lute family and that its early forms were already known in the 7th and 8th centuries AD. Tibetan musicians have the right to affirm, therefore, as they have expressed to me, that the dra-nyen is a "truly Tibetan" instrument.

THE NAME 'DRA-NYEN'

The status of the dra-nyen in Tibetan areas appears to be reflected in its name, its association with the gods, and in its role in a variety of musical contexts.

The name 'dra-nyen' (sgra-'snyan) has a meaning which suggests that the instrument holds some position of prominence within Tibetan musical culture. The flexibility of Tibetan terminology clouds the issue a little, but in comparison with 'pi-wang' (pi-wang), 'gyi-mang' (rgyud-mang) and 'tam-bu-ra' (tam-bu-ra), all of which are at times used to denote the dra-nyen, the term 'dra-nyen' (sgra-'snyan) has the most emotive and evaluative connotations. It is the most common and standard term for the instrument and it means "sweet-sounding".

The Tibetan term 'dra' (sgra) means 'sound'. The word 'nyen' (snyan) derives from the adjective 'nyen-po' (snyan-po) and means 'beautiful', 'interesting', 'pleasant' or 'sweet', in respect of the ear (snyan, honorific for 'ear'). In addition, the adjectival phrase 'sweet-sounding' ('dra nyen-po') has a special evaluative function in contrasting, for example, different styles of chant composition. Here one genre is classified as aurally 'more beautiful'. In the context of monastic chant, this concept is inextricably tied up with notions of greater ritual effectiveness and technical skill involved in chant performance.

By contrast, the alternative names have little to offer in terms of a specific Tibetan meaning. The terms pi-wang and tam-bu-ra are of foreign origin and their lexical significance is unclear, while 'gyi-mang' (rgyud-mang) simply means 'many-stringed'. In addition, pi-wang and rgyud-mang are more often used nowadays for other instruments, the two-stringed fiddle and the hammer-dulcimer respectively.

INSTRUMENT OF THE GODS?

Closely connected with the concept of aural beauty in Tibetan culture, is the use of the lute in various offerings and in ritual art. The 'silent lute' placed on an altar, like the conch-shell, is a symbol, an offering connected with the sense of hearing. This may be a dra-nyen which an individual wished to donate to a shrine or it might be a decorative

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20 Various theories are propounded concerning the etymology of the term pi-wang. The most coherent is the connection with words such as (Chinese) Pipa and (Mongolian) Bi-ba (cp. Japanese Bi-wa), which commends itself on the grounds of: I) linguistic similarity; II) the pipa-like shape of many of the lutes of Tibetan iconography (also see note 17); and III) Tibetan acquaintance with Chinese instruments from the Tang dynasty at the latest (AD 618–907). Its association with the Tibetan fiddle (pi-wang) may have arisen from its close connection with the Mongolian 4-stringed fiddle, the dörven chikhtei khaan, also called bi-wa.
instrument not intended for performance. Before the Communist era, a processional silent display of musical instruments including lutes, normally stored in a state collection, was made each year in Lhasa – also as an offering of the sense of hearing.\footnote{Takra Tethong, Asian Music 1979 Vol.10/2 p. 5.} Likewise, on the fifteenth day of the Tibetan New Year a performance-offering (‘cho’she’, mchod-gzas) was made (a tradition maintained in Dharamsala). The music played in this religious setting included that of the secular lute, the dra-nyen.

When held in the hands of an iconographic Buddhist deity, the lute of iconography takes on a significance quite beyond that of the secular lute. It is an attribute of the deity. Nowadays it is generally referred to as a dra-nyen, and some examples depict it in a form resembling the secular instrument. This close association between the religious and secular lutes lends to the secular dra-nyen certain religious connotations, even though it is almost entirely prohibited from ritual performance.

This is the reason why the dra-nyen has sometimes been described as ‘the instrument of the gods’ by Tibetan secular musicians. It is associated with a number of iconographic figures, among them the celestial musicians (Gandhara or Kinnara; Tibetan: Dri-za'), with their king, the guardian king of the East, who is depicted with his lute at the entrance to most Tibetan shrines (Dhītaṛāstra, Yul-’khor-brung), and most of all with Sarasvati (‘Yang-chen-ma’, Dbyang-can-ma), goddess of melody, the Buddhist embodiment of sound in its purest form. In other words, the heavenly music played on this symbolic lute exceeds even the most beautiful, most efficacious and most skillfully executed chant of the monasteries. In the Tibetan theoretical scale of values, this ‘mental music’, heard only in meditations and dreams, is the peak of aural beauty (‘dra-nyen-po’, sgra snyan-po).\footnote{Takra Tethong, Asian Music 1979 Vol.10/2 p. 5.}

The name of the secular lute, the 'dra-nyen' ("sweet-sounding"), then, has lofty associations, although its primary reference must surely be to the secular entertainment music and village folk dances in which the dra-nyen plays a prominent role. This non-religious role, though, is the very reason why the instrument is barred from monastic ritual music. The prohibition is softened a little by its inclusion in certain exceptional ritual contexts – but no stringed instrument is otherwise permitted space in Tibetan Buddhist religion. In real life, however, many monks have become some of the best performers of folk music. One former monk testifies that the very 'sweetness' of the sound of stringed instruments is a distraction to meditation or study.\footnote{Takra Tethong, Asian Music 1979 Vol.10/2 pp. 9–10.} What, then, is this 'sweetness' of sound which is so attractive to the Tibetan ear, monastic or otherwise?

\textbf{SECULAR CONNOTATIONS – A MOTHER'S VOICE}

The answer to that question must surely lie in the cultural connotations of the traditional performance context of dra-nyen music. In some folk-song texts the dra-nyen is sometimes referred to as a person with a name (eg. Dra-nyen Tashi Wangyal), whose parts (wood, skin, strings, etc.) are identified as those making up his closest circle of relationships (father, mother, brother, friends). In another song-text, the appeal of the dra-nyen's timbre is likened to the sound of one's mother's voice. This suggests that the “sweet sound” of the instrument has something to do with its evocation of homely associations and cherished relationships, especially one's home-community with its festivals and dances, led by the melody of the dra-nyen. In addition, prior to the 1950s, troupes of travelling entertainers from Eastern Tibet (Kham-pa ral-pa)\footnote{Also called ras-pa or res-pa. See Takra Tethong, ibid. p.8; Losang Lhalungpa 'Tibetan Music: Sacred and Secular', in Asian Music 1969 Vol.1/2 p. 9; Jamyang Norbu, in Zlos-Gar (ibid) p. 3.} would sometimes visit communities and some might perform the dra-nyen with great skill.

The aristocratic setting of the dra-nyen in courtly entertainment music for the Dalai

\footnote{Ter Ellingson, Asian Music 1979 Vol.10/2 p. 115,151.}
Lamas or for other regional rulers (e.g., the Gar and Nang-ma ensembles of the 19th and early 20th centuries) lends to the instrument a certain air of elegance. The nang-ma and "tö: she" (stod-gzhas) ensemble styles also became very popular in the capital during the 1930s and 1940s under the creativity of a well-known musician, Teacher Nam-gye (Rnam-rgyal). The instrument is popular, therefore, both as a specialist’s and as an amateur’s instrument.

THE DRA-NYEN IN EXILE

In the very different political context of today, Tibetan musical traditions have to compete with Western, Indian and Chinese music. Both exile and non-exile communities have discovered the need to distinguish their musical culture from the music they are absorbing around them. Although Tibetan Buddhist music is strikingly different, to a casual non-Tibetan listener much of their secular music is less obviously so. The distinctiveness and status of the dra-nyen in Tibetan folk traditions has, therefore, given it something of a role as an emblem of Tibetan folk music.

The journal of the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA) in Dharamsala, was given the name ‘dra-nyen’. This publication described the instrument as “by far the most popular instrument among Tibetan musicians”, which “has dominated Tibetan secular music for many centuries”. Along with the long horn (dung-chen) used in Tibetan Buddhist music, it is singled out in TIPA’s programme notes as “uniquely Tibetan”.

In newly composed music, this evaluation is expressed in a variety of ways. Some music uses traditional instrumentation, often with the dra-nyen as the only instrument. More popular and westernized styles include the dra-nyen as a very obvious musical “emblem” of Tibetan ethnicity. Alongside a drum-kit, electric guitar and keyboards, the sound of the dra-nyen is striking. In other words, there has been a determined effort to retain a degree of cultural distinctiveness alongside influences from Western music. This reflects the geographical and social context in which the exiled communities live and for some Tibetans this is a political statement deriving in no small measure from a fear that cherished parts of Tibetan culture might otherwise become extinct, swallowed up by a more dominant musical culture. It is a nostalgic symbol of a land they or their parent have left behind.

THE DRA-NYEN IN PRESENT-DAY CHINA

In the Tibetan homelands, the dra-nyen is still performed and appreciated, though with the younger generation here, as in exile, it encounters a great deal of competition from more modern-sounding musical instruments, especially the guitar. The traditional popularity and long history of the dra-nyen is acknowledged and it features today alongside Western and Chinese instruments. Sometimes new compositions feature the dra-nyen, setting idiomatic dra-nyen music against a clearly Chinese accompaniment, or use it rather like a bass pipa, with glides and tremolos characteristic of the Chinese pipa. Likewise, the sandalwood and snake-skin appearance of the Beijing model of the dra-nyen has given it to certain resemblances to the Chinese long-necked lute, the sanxian. In other words, these elements demonstrate a sinicizing of the instrument.

On the other hand, a very popular regional idiom has emerged among the North-Eastern Tibetan sub-grouping known as Amdo-Tibetans, in Qinghai, N.Sichuan and

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26 The Dra-nyen (Ibid) 1986 Vol.9/1 inside cover; and Programme for the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts tour of the United Kingdom in 1988.
27 Yuan and Mao Dictionary p. 249.
W. Gansu Province. This genre is called 'dram-nyen dung-len' (sgra-snyan rdung-len), meaning "dra-nyen play and sing", in which the lutenist also sings the words of the song. This style is featured on local radio broadcasts and on tape-cassettes. It could be that this new style makes special use of the dra-nyen because of its Tibetan-ness, as an emblem of cultural identity.

Chinese influence was by no means absent from some kinds of Tibetan secular music before the Communist era. This is clearest in the nang-ma ensemble. A well-respected 18th century Tibetan army officer, Tenzin Panjor (Bstan-'dzin Dpal-'byor), received musical instruction while in Beijing. On his return to Tibet in 1793, he introduced the Chinese hammer-dulcimer (the yangqin) and established the now traditional ensemble of lute, fiddle, dulcimer and flute. That situation demonstrated a degree of cultural borrowing. However, much of present-day Tibetan music has been drawn almost completely under the Chinese cultural umbrella. The tunes may be Tibetan, but the orchestration and overall sound is Chinese. This too is a musical illustration of the socio-political context of the dra-nyen.

CONCLUSION
This article has presented the dra-nyen as an emblem of Tibetan culture, especially of its folk music traditions. For the nomads that emblem is a particular style of singing or the flute, for Eastern Tibetans it is the fiddle (pi-wang). However, for Central and Western Tibetans and their Himalayan neighbours, the dra-nyen is equivalent to the harp in Wales, the Hardanger fiddle in Norway or the morin khuur in Mongolia.

The last forty years have made such a symbol all the more desirable. Prior to 1949 most Tibetan communities lived in virtual isolation from the outside world. Now, their folk-music culture has to thrive in the midst of at least three imposing and historic music-cultures and faces the grim possibility of gradually being usurped. At present that situation does not apply. New Tibetan popular music styles are being developed. Not all of it makes use of the dra-nyen, but one thing is evident: where there is Tibetan folk, dance, or popular music, a dra-nyen will not be far away. In some senses, it would appear that the very circumstances in which the Tibetans find themselves are thankfully serving to preserve and promote this instrument. For the world of music that must be good news.

The author collected data while studying language for two years (1988 – 1990) in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, including a field-trip to Central Tibet, and has been able to interview some of the members of the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (India) during their visit to London in the Summer of 1991. The material was originally collated for a dissertation for the author’s Master’s degree in Ethnomusicology at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.

28 Zhol-khang Dar-rgyas, Shes-bya'i Zegs-ma (ibid) p. 42.
A WESTERN MUSICIAN’S VIEW OF

China’s Pop & Rock Scene

DENNIS REA
Seattle, Washington

The American guitarist Dennis Rea, briefly visiting China in early 1989, soon found himself playing pop and rock music on local Sichuan radio. Rea returned to China in subsequent years. He brought along Western bands such as ‘Identity Crisis’ and ‘The Vagaries’, and gave Chinese audiences a rare taste of contemporary American music. Rea met with stars like Zhang Xing and Cui Jian, produced a Chinese solo album and appeared in China’s International TV Festival. This is a personal and journalistic account of his experiences with the Chinese pop and rock scene. He views it as ‘primitive’ and ‘lacking in imagination’ but is very positive about his cooperation with Chinese musicians. Rea discovers underground rock communities in Beijing and Chengdu, struggles with Chinese record producers, police guards and officials, as well as with pathetically inadequate equipment and Sichuanese flies.

I am an electric guitarist and composer based in Seattle, Washington. My activities have been many and varied – modern jazz, free improvisation, electronic music, progressive rock – but consistently outside of the mainstream.

I first went to China in January 1989 at the invitation of my wife, Anne Joiner, a Chinese History major who was teaching English at Chengdu University of Science and Technology in Sichuan. I myself had no previous background in China Studies, but had acquired a strong interest through Anne. She recommended me to her university as a teacher and I was soon on my way to Chengdu. At the time I viewed the whole episode as an interruption of my musical pursuits; although I brought my guitar with me I had no expectations of playing music publicly in China. I confess that I had imagined the Chinese music scene to be more primitive than it actually was; I fancied that I would have the only electric guitar in Chengdu, but in this I was happily mistaken.

One reason why I didn’t expect to perform was because the music I prefer to play often borders on the avant-garde, if not in academic terms then certainly in Chinese. From what I knew of China and the Chinese, art of an extreme nature was not generally condoned; this was borne out by most of the music I heard there, which was singularly lacking in imagination.
THE BEGINNING – A GUITAR CLUB IN CHENGDU
Shortly after I arrived in Chengdu, a delegation from the University’s guitar club turned up at my door. They expressed an interest in hearing me play, so I went with them to a chilly room where, to my surprise, about 25 people were waiting. This was my first experience of the phenomenon in China whereby a minor occasion somehow becomes an event, especially when it involves a foreigner. I found the attention disconcerting, all the more so because I wasn’t accustomed to playing solo. But it was apparently well-received, since from that time onward I was regularly asked to perform.
Among those present at that first impromptu ‘show’ was a guitarist from off-campus named Zhao Xiong who evidently commanded some respect. He owned what was probably the only 12-string guitar within 500 miles (the gift of an American English teacher) and was an interesting, idiosyncratic player who wrote uncharacteristically bluesy instrumental pieces. He later became my guitar student, and I often involved him in group performances. I credit Zhao Xiong with introducing me to the larger community outside of my university. I took part in several guitar concerts he organized as president of the Chengdu Guitar Association, where I met a number of promising
players. These were basically free concerts, sometimes for several hundred people, with dinner thrown in for the musicians.

**STYLISTIC DIVERSITY**
One of the things I enjoyed about these and other concerts in China was their stylistic diversity. A single show might include classical, folk, and rock music, and the audiences, unlike those in the US, were open to it all. In America, listeners are defined more by what they don't like than by what they do. The Chinese, on the other hand, trying to come to terms with a flood of unfamiliar music since the late 70s, didn't have a clear idea of what was 'hip' or not, which I found refreshing. Once I understood this I began to consciously introduce more unusual material in my performances, in an effort to break some new ground with the audiences. From an initially cautious and lyrical approach I started to include more dissonance, extended playing techniques, and sound for its own sake. While it would be exaggerating to say that crowds of Chinese were won over to alternative music, people were curious, attentive, and often genuinely enthusiastic. Early on I made a habit of including adaptations of Chinese traditional music in my set, partly as a gesture of respect for my hosts, partly as a challenge to myself, and partly out of a sincere interest in Chinese music. This naturally endeared me to my audiences.

After organizing concerts at my university and playing at bars, discos, the Worker's Cultural Palace, and even a textile factory, I came to the attention of the official media. I played and held seminars on jazz and the guitar at Sichuan Music Conservatory, to whom I had been introduced by Anne. Sichuan Radio brought me into their studio to make a multi-track recording of my music, which was later broadcast several times. At Chinese New Year I was asked to participate in Sichuan Radio's New Year's Eve concert; I was told that the performance, an improvisation on *Hong Lou Meng* with the well-known *erhu* player Zhu Ling, was heard by an estimated 10 million people in Sichuan. At that point I realized just how many people this unusual music was reaching, and recognized a unique opportunity to help facilitate the introduction of non-mainstream, non-commercial music on a large scale. Playing music had gone from being a sideline to being the main focus of my energies.

**ZHANG XING, CHINA'S FIRST POP-ROCK PHENOMENON**
At about this time I was introduced to Zhang Xing, AKA Zhang Han, a major pop singer who was in Chengdu for two concerts. He was travelling with a Beijing rock band, *Yinhuocong* ('Firefly Band') which seemed to enjoy a reputation among musicians. Zhang Xing, as it turned out, was a notorious figure in China. As a young man in Shanghai, he took a fancy to the guitar, which was then considered an emblem of bourgeois decadence. He says that the police confiscated and destroyed several of his guitars in the 1970s. After the political climate relaxed, the guitar was rehabilitated as an instrument. Zhang Xing appeared playing one on a Shanghai TV talent show and took first prize. 30,000 guitars were reportedly sold in metropolitan Shanghai the following week. He went on to make several recordings which established him as mainland China's first genuine pop-rock phenomenon. Some claim that he has sold more recordings than any singer in Chinese history.

Zhang Xing also affected the lifestyle of a celebrity, flamboyant and ostentatious, with numerous romantic liaisons. This earned him the disapproval of Beijing, who viewed the emergence of rock and roll as a threat and Zhang Xing as an unwholesome role model for China's youth. In truth his music, consisting almost entirely of warmed-over Taiwan and Hong Kong pop ballads, was laughably tame by Western standards. The upshot of all this was that the government, on moral grounds (citing his well-publicized affairs), sentenced him to 8 years in prison and banned his music! The story was picked up by the New York Times and Washington Post, who protested that the
punishment was out of all proportion to the crime. Presumably as a result of this he was released after serving 3 years. Later he embarked on a comeback tour which included the dates in Chengdu.

JOINING THE BAND
A mutual friend introduced me to Zhang Xing and the band. After playing for them in their hotel room, I was astonished to be invited to join the band for two shows at the sports arena – in 2 days! I protested that Taiwanese pop wasn't my forte, but the absurdity of the situation appealed to me, so I accepted on the condition that we have ample rehearsal time.

As it turned out, we rehearsed only once, and the band was more interested in learning my songs than in teaching me their old warhorses. Two days later I found myself onstage in front of 5,000 people, blindly improvising my way through 10 songs I had scarcely heard before. (The band also played one of my songs, *Huo Guo*, which went down fairly well with the crowd.) It was a full-blown Vegas-style show, with the ritual flower presentation and dancing girls decked out in Cultural Revolution garb. A highlight of the set was a rock–up rendering of the old Maoist paean, *Taiyang zui hong*.

I apparently wasn't that great of an irritant, for I was asked to continue on to Chongqing with the band for 4 more shows at the sports arena there. I was also given a solo feature in which I performed Xinjiang Uighur music on electric guitar. But by the end of our stint in Chongqing I was beginning to feel foolish playing saccharine pop songs I never would have played in my own country. It was the surrealism of the scenario that had attracted me, not the music. But on the positive side, *Yinhua* had successfully performed music of mine which was decidedly strange by Chinese standards, and Zhang Xing had taken the risk of including it in his program, which I admired him for.

AN AUTHENTIC POP MUSIC SUB-CULTURE
My experience with Zhang Xing opened my eyes to the fact that there is an authentic pop music subculture in China, complete with sleazy promoters (there was a threatened walkout over non-payment in Chongqing), leather–clad backstage groupies, hangers–on, posers, and big money. Zhang Xing received 5–6,000 RMB for each 8–10 song performance, reportedly the highest income among Chinese entertainers; each band member earned 300 RMB per show, or double the average monthly income in China at the time.

Another thing that struck me about the arena–rock experience in China was the makeup of the audience, which encompassed the entire demographic spectrum from toddlers to factory workers to PLA officers to Party officials. This again was a refreshing contrast to the narrow exclusivity of Western audiences.

The more active I became as a performer, the greater my need became for a manager or liaison, especially given the inadequacy of my spoken Chinese. This role was assumed by Tang Lei, a friend of Anne's and the wife of Zhang Xiaogang, one of the leading avant–garde painters in Southwest China. This led to a solo concert at Southwest China Art Academy, where Xiaogang teaches – perhaps my fondest memory of that period. Tang Lei functions as an unofficial agent for radical artists in Sichuan and Yunnan; she has a diplomatic manner, managerial instincts, a genuine desire to advance creative art in China, and an understanding of Chinese nature that I shall never have. She proved invaluable in steering me around bureaucratic pitfalls, and remained my manager throughout all subsequent projects.¹

¹ She is presently studying in Germany, and can be reached at: Tang Lei, Bahnhofplatz 3, 3500 Kassel, Germany.
Back in Chengdu in 1990 I began to come into contact with more creative musicians. One of them was Huang Qiang, a composer of eccentric electronic music. I contributed to his recording, 'Impressions of the East', a suite depicting China's traditional festivals; the piece was eventually broadcast throughout China. Huang Qiang was a standout in Chengdu with his below-shoulder-length hair, guitar pick earring, and paisley beret bearing a red star. He is now a musical instrument distributor in Chengdu and less involved in composing.

Another presence on the Sichuan music scene was the prize-winning composer He Xuntian, who is associated with Sichuan Music Conservatory. His music, like Tan Dun's, sometimes combines traditional Chinese instruments with 20th-century Euroamerican compositional techniques. A good example of this is 'Sounds of Nature'.

SHADOW IN DREAMS

Two weeks before leaving Chengdu I was approached by Yang Shichun, a producer for the state record label, China Records, which has its headquarters in Beijing and branches in Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chengdu. He said he had listened to a tape of my music and was interested in releasing a solo album. I was of course delighted with the offer, but felt it was only fair to stress that releasing a tape of my music would probably amount to commercial suicide in China. I wondered if he had actually given the music a close listen, or whether it was the foreign factor again. Sure enough, he returned two days later and said, 'I listened to your tape again. I like it very much, but it is very unusual music for China. What do you say we include something familiar for the audience?' 'What do you have in mind?' I asked with growing apprehension. When he replied 'Do you know Richard Clayderman?' I groaned inwardly. It seemed that he had completely missed the point of my music. I was about to say, 'Look, maybe I'm the wrong person for what you have in mind,' but he told me to think about it and let him know in a few days.

When he returned later it was clear that he'd read the disappointment in my face, for he said, 'You're right. That music is not your style.' I relaxed. 'But the company insists that you include at least one piece of 'light' music for the audience's sake.' Than he handed me the score for 'Fur Elise', one of the most ubiquitous pieces of muzak in China. I asked if I was free to arrange it any way I liked. Mr. Yang gave his assent, and the project was on.

The recording that was to become 'Shadow in Dreams' was made in 4 days at the China Records Studio in Chengdu, a primitive but adequate facility where you can see your breath all the time. The session was plagued with technical problems such as unwanted electrical noise and faulty power cords, involved the unfortunate use of a drum machine, and was altogether hurried — in other words, a typical session in the PRC.

I avoided mentioning 'Fur Elise' for the duration of the session, hoping it would somehow get lost in the shuffle. But on the last day, just before I was to be paid (3,000 RMB), Mr. Yang pulled me aside and said, 'We must have that Beethoven.' I yielded. But with the help of distortion, delay, and found objects I managed to twist that salon piece into the weirdest track on the album, much to the company's chagrin.

'Shadow in Dreams' (a compromise title; they had wanted something 'romantic') was released in summer 1990. It was consciously more conservative than I would have liked, but nevertheless an oddity in China. Flawed as I feel it was, to my great surprise it has sold nearly 40,000 copies to date, and was listed among the year's best releases by China Youth magazine, a Party organ.

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2 Recorded on commercial tape by the China Record Company, Shanghai branch, 1986, HL-515, Vol.3 in the series 'Compositions Awarded with Chinese Record Prizes'.
My final project in China in 1990 was a television special, 'The Guitar Music of Dennis Rea', produced by Chengdu TV. The program included a studio performance, an interview, and 'candid' footage of me 'discovering' Chengdu's scenic attractions, struggling with a hot-pot (pig brains and cow throats), and rowing a little boat in a tawdry park! I found the shtick embarrassing, but the music got through intact.

PLAYING IN TAIWAN
In March 1990 we left the PRC for Taiwan, where Anne was to continue her Chinese studies. Knowing what I did of Taiwanese music – the fluffy schlock that was flooding China – I again had low expectations. Indeed, I found most people in Taiwan to be both jaded and naive as regards music, whereas in mainland China they were simply naive, in the best sense of the word.

Several months after our arrival in Tainan, the island's most conservative city, I was approached by an American, Mark DeForge, about forming a band. This was a radical idea in Tainan. Lost Weekend, as we called ourselves, basically represented the common denominator of four individuals with widely divergent styles, tastes, and levels of ability. The band was notable chiefly for the fact that we wrote our own material, a first for bands in Tainan, and for introducing the idea of live bands (as opposed to folk singers) in clubs. Ironically it required the efforts of foreigners like ourselves to make this happen. The first and second of Lost Weekend's handful of shows in Tainan were shut down by police toting automatic weapons. Needless to say, we were a bit taken aback.

The band dissolved after several months, but the live music tradition continued. Lost Weekend was followed by a group I formed to play more progressive music, first under the name The Gang of Formosa, later as Identity Crisis. A total of 10 people passed through the group, only two of them native Taiwanese. (Stability is a continuing problem with expatriate bands consisting primarily of students.) To our surprise Identity Crisis evolved into a genuinely interesting, if somewhat flawed, musical entity, certainly unlike anything else in Taiwan. The band developed a sizeable body of original, mostly instrumental work encompassing jazz, progressive rock, and adapted Chinese traditional music. We performed 30-40 times in our first six months. Our reputation among local musicians was considerable, but the public for the most part found the music too challenging, although they appreciated what we were doing in theory.

PREPARING FOR A RETURN TO THE MAINLAND
Concurrent with these events I was attempting to organize a concert tour of mainland China involving professional musicians I knew from the States. I had been turning the idea over in my mind for some time, but although the musicians were enthusiastic, I was as yet at a loss as to how to bring it about. Some early leads had proven to be dead ends.

At this time Tang Lei re-entered the picture. She telephoned with the news that Cui Jian, after hearing and enjoying a tape of my music, welcomed me to come to Beijing to perform. Sensing a remarkable opportunity, I immediately contacted the musicians in America to entice them to China, but there was a serious problem: money. The deal was basically that if we could get ourselves to Beijing, the rest would be taken care of. For the Stateside musicians, getting to China meant spending well over a thousand dollars each. They regrettfully informed me that they couldn't afford to do it.

Not wanting to let this opportunity slip, I decided that Identity Crisis was competent enough to do the gig, and they agreed to go. We had the advantage of being close to China and having a fair amount of cumulative experience with the Chinese. The group at that time was made up of myself, Andreas Vath from Germany on bass, and Americans Tom Vest on drums and Bryce Whitwam on keyboards. (Another key
member, Volker Wiedersheim, had recently departed for Germany.) After one month of intensive rehearsals we were on our way to Beijing, where Tang Lei was awaiting us.

‘IDENTITY CRISIS’ IN BEIJING

Upon arriving in Beijing we learned that we were scheduled to play that very night. Travel-weary, we had scarcely gotten our bearings when Cui Jian showed up at our hotel to have dinner with us. We were immediately impressed by his manner. We had learned several of his songs in the hope that he would perform them with us; he seemed receptive to the suggestion. Minutes later we were taken to the unlikely venue for the night’s show – Maxim’s, an upscale French joint-venture restaurant. In the back of the restaurant is a large room with a stage that is held by many to be the cradle of the Beijing rock scene. Because of its joint-venture status, Maxim’s is the sort of ‘grey zone’ where fringe activities go more or less unnoticed. The hefty cover charge (30 RMB when we played) is a deterrent to attendance by ordinary people, so the ‘parties’ (a euphemism for rock concerts) are patronized largely by the privileged children of Party officials and by foreign residents – not exactly what we had in mind.

We were surprised to find a full-blown, expensive sound system in place, better than what most bands in the US have access to. We learned that other foreign bands were on the bill; they turned out to be rowdy bar bands made up of exchange students and ex-pat businessmen. When these bands were onstage it might just as well have been New Jersey, complete with beer fights and lots of blond heads bobbing in the audience. I remember thinking, ‘We came all the way to Beijing for this?’ But when we took the stage an interesting thing happened: the ‘let’s party!’ contingent retreated to
the bar and a large number of local musicians I hadn’t seen before filled the room. Cui Jian had apparently put out the word on us, and the musicians, as bored as we were with the antics and stale Rolling Stones tunes, had been waiting outside for us to begin.

What followed was one of the most memorable gigs of my life. From a musical standpoint it was certainly among our best shows, but what made it really special was the feedback from the audience. At the end of our set we invited Cui Jian to join us for one of his songs. After some hesitation, probably owing to the fact that his appearances, scheduled or otherwise, invariably draw heat from the authorities, he came onstage for a rendition of his classic Yi wu suo you. At the outset he was a bit rusty, and some of the band members were frankly terrified, but before long the music fell into place. By the song’s end Cui Jian was clearly in his element. The effect he had on the crowd was remarkable, especially considering the reserve typical of Chinese audiences: the people were on their feet, cheering, swaying with hands held aloft, and chanting along with the words of the song. It was a level of audience–performer interaction I haven’t experienced before or since, and brought home to me the impact Cui Jian has had on young people in China. I was deeply moved by the experience, and must add that we gave the song a fresh reading.

The show concluded with a collaboration on Qu Zou, another of Cui Jian’s more celebrated songs.

THE UNDERGROUND MUSIC COMMUNITY IN BEIJING

In the week that followed several more performances, both public and private, took place. Cui Jian, Lian Heping (an excellent, adventurous modern pianist), and his brother Liang Weiping (a key promoter of musical events and Cui Jian’s road manager) had scheduled a series of get-togethers with local musicians. A dozen or more players gathered a number of times in Cui Jian’s rehearsal room for grass-roots jam sessions and to prepare for a weekend concert. One afternoon we went to a rehearsal of rising stars Hei Bao (“Black panther”); that evening we sat in with my old friends Yinhuochong at the Taiwan Hotel.

The next day we were taken to a disco Liang Weiping had rented, the ‘Citi All-Night Club’, for what was described as a ‘musical exchange’. We walked in expecting a low-key jam session, only to discover over 100 members of the Beijing alternative music community waiting for us to give a concert. Again, an impressive arsenal of equipment was set up and ready for use. Under intense scrutiny we delivered a spirited set, which led to performances by Beijing rock bands, various ad-hoc improvising groups, and the first reunion of Cui Jian with his former band, ADO, in more than two years.3

It was here that I first realized the extent and depth of Beijing’s underground music community.

3 The afternoon was captured on film by a director from Beijing film studio; the author has a copy on videotape.
which, despite being right under the nose of the government, is far more daring than in any other city. With zero support from the government and little from the public, dozens of bands have emerged whose music deliberately flies in the face of the status quo. Their music, although generally lacking in finesse, possesses a passion that is, perhaps not surprisingly, almost totally absent in music from Taiwan and Hong Kong, the bastions of 'free China'. Among the groups active at that time were Ziwo jiaoyu ('Self Education'), a gloomy, alienated 'New Wave' band (and Cui Jian's favourite); Huangdiren ('The Yellow Race'), who proffer a rough and ready brand of quasi-heavy metal 'with Chinese characteristics'; hard-rockers 1989 (provocative name, that!); the all-woman vintage rock and roll band Cobra; the aforementioned Hei Bao, a slick, well-connected arena-rock group; and former CCTV English-language newscaster Wei Hua, who left her job to become a rock singer after Tian'anmen. We also encountered ambitious, loopy fusion, reggae, and even free improvisation.

One of the most striking things about this music scene was its sense of community. Allowing for the inevitable factional rivalries which we, as outsiders, were not privy to, there seemed to be more cooperation, and less competition, than I have come across elsewhere. We were impressed with the musicians' willingness to share instruments, rehearsal space, and the very few performing opportunities available. They supported each other regardless of stylistic differences. I wonder, as the liberalization of the PRC inevitably draws closer, if these values will survive the transition.

NOBODY ASKED THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT
Our keyboard player, Bryce Whitwam, had been an English teacher at a technical university in Beijing in 1988. Before Identity Crisis left Taiwan for Beijing, he telephoned the university's Foreign Affairs Office to ask if we could give a concert there. They accepted our offer with enthusiasm, assuring us there would be no problem arranging a free show for the students. After we arrived in Beijing, Bryce went to the university to iron out the details. He met with the director of the Foreign Affairs Office and with the president of the student organization, both of whom told him the concert was on. At the same time, students had also contacted Beijing and Qinghua universities, where we were also invited to perform. We were amazed at the ease with which doors were opening for us, especially given the recentness of the Tian'anmen incident.

Later in the week we received the bad news. Apparently all of those consulted had approved our concert at the Technical University, but one minor detail had somehow been overlooked: nobody had asked the university president! When he and the leaders of Bei Da and Qinghua discovered what was afoot, they of course cancelled the shows outright. Their refusals were couched in typically indirect terms, for example: 'Sorry, but the auditorium is being used this week by the dance club...' The truth was that no student gatherings of any kind were allowed in the post-Tian'anmen era. It's also probable that our association with Cui Jian weighed against us, as we had been warned that he would not be allowed on campus if we played. Ironically, since our music was almost entirely instrumental, it had zero political content. The whole debacle proved that dealing openly and honestly with the government was a dead end. Cui Jian and the Liang brothers had been skeptical about the university shows all along; they had long since learned that, if one wants to play unorthodox music in Beijing, one must resort to stealth.

The final event in Beijing was a fairly large show (400 people) at another odd venue, this time a 360-degree panoramic theater. Identity Crisis headlined, with the re-activated ADO (sans Cui Jian) and Cobra sharing the bill. The theater manager had agreed to the show on the condition that Cui Jian not sing. (Playing his trumpet, however, was another matter.) The highlight of the evening was a collaboration among
members of Identity Crisis and ADO, plus Cui Jian on trumpet, joint-venture music maven Kenny Bloom on saxophone, and Liang Heping on keyboards, performing a blues, Liang Heping’s jazz arrangement of the Chinese traditional song *Mu yang qu*, and my *Huo guo*. There were about 40 uniformed police present, or one for every ten concert-goers. Late in the evening Cui Jian, chafing at being restrained from singing, took the stage after all for solo versions of two songs, including the infamous *Nanniwan*. Again I witnessed the galvanizing effect he has on the audience, and was quite stirred.

CHENGDU
From Beijing we went by train to Chengdu. Because of its distance from the central government, Sichuan has always enjoyed a greater degree of autonomy than most places in China, so we encountered much less official resistance there. The fact that I was a veteran of local media and therefore well-known locally certainly aided our cause. We gave 5 large concerts at universities (Chengdu University for Science and Technology, Western Medical University, and Chengdu Electrical University) with little or no resistance from university officials – with the exception of Sichuan Music Conservatory, which despite my having played there before cancelled a scheduled concert because of a mere rumor that we played a Cui Jian song.

The response from the students was tremendous, this being the first-ever visit by a Western band to Chengdu. At the Medical college a large glass door gave way under the weight of students trying to force their way inside the hall, while others climbed in through second-floor windows. At another show a student reportedly drummed on a tabletop with his fists so zealously that he broke his hand. People made banners and posters, and presented us with photographs and gifts. We were also a great excuse for them to eat and drink beyond their means.

Unlike Beijing, where Cui Jian and the Liang brothers had the wherewithal to rent or borrow professional equipment, the facilities in Chengdu were crude at best. Since it was out of the question for us to travel with our own amplifiers and drum set, we had to make do with whatever was at hand. Sometimes we were fortunate enough to borrow or rent adequate equipment from local dealers, but most of the time we were stuck with oatmeal-carton kiddie drums, amps that sounded like transistor radios, and no P.A. system at all.

A TECHNICAL NIGHTMARE
The Electrical University show was a classic farce. Our biggest concert on the tour, it took place on an open-air stage on campus. The concert was organized by the campus branch of the Communist Youth League, who professed a fervent love of rock and roll. Every day for a week we reminded them of our need for individual guitar amplifiers; they gave us repeated assurances that all of the necessary equipment would be there. Enroute to the university on the day of the show we again inquired about the amps. Someone replied, 'Oh, yes, we have a very good amplifier, very big!' Something about his use of the singular gave us pause. We arrived at the venue a little too late for our comfort, since we were hoping to get in a sound check for a change. Sure enough, there were no instrument amplifiers whatsoever, only a huge public address system. We had taken great pains to explain the difference, but it had all been for naught. No worse calamity can befall a musician than to give up control over your sound, especially when the sound engineer has never heard anything remotely like the music you play. But since in this case there was nothing we could do, we immediately began to set up what equipment we had in order to ensure an adequate sound check.

As soon as we started setting up, the student delegation suggested we leave the sound check until after dinner. We politely let them know that the sound check was more
important to us than our dinner (we’d been feted to death in Chengdu anyway). This was received with some alarm; they had evidently been given money by the school to buy us dinner, so, impoverished students that they were, there was no way they were going to forfeit this opportunity to gorge themselves in our name. There was no arguing with them. All practical considerations of equipment and sound were dismissed and we were trundled into a minibus and driven to a restaurant. Our hosts wolfed down about 20 dishes while we poked half-heartedly at our own. Perilously close to showtime the bus crawled back through heavy traffic to the stage. To our horror 4,000 people were already there waiting for us, and we had not even begun to set up yet.

Predictably, the show commenced with a horrendous blast of raw noise. The drums were the only things audible, exploding out of what sounded like ruptured loudspeakers. The fact that this was an electrical university had given us a false sense of confidence – here, at least, technical people would know what they were doing. But in actuality everything was plugged into a single, dangerous-looking outlet, and every time the stage lights came on, the keyboard lost power. To top it all off, an unprecedented plague of flies had descended on Chengdu and settled on our faces, crawled up our nostrils, and swarmed over our instruments as we struggled to salvage some of our music from the din. A technical nightmare of the first order, our only consolation was that it had not been our fault. The audience, at any rate, seemed to enjoy the show, showing just how starved for sensation young people can be in China.

BANISHED SOULS

Chengdu TV arranged a private concert for local media bigwigs and Party brass which was videotaped and later broadcast in the Chengdu area. (The event was held at the Shangri-La Disco, which had a sign hanging over its door that read ‘Sing and Dance Hell’. ) A conflict arose over the use of the name ‘Identity Crisis’, which had been translated into Chinese as Ziwo fang zhu (roughly ‘Banished Souls’) by a Taiwanese friend. This name was interpreted as subversive by the mainland Chinese, so we were allowed to play only on the condition that we not use it.

We were billed instead as ‘Dennis Rea and Friends’, much to the other band members’ chagrin. This was not the first time the name caused us trouble, and we were continuously being asked why we had chosen it. We were also repeatedly made to write down our lyrics for official scrutiny; since the few words we sang were literally gibberish, this made for some hilarious translations.

My former producer at China Records, Yang Shichun, encouraged by the modest success of ‘Shadow in Dreams’, brought us into the studio to record a second album. Since we had limited time, the session was again conducted under pressure, compounded by 6-hour power outages on each of the three days we spent in the studio. Everyone, however, was very pleased with the result. If and when the album is ever released, it will doubtless qualify as one of the most eccentric recordings available in China; stylistically the first of its kind, it is a marketer’s nightmare. As of this writing its release has been held up by record company officials in Beijing who were irked at Chengdu’s decision to do the project without first receiving their go-ahead. Mr. Yang is hopeful that it will eventually be released ‘in a few years’. Again I am grateful to Mr. Yang and his staff for having the courage to support such a risky project.

Before we left Chengdu Mr. Yang strongly recommended that we contact his colleague, Feng Xiaocong, when we passed through Guangzhou. Feng is reportedly the top record producer in China; he works for China Records Guangzhou, and hires himself out for private productions as well. According to Yang Shichun he commanded an astronomical salary for China. We were told that, if we were serious about making a recording in China, Feng was the man to see.
BEIJING VERSUS GUANGZHOU

Feng Xiaocong collected us at Guangzhou Airport with a bus and driver, and before we had finished exchanging pleasantries was already discussing not if but when we could begin recording. He took us to his luxurious home, listened to a sample of our newly-completed tape, then took us out and treated us to a pricey banquet. Later we were given a tour of the China Records studio, an impressive, thoroughly up-to-date facility. I was amazed at the interest this pop music mogul was showing in our quirky music, and wondered what the catch was.

That evening Mr. Feng took us to see the house band at the Poton 100 Club, so-named for its outrageous cover charge – 100 RMB! ‘This is the best band in China,’ he stated flatly, not the first time we had heard such a claim. The traditional rivalry between Beijing and Guangzhou, or indeed between North and South China, evidently carried over into the music field as well. Having heard both sides of the argument, I will summarize as follows: Beijing, as cultural capital, boasts the more original, ‘artistic’ musicians, while Guangzhou, as commercial capital, produces players who are less creative but more advanced in technical ability. This was definitely borne out by the much-hyped band we saw in Guangzhou, very facile players whose music unfortunately amounted to second-rate borrowings from Hong Kong and Taiwan – in short, a bore. The exhilaration we had felt in Beijing, the sense of participating in a fugitive movement, was utterly lacking in Guangzhou. On the other hand, we did find the musicians to be warm and helpful, especially the guitarist Lao Zai (‘Loud Boy’) who, at least from a technical perspective, is the finest guitarist I’ve heard in China. After the band’s set we were invited onstage for an impromptu performance, which the musicians seemed to enjoy quite a bit.

The following morning Mr. Feng told me privately that he hoped to work with me in a different context in the future. He regretted that we did not have more vocal songs (read: pop tunes – the catch!). The offer remains open. Identity Crisis left for Taiwan the same day.

BACK IN TAIWAN

Upon returning to Taiwan, we found our reputation greatly enhanced as a result of our association with Cui Jian. (Everyone in Taiwan knows of and approves of Cui Jian, but nobody actually listens to him.) Numerous performance opportunities arose, not only at clubs but at cultural centers, department stores, and even Buddhist temples. Throughout summer 1991 Identity Crisis, with new drummer Tsao Hsin, played every weekend at the Feelmore Jazz Pub in Taipei to warm response. I began to notice an increased interest in non-mainstream instrumental music among the Taiwanese.

At the same time we discovered we were not alone in creating original progressive music in Taiwan. The Jazz Cowboys, led by Chapman-Stick player George Soler, had developed an impressive oeuvre of original modern jazz, and had released a CD on Taiwan’s Crystal Records. Identity Crisis and the Jazz Cowboys formed a loose alliance which led to occasional spin-off projects such as the free-improvising Cyberspace Chamber of Commerce.

Through the agency of George Soler, Identity Crisis made an agreement with Crystal records to produce a CD (with newly-returned Volker Wiedersheim). Crystal is a label of modest stature but is certainly the most innovative company in Taiwan, releasing controversial albums by radical Taiwanese rockers Double X, Sissy, and Hei Mingdan (Blacklist), as well as by Taiwanese-language singers like Chen Mingzhang. The label’s founder, A-da Im, hopes to create a market for alternative music in conservative Taiwan; hence the Jazz Cowboys and Identity Crisis albums, which are unlikely to be profitable ventures. (The Identity Crisis recording is still in production at this time.)
ROCK MUSIC OR NOT?
Autumn 1991 saw the fruition of our most ambitious project to date: a Chinese tour by my American group, The Vagaries, which coincided with our appearance in the 1991 China International Television Festival. Hosted in alternate years by the cities of Shanghai and Chengdu, the festival is China’s showcase international media event. It includes televised performances by Chinese and international artists, a film festival (the ‘Golden Panda’ awards), and a broadcasting equipment trade fair. The opening ceremony is televised throughout China by China Central Television (CCTV).

When Tang Lei and her friend, Dong Hong, first became aware of the festival, they saw it as the opportunity we had been waiting for, so they sought out the organizers and proposed inviting my band to represent the United States. Since the hosts, Sichuan TV, were already aware of my previous activities in Chengdu, they reasoned that as a ‘friend of China’ I would be easy to work with. But in order to satisfy Beijing it was necessary for us to meet before they could arrive at a decision. We arranged a meeting when Identity Crisis was in Chengdu in April 1991.

At the meeting it was revealed that Beijing had forbidden the inclusion of rock music in the festival. This might have ended the discussion had I not resolved the difficulty by stating that we were by no means a rock group. This was not entirely true; however, eclectic our material, the fact remained that we used electric instruments and could be quite loud, so the Chinese were not likely to notice any distinction. Hoping to avoid an impasse over questions of style, I improvised a solution by suggesting that we perform a piece of Chinese traditional music adapted to the resources of a contemporary electric band. This proposal was immediately endorsed by those present, who were visibly relieved. I had the sense that we had crossed the one major hurdle towards being accepted. I supplied them with contact addresses and we agreed to keep in close communication.

There still remained several serious obstacles, however, the largest being that the band I had volunteered for the project did not really exist! (Of course I didn’t tell the festival organizers this.) Ever since the idea of bringing over an American group had occurred to me, I had envisioned putting together a new group made up of the best musicians I knew, subject of course to their availability. This opened up a whole Pandora’s Box of difficulties: Since most of the musicians were in different locations (and myself in Taiwan), how could we arrange to be together for the necessary rehearsals? And since we didn’t actually exist, how were we to satisfy the festival’s requirement that we submit audio and video demo tapes of the band? In addition, the festival wanted to know what ‘unit’ we belonged to, and asked proof of our affiliation with a legitimate organization. Finally I had been warned by my contacts not to mention that I lived in Taiwan, so how was I to disguise the fact that my communications would be coming from there?

The rehearsal problem was solved when everyone agreed to be in Seattle for one month prior to the festival. For an audio demo tape I compiled a selection of works by the various individuals involved, and passed it off as being The Vagaries. For a video tape I submitted a performance video of Identity Crisis, taped at a distance, hoping that nobody would notice it was a different band! As for our ‘unit’, band member Roland Barker’s wife, filmmaker Lisa Dutton, operated her own filmmaking concern, Motherland Productions; overnight Motherland became a ‘performing artserices management company’, and all official correspondence with the festival was conducted using Lisa’s fax and letterheads, thus solving the problem of my being in Taiwan as well. Lisa did the greater part of the planning and fund-raising for the tour, and was to be our tour manager in China.

PREPARING THE VAGARIES TOUR OF CHINA
The four musicians I originally invited to take part in the project were Roland Barker (keyboards, electronic wind instrument); William Rieflin (drums); Charley Rowan
(keyboards, vocals); and Amy Denio (bass, vocals). I had worked with Roland, Bill, and Amy on Roland's soundtrack to the feature film Shredder Orpheus in 1988, and felt that it was a promising relationship worth continuing. Charley was a long-time collaborator in various groups and projects in Seattle. They were all highly-regarded instrumentalists and songwriters, with distinct but complementary sensibilities. I was sure they would be unique in China. They were very keen on the project as well. Ultimately Amy was unable to make the trip, having received a grant to compose for the Pat Graney Dance Company at the same time. Her last-minute replacement was Mike Davidson, who, along with Bill and Roland, had been in the influential late-70's Seattle band The Blackouts. We nearly lost Bill as well due to scheduling conflicts with his full-time band, Ministry, who ironically were also planning a swing through Asia (but not including China) on their next tour.

The idea was for all of the band members to contribute an equal number of compositions with our instrumentation and abilities in mind. I felt that, rather than focus on any one particular style, we should instead be as eclectic as possible, thereby introducing a greater number of musical genres to the Chinese.

In due course we were notified of our selection by the festival. The one remaining obstacle in our path was money. The festival organizers told us that they would cover our in–China expenses, including airfare from the point–of–entry to Chengdu and back. But the greater expense of getting the band from the U.S. to China and back was our responsibility, and none of us could afford it.

The money dilemma was eventually solved, thanks to a suggestion by Amy that we apply to Arts International for a grant. AI's Fund for American Artists Abroad, supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation, and others, funds performances by Americans outside the U.S. Since we measured up to all of the stated criteria, we applied. AI agreed that it was a rare opportunity for modern American music to penetrate China, so we were awarded a grant to pay for the group's airfare to Hong Kong. (It seemed remarkable to me to receive payment from both the United States and the PRC governments for the purpose of playing strange music in China.) Other support came in the form of a small grant from Seattle–based Muzak, Inc.(!), from the proceeds of a fund–raising concert we held in Seattle just prior to our departure, and from sales of Vagaries T–shirts designed by Bill's partner, artist Francesca Sundsten.

A DOCUMENTARY FILM

In late August I flew to Seattle for three weeks of intensive (5–7 hours a day) rehearsals and a single trial concert. We were all relieved to find that we did indeed gel as a band. The unusual nature of our project generated a fair amount of interest in the press and the community. The concert itself was successful, boding well for what lay ahead.

From the time the project was conceived, a parallel project was being developed concurrently: to record the experience on film in documentary form. The suggestion was made by Lisa Dutton, who as a filmmaker and as partner to one of the band members was in the perfect position to realize this. Lisa hoped to make a professional, broadcast–quality film which would document not only our tour but the Chinese music scene in general and the circumstances under which musicians work. Our biggest fear was of having the film equipment confiscated by the authorities. Lisa and camera operator Daniel chose the smallest camera possible for their purposes, which however was still large enough to excite suspicion in China. The camera and accessories were quietly entered on the equipment list we submitted to the festival for Customs, with the explanation that it was to be used only to record the Vagaries' performances. For still more extensive documentation, professional photographer Spike Mafford joined our party as well.
‘...AND NO ROCK MUSIC’
At the end of September The Vagaries, along with Lisa, Daniel, Spike, Frankie, and friends Heather Kennedy and Deborah Pops, flew to Hong Kong. We were a rather unwieldy group for China travel, not least because of the mountain of equipment we lugged with us, including two keyboards, two guitars, sundry musical accessories, and camera equipment. After two nights in Hong Kong we took the train to Guangzhou, where we were met by a representative of the festival and by an employee of Guangdong TV. They bought us lunch, gave us a perfunctory tour of Guangzhou, and saw us onto the plane to Chengdu.
We deplaned in Chengdu to a reception by TV cameramen and all manner of festival hoopla. Chengdu was decked out for a party, with banners and lanterns everywhere; from the looks of it the China International TV Festival was the biggest thing ever to hit town. We were booked into the Minshan Hotel, a luxury hotel in that part of China. Accommodations were arranged for the extra people in our party by the festival people, who promised them a ‘special discount’. (We later learned that they had been shamelessly gouged.)
In the morning we were informed of a dress rehearsal that very night, and were instructed to go to the venue, the Sichuan Provincial Arena, to discuss equipment matters. We had been asked several times by fax what our equipment requirements were, and had responded in detail. Upon arriving at the arena we were informed that the so-called ‘dress rehearsal’ was in fact an unscheduled show for 10,000 people! (so much for badly-needed band rehearsal). But the big blow came when officials told us that we would not really perform at all, but would lip-synch to a tape instead. ‘Television, you understand...’ After all of the empty discussion of our equipment needs, it now became clear that they had known all along that we would ape the performance, but had concealed this from us. In the final analysis we had to acknowledge the logistical difficulty of moving our equipment on live TV, but what burned us was not having been informed.

So what tape were we supposed to lip-synch to? An insufferable ‘advisor’ from CCTV told us we had to record two songs in Sichuan Radio’s studio that very afternoon, ‘one Chinese song and one country–western song’. What? Of all the many styles of music we were capable of playing, country–western was not one of them. Hadn’t they listened to the tape? ‘And no rock music.’
Okay! We sped to the studio, a frigid cavern, where with crackling wires and one-earred headphones we were bullied into cutting two stiff tracks in an hour: my elaborate reworking of the traditional *Yizu Wuqu* (Dance Song of the Yi People) and Charley’s I Was Wrong, a more-or-less rock song (uh-oh!) which could possibly be construed as country–flavored. Mr. CCTV (he of the ‘no rock music’) floored us with his enthusiasm for this rock song – ‘Yeah! That’s what we’re looking for!’ – go figure. We were hustled out of the studio without participating in the mixdown, a few hours before the show.

NOT WESTERN ENOUGH
The concert, exclusive of our non–performance, was a memorable surreal event. Its theme was ‘The Western Nationalities’, meaning an upscale freak show featuring minority people, with a cast of hundreds. We were right at home in this context, as were the State Dance Company of Byelorussia. The backstage scene was right out of Fellini, with dozens of ethnic groups from all over western China in traditional festival dress: Uighurs, Tibetans, Miao, Yis, Was, etc. Mingling with these unpretentious people was in fact the highlight of the festival for us.
When the appointed time came we walked onstage, greeted by cheers, feeling utterly foolish with our unplugged instruments in hand. As our cue for when to begin, 4 beats had been added as a lead-in before the first song, but since the sound man carelessly
started the tape on the third beat we were caught off guard and got off to a false start. The mix of our music was simply awful, and we all felt like frauds out there flapping our lips, emoting insincerely, and striking our instruments inaudibly. The next morning we were summoned to a meeting and told that, 1. a second ‘dress rehearsal’ had been scheduled for that evening, 2. we should be more ‘active’ on stage, and 3. our time slot was being cut back to 3–1/2 minutes (from an original 10) because the overall program was too long to accommodate all of the performers. The casualty in our case was, ironically, the Chinese song, which, after all of the organizers’ enthusiasm for our doing a Chinese number, was now considered too cerebral and ‘not Western enough’. There was something suspicious about all of this; indeed, as it later came out, certain Party officials had been scandalized by the discovery that we were a dreaded rock band after all, and would have pulled us from the program altogether if it had not meant a major loss of face. One gentleman in particular, a Mr. Guo Yang, was our chief adversary in all matters pertaining to the festival; more on him later.

We did win the concession of being allowed back into the studio to remix the tape ourselves, with better results. That night we repeated the lip–synch charade, and once again in the next day’s formal Opening Ceremony. This ceremony was conducted with all the pomp the Chinese could muster, quite an impressive affair really, with fireworks to top it off. We were later told that, including re–runs, our performance reached up to 500 million people, including viewers in all the neighboring countries. This seems rather exaggerated, but if it was a fraction of that we’d all still be plenty pleased with the exposure. Our biggest regret was that we hadn’t been allowed to choose one of our more adventurous pieces to represent ourselves with.
FINALLY – A REAL CONCERT
The Opening Ceremony was followed by two ‘Congratulatory Performances’, also at the arena, sort of a Festival all-star show. Here we were finally allowed to perform live for nearly half an hour. As usual there were no instrument amplifiers, but this time we insisted that they rent some. Mike and I led the Festival people to a music shop I knew which had plenty of good amplifiers, but after an hour of vague haggling left empty-handed. It seemed that the amps were of a different brand than the P.A. equipment used by the Festival, so using them would infringe on the P.A. manufacturer’s advertising monopoly! We then went to the local representative of the P.A. firm, who generously offered us anything we wanted, but when we went to collect the equipment we learned that they didn’t even make instrument amplifiers – only P.A. systems. When we finally went onstage, it was with – believe it or not – a separate P.A. system for each musician. We nevertheless turned in the first truly representative performance of The Vagaries in China, and exacted a small measure of revenge on Guo Yang and company by playing a longer set than we had agreed to (the M.C.s were in a panic). The second Congratulatory concert was televised in Sichuan. Between these two shows, the Opening Ceremony, and the ‘dress rehearsals’ we had appeared before 50,000 concert-goers in 5 days.

When the final Festival concert was over we brought our gear to the Jinhe Hotel Dance Hall, to which we had been invited by local musicians. We arrived to find a genuine rock and roll party in progress, the first evidence I had seen in Chengdu of a Beijing-style underground emerging. Apparently a number of bands had sprung up in the wake of Cui Jian’s 1990 Chengdu concerts. Groups such as Het Ma (Black Horse) and The 21 Band, who ordinarily play hotel discos, were letting their hair down and having a raucous good time playing at all. When the bands had finished we did a set ourselves, which served as the perfect release for all of our pent-up frustrations over the Festival and officialdom. It was a powerful performance, with people packed onto the stage whooping with glee and drowning us in beer.

MACHINATIONS
This type of show – direct and personal – interested us far more than the sterile pomp of official events like the Festival. With this in mind we had badgered the Festival organizers for months to arrange some public concerts for us in Chengdu. When we first showed up in Chengdu we were told that two public Vagaries concerts had been scheduled at the Worker’s Cultural Palace, a major venue. We were really looking forward to playing for ordinary people at these concerts. But no sooner had we fulfilled our obligation to the Festival than Guo Yang announced that the concerts had been cancelled because the hall was being used for other activities. He instead offered us a consolation concert in the small city of Luzhou, 10 hours away by bus and safely out of harm’s way. We exploded. ‘How could you have scheduled the Cultural Palace concerts without knowing that the hall was already booked?’ we asked, to which he replied evasively.

We asked for help from Tang Lei, who had miraculously reappeared in Chengdu from Germany and was working on our future itinerary. She spoke with a friend at the Cultural Palace and brought us the news that no events were scheduled at all. What had really happened was that Guo Yang had offered The Vagaries to the Cultural Palace on the condition that the Cultural Palace pay the Festival a sum in the hundreds of thousands of RMB, without mentioning a word of this to us. We were really disgusted that China’s premier media event would try to capitalize on its guests in this way. We refused the show in Luzhou and let Guo Yang know how we felt about his machinations. Unfortunately the task of translating fell to Dong Hong, who as our contact person and official interpreter had worked miracles for us; she was mortified at now being caught between the hammer and tongs of the Party and some uppity
foreigners. The token compromise that was reached involved our doing three shows in the Minshan Hotel disco, a sorry trade–off for the Cultural Palace. It came out that the Festival was still trying to make a profit on us, charging an exorbitant 30 RMB at the door while telling us it was a free show. They of course refused to cut us in on the take. As a footnote to all of this, Guo Yang tried to slip away without paying our return airfare as promised.

A ‘GUERRILLA GIG’
It was clear that the Festival people were going to great lengths to shield us from the public. We had appeared on TV sets all across China, but getting a substantial public gig was an epic power struggle. Clearly the collapse of world communism had brought a chill to mainland China; Identity Crisis’ April tour had been a cakewalk compared to our efforts to set up shows later in the year. Tang Lei tried to arrange a concert at Southwest China Art Academy, where I had played in 1990; it was prohibited by local government officials. Dong Hong’s husband had tentatively scheduled three shows in open–minded Shenzhen; they too were shot down by authorities (‘new regulations’). And the word from Beijing was that the ‘parties’ had all but disappeared due to official harassment. It seemed that we would have a hard time patching together a tour.

Filming all of this, on the other hand, was surprisingly hassle–free. Daniel was allowed to film almost anything he wanted to. He and Lisa soon had several hours of footage, including performances by both the Vagaries and Chinese musicians, interviews with band members and local people, and even meetings with officials. Spike likewise collected a large amount of valuable photographic material.

Our stay in Chengdu ended on a happy note with a ‘guerrilla gig’ at the cavernous Night Salon disco, arranged by Tang Lei. About 400 people attended. The stage was a weird multi–tiered wedding–cake structure with thick pillars that prevented us from seeing, much less hearing, each other. Despite this we were in good form and delivered an energetic set. After some initial hesitation the audience let go and rocked wildly to the music; the manager became so uneasy that he asked us to curtail our set. We were to witness this phenomenon repeatedly during our tour – normally staid Chinese people erupting into a passionate frenzy when given half a chance.

CHONGQING
Our next stop was foggy Chongqing. The Academy concert had fallen through, but Tang Lei had salvaged some gigs for us at the Chicago Night Club, owned and operated by a Taiwan–born Chinese–American. We played three shows at this modest venue, where our big supporters were, predictably, the local musicians. After our first appearance police from the local Cultural Ministry arrived, angered at the nightclub’s decision to book foreigners without their permission; the matter was later settled the old–fashioned way – a cash payoff – and we were allowed to finish the engagement. These shows were especially memorable for the supporting acts, which included a 10–year–old girl contortionist who tied herself into knots while gripping large objects between her clenched teeth.

The Chongqing Renmin Hotel, one of China’s most attractive hotels with its Temple of Heaven motifs, offered our entire party – which now included Tang Lei, Jiang Zhicheng of China Travel Service, and my wife, Anne, who had joined us in Chengdu – free accommodations and meals in exchange for our giving two concerts there. At the first of these concerts we again encountered the now–familiar no amplifiers scenario, and to make things worse my guitar was accidentally broken, requiring makeshift repairs. Each show was attended by about 250 people.
STRANGE IDEAS & OPEN MINDS IN KUNMING

Moving on to Kunming, we were met at the airport by a delegation led by the conductor of the Kunming Symphony Orchestra (talk about crossover appeal). They held a small banner reading "Welcome 'Fantasia' from USA". ‘Fantasia’? Like Identity Crisis, The Vagaries were also dogged by name problems. Our name had been translated as 'Strange Ideas' in Chinese, which was fine with me but another politically insensitive tag in China.

Another play—for—stay agreement had been worked out by Tang Lei with the Kunming Golden Peacock Hotel, who let our whole party live there gratis for seven days. We did a show for invited guests in their dance hall, and another at the Kunming Song and Dance Ensemble’s unit. The latter show was among our favorites, thanks to a sympathetic audience comprised mostly of professional musicians, dancers, and other artists. Kunming possessed more of a frontier atmosphere, and we found people more open here, perhaps owing to the multi—ethnicity of the population.

One day we returned to the hotel to find the manager and several other people hatching an ambitious scheme for a large—scale public show at the National Defense Stadium (the same place where condemned prisoners are executed). They had already received a ‘maybe’ from Provincial and Central Government officials, pending final approval from the Yunnan Cultural Ministry. Several Ministry officials, including the Director of Propaganda, dined with us and later viewed a videotape of the band that Lisa and Daniel had quickly cobbled together. The tape sounded so awful that we were sure we’d be rejected, but, evidently impressed by our participation in the TV Festival, they gave us the go—ahead after all.

The Defense Stadium show was, for me, the high—water mark of the tour. The 4,000 who attended were unrestrained in their enthusiasm, the sound was actually tolerable, and we exhibited a new—found maturity as a band. The event, which was almost certainly the first ‘rock’ concert ever in Yunnan, was hailed by some officials, under the influence of vast quantities of beer, as the beginning of a new musical era in the province. During one of our more rousing numbers several dozen young people spilled onto the floor and began to dance. Some of them got carried away and rushed the stage, including one fellow who leaped about onstage waving a homemade sign reading ‘rock’ in both English and Chinese. Two young men wearing Cui Jian T-shirts did stylized dance steps at the edge of the stage while another cart—wheeled across the floor. As soon as the song ended the officials made us tell the audience that if they didn’t return to their seats at once the concert would be stopped. This drew jeers, and although the dancers complied, several songs later they were back on the floor again.

News reached us which caused us to forego our planned trip to Beijing. Ironically, as we were slogging around China on our ‘groundbreaking’ grass—roots tour, Paul Simon waltzed over the border from Hong Kong for a big show in Guangzhou, becoming one of the few major American artists to perform in China. This meant that musicians from all over China were descending on Guangzhou for the show, including most of the people we had hoped to see in Beijing. So, since a concert in Beijing would have taken a month to arrange, we opted to go to Guangzhou instead.

PAUL SIMON IN GUANGZHOU

Guangzhou was like a family reunion: Cui Jian, ADO, the Liang brothers, Loud Boy, and dozens of musicians from Beijing, Guangzhou, Chengdu, and other cities were in town to see Paul Simon. We all gathered at the Pohon 100 Club. (Later, Daniel and Lisa had opportunities to interview a number of important musicians on film, including Cui Jian.) According to Loud Boy, the U.S. Consulate, and others, things had recently

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tightened up even in it Guangzhou, so it would be difficult for us to play there unless it was in private. Loud Boy arranged two shows for us at Poton 100.

Cui Jian had dinner with Paul Simon, who asked him to take part in his concert. They were to collaborate on Cui Jian’s Yi wu suo you and Simon’s ‘Scarborough Fair’, which Cui Jian had sung as a teenager. Local musicians and consular officials had also arranged a special evening at Poton 100 to fête Simon and his band, which included a number of big-name players like Michael Brecker and Steve Gadd. On the appointed night the club filled up with eager musicians, but neither Simon nor his band deigned to show up. The locals were understandably disappointed, and I felt that Simon had missed his one opportunity to make contact with China’s creative musicians. (He left China hours after completing his concert.)

I went to the Simon concert, more interested in watching the audience and Cui Jian than in Simon’s music. The 8,000-seat arena was only 2/3 full, doubtless because of the 50–100 RMB ticket price. On the other hand, Simon’s reputation in China rested
solely on early Simon and Garfunkel classics, and his current world—beat big band was quite a leap for the Chinese. The crowd was typically sedate at first, despite the fact that someone had distributed hundreds of annoying plastic whistles. It was the several hundred foreigners in the audience who eventually got the crowd whipped up. By the mid—way point the Chinese were enthusiastically clapping to the music while the foreigners danced in the aisles. Still, it was nothing like what we’d experienced in Kunming and Beijing. I waited and waited for Cui Jian to join Simon. At one point I spotted him going backstage, only to emerge a moment later and return to his seat. He later explained that the government had threatened to cancel the show altogether were he to take part. He was bitterly disappointed at being denied the chance to perform alongside his old hero.

CUI JIAN IN ZHUHAI
The Vagaries did a post—Simon—concert show at Poton 100 which was unfortunately our weakest set of the tour. We put it down to ten days without practice. It was nevertheless a treat for those present and an interesting contrast to Paul Simon. In the late hours about 50 people, including ourselves, Cui Jian, and many Beijing and Guangzhou musicians, were taken to a restaurant to eat snake, lizard, and drink snake—bile liquor.

A few days later the Vagaries played another private show at Poton 100 for local musicians. In the morning we left for Zuhai, adjacent to Macao, to see and possibly participate in a concert by Cui Jian and his band.

Cui Jian had been largely idle as far as performing was concerned. Half—way through his successful 1990 tour the government had pulled the plug on him, and he had only managed to perform once or twice since. He lamented that all his band did was practice with no shows in sight, and hoped the musicians wouldn’t lose heart. His second album, the most aggressive and hard—rocking release to date in China, did little to improve relations with the authorities. Therefore we were delighted to learn that he had somehow managed to set up two sizeable concerts in Zuhai while we were in the vicinity.

We showed up in Zuhai to a warm welcome from Cui Jian and his band, who found us excellent accommodations very cheap. Liang Weiping, Liang Heping, and Cui Jian went into a huddle and decided to risk inviting us to share the concert. Someone was dispatched to the local Cultural Ministry with our TV Festival invitation to seek their permission; nobody was in the office, so we decided to take a gamble and do it anyway. Doing a big show with Cui Jian’s band was the perfect way for us to tie up our China tour, and we were extremely grateful for the opportunity.

We all went to the theater. Following Cui Jian’s sound check, we set up and did a sound check of our own. Everything was in place and ready. Just before showtime we went out for a bite to eat.

I had an intuition that something had gone awry when I saw Liang Weiping approach our table a few minutes later. What he told us was so predictable I almost laughed. The Cultural Ministry had indeed caught wind of our scheme, and 20 minutes before showtime they arrived to warn us not to play. At this moment I felt the full weight of all our frustrations with Chinese officialdom. We were all dispirited after that, and Cui Jian, who understood the situation better than anyone, was genuinely disappointed.

TRYING TO DANCE
Our defeat didn’t prevent Cui Jian and his band from giving an inspired concert. Clearly elated at being onstage again, the band had the audience with them from the start. At one point some people in the audience rose to their feet and began to dance; immediately a uniformed guard appeared who ordered them to sit down. Later they
rose to their feet again and the guard returned and shoved one of them. In an instant the entire audience was on its feet in challenge. Cui Jian’s people, who were veterans of this kind of confrontation, had the matter well in hand; the light man in the balcony quickly fixed a spotlight on the guard, and one of Cui Jian’s crew members appeared from out of nowhere and trained a video camera on the scene. The guard beat a hasty retreat, and the crowd remained on their feet to the end.

After the show everyone got together over several beers, and, with heavy hearts, we took our leave of China, Cui Jian, and our friends. In the morning we crossed over into Macao and scattered to the places we had come from.

The Vagaries returned to their individual pursuits pending future projects together. A return to China has not been ruled out. Lisa Dutton started work on the Vagaries’ tour documentary. The members of Identity Crisis have gone back to America and Germany. Taiwan’s Crystal Records has begun to produce recordings in Beijing, and have expressed an interest in my becoming involved. Original music is still being performed in Tainan by Misery and in Taipei by George Soler’s new band. In the coming years I hope to produce a compilation recording of the new Beijing bands for release in the West; I would like to make contact with anyone who is interested in being a partner in the project.

Recently, I returned to Taiwan for an additional six months, but I am now back in Seattle. I understand that a ‘second wave’ of Chinese rock musicians, led by groups such as The Tang Dynasty, Hei Bao and others, has emerged in Beijing. Their recordings are being heavily promoted in Taiwan and Hong Kong and have been receiving attention in the western mainstream music press. These recordings, produced by Taiwanese record labels, are in my opinion unremarkable, and portend the unhappy commercialization of Chinese rock music. The music is slick and expensively produced, and apart from the Chinese lyrics sounds like any western heavy metal band. Some of the musicians have dismissed Cui Jian as a ‘has been’. As for Cui Jian, he and the emergence of Chinese rock are the main topics of Zhang Yuan’s feature film ‘Beijing Bastards’, which is currently in production. Cui’s long-planned U.S. tour is still being held up due to passport complications.

While in Taiwan, I organized two concerts of eclectic original music at the New Phase Arts Center in Taiwan, involving musicians from the U.S., Taiwan, Germany, and Canada, under the names Axolotl and The Lemming Dynasty. In terms of audience response I felt these were our most successful musical endeavours in Taiwan to date. Although it will likely be some time before I return to China or Taiwan, this by no means spells an end to my involvement in musical exchange with the Chinese.
HISTORY & FOREIGN STUDENTS’ EXPERIENCES

The Shanghai Conservatory of Music

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World music plays a growing role in professional music training in the West. But what about the countries where world music is born? Over the past hundred years, numerous academic music colleges were founded in non-Western countries. What kind of attention do such schools pay to native music? How do they cope with their local music traditions? In this article, the authors trace the history of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music from its founding in 1927 up to the present. They examine the influences that shaped both the Western and Chinese musical training programs in this school and discuss their own experiences as foreign students at the Conservatory in 1988-89. The Shanghai Conservatory is of interest not only as a place to study Chinese music but also as a 'monument' of 20th century Chinese cultural history.

The Shanghai Conservatory of Music is situated in Fenyang Street in the former French Concession of Shanghai. Just around the corner is Huaihai Road, one of the city’s major shopping avenues. The compounds of the school are a characteristic mixture of Western villas from colonial times and newly raised utilitarian flats. The contrast is a silent reminder of Shanghai’s chequered past. This is where all the teaching takes place, and also where most of the students and some of the teachers live. It is a pleasure for visitors from outside to stroll around the compounds and to hear the music that comes out of open windows at almost any time of the day – a strange cacophony of Western opera voices, trombones, pianos, saxophones, Chinese lutes, traditional percussion and noisy shawms. On hot summer evenings, supplementary flavour is added by thousands of cicadas chirping in treetops.

Only a few years ago, part of the terrain was inhabited by local Shanghai Chinese. Their neighbourhood life was more or less incorporated in the Conservatory’s typical atmosphere. These people lived in tiny rooms in low houses huddled cheek by jowl, like in the Old City. They would prepare their food on outdoor charcoal fires, rinse their dishes in public sinks and chat on their doorsteps, beneath bamboo poles hung with washing. The Conservatory’s music students, walking from their dormitories to the lecture rooms, would find the poultry and crawling toddlers of the co-inhabitants crossing their path – a taste of townsfolks’ community life which has now largely
The main gate of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music in Fenyang Street, spring 1993.

disappeared. The last huts and shacks were removed in 1986, and an imposing music library arose on the cleared site. This library and the other modern school buildings erected in the past decade - next to the colonial villas which still house part of the school’s administration - reflect the rapid development of the Conservatory from a small urban music school into a modern, well-equipped institute of music education.

Some of the former 'homeliness' remains, even in the Shanghai of the 1990s. Music students will carry their cellos and violins across the compounds without protective cases. They are sometimes found playing their instrument outdoors because the dormitories - where they live together with an average of eight people in one room - leave them no space for practising, and all available practising rooms may be occupied. It is possible to hear a promising talent play a Brahms concerto on his doorknob, while other students pass by, talking and hardly taking notice. During lunch time people can be seen walking with rice bowls from the dining hall. Except for the extremely quiet siesta hours, the lanes and alleys around the Chinese students' flats are rather noisy. People shout each other's names, leaning out of windows; the music making goes on from early morning until midnight, interrupted only at noon. The lawn below the Chinese dormitory is strewn with litter: students throw their waste out of the windows.

What does it mean for foreign students to be part of this atmosphere every day - to mix with local students and to attend lectures on Chinese music theory and lessons on Chinese instruments by native teachers?

For us, personally, it was a wonderful and gratifying experience. Anyone in the West with a genuine passion for Chinese music and a professional interest in it should consider spending some time at a Chinese conservatory. Those who wish to become genuine masters of a Chinese instrument may decide to stay on for several years and to graduate in China, as a handful of Western students have done. This was not feasible for us because our main goal was to carry out fieldwork on folk song in the Chinese
Playing Brahms outdoors. The dormitories are usually too crowded for practising.

countryside. We only spent eight months in Shanghai and were unable to complete more than one or two courses. It was still long enough to profit from the experience and to conclude that the Shanghai Conservatory is a good place for studying Chinese music; the standards of teaching are high and the range of courses offered is very broad and attractive.¹

Needless to say, foreigners will have to meet certain requirements. Though it is not formally demanded, some basic knowledge of spoken Chinese is indispensable at the Conservatory, and a long-term stay in China will always require a firm commitment, an open mind and – not least – a strong constitution. The curriculum, the study situation and the living circumstances in China are obviously very different from what one is familiar with in the West. It is good to be aware of the differences and to know in advance what to expect.

This article on the history and development of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music may be of some help to those who plan to accept the challenge of studying music in China. The historical survey should put current conditions and teaching priorities at the Shanghai conservatory in proper perspective.

It is no exaggeration to say that a new epoch in Chinese music and musical training began with the founding of this school in a back-street building in Shanghai in the late 1920s. The school was to become not only a focal point of music education in China, but also a veritable cultural battlefield. In some ways, the picture is still valid in the 1990s.

¹ The Central Conservatory in Beijing (founded 1950) is probably a very good alternative, but our experience there is limited to some brief visits. It may well be that the other conservatories in China – namely those of Tianjin and Shenyang (both founded in 1958), of Sichuan (1959), Xi’an (1960), Wuhan and Guangdong (both 1985) and the Chinese Conservatory in Beijing (1964) – now accept foreign students, too.
THE FIRST OF ITS KIND

At the beginning of this century, Western music was virtually an unknown commodity in China, except in those urban circles where foreigners happened to introduce it to their Chinese friends. In Shanghai, small jazz ensembles and — from the 1920s onwards — a symphony orchestra consisting of non-Chinese musicians — performed mostly for the city’s foreign community. A small number of Chinese were wealthy enough to participate in foreign social life and to make their acquaintance with Beethoven, Tchaikovsky and other classical composers.

Western music education hardly existed in China, except for lessons given by a handful of individuals, privately or at missionary schools. There were no ‘music departments’, let alone independent music institutes that propagated Western music. Chinese traditional music was not taught in colleges either, but local Chinese opera troupes served as de facto training schools for young opera actors, and local instrumental ensembles adopted students to be trained in a master–pupil situation. In such situations, the emphasis was on Chinese instruments and Chinese musical genres. Western music was not studied.

One pioneer in the field of Chinese music education, Xiao Youmei, decided to change this situation. Together with Cai Yuanpei, an influential politician and former university director, he took up the idea of introducing Western-style professional music training in a special school in Shanghai. With state support, the two men founded a National Music College (Guohu yinyue yuan) in Rue Dollifus (now Nanchang Road) in the French quarter of the city. The school started in November 1927 and was the first of its kind in republican China.

At that time, it was mainly accessible to children of middle-class families and functioned practically as a boarding school. It had some lecture rooms, a central hall and two separate dormitories for boys and girls. Only rich students could afford to live there throughout the year, summer holidays included. Girl students had a special female tutor to guide them in social behaviour and etiquette.

The school began with just over twenty students, and with fourteen Chinese and four foreign teachers. It provided basic courses in music theory, composition, singing, piano and violin. Other Western instruments were soon added to the curriculum, as well as courses in English, French and in Western cultural history. The teaching was done with the help of simple music materials or with no materials at all. The school

2 Unless otherwise stated, information about the history of the Conservatory in this article is taken from: Ding Shande et al. (ed.) — Shanghai yinyue xueyuan jianshi 1927–1987, (‘Brief History of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music 1927–1987’), a special 132-page publication which the Conservatory issued in 1987. We refrain from quoting it for every single fact mentioned. Most of the historic photographs reprinted here were taken from three brochures published by the conservatory: Zhu Yongzhen (ed.) — ‘Shanghai Conservatory of Music’ (publ. 1982 ?); Zhu Yongzhen (ed.) — ‘Shanghai Conservatory of Music’ (publ. 1987, printed in Hong Kong) and Ru Jie et al. (eds.) — ‘Music Middle School affiliated to Shanghai Conservatory of Music’ (publ. 1989 ?).

3 True enough, in 1921, Xiao Youmei had already started a music department at the University for Women Teachers in Beijing in the wake of the May Fourth Movement, and he founded another small music faculty at Peking’s Academy of Fine Arts in 1926. But it was in Shanghai that Xiao began the first independent professional music school in the country. It should be noted that Western music education was also offered in China on a professional level in schools operated by foreign missionaries, such as Yanjing University and Shanghai University. Bliss Wiant, a music graduate from Boston University and author of ‘The Music of China’ (Hong Kong, 1965), was Professor of Music at Yanjing University for many years. (Cf. Schuman Chuo Yang — ‘Twentieth Century Chinese Solo Songs’, M.A. dissertation, George Peabody College for Teachers, Louisiana, 1973, pp. 17–19).

4 From the very beginning there was also an element of political education — a course called sanmin zhuyi, the ‘three democratic principles’, referring to the theories of Sun Yat-Sen. The tradition of political lessons was later continued by the Communists with a different bias. It is still part of the curriculum at the Conservatory in the 1990s.
was apparently quite popular, for already in the second year the number of students rose to as many as eighty.

A SYMBOL OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM
Cai Yuanpei served as formal director, but he was not a music expert. Purely on the basis of his musical education, Xiao Youmei would have been more suitable for leading the school. Xiao was one of the first Western-trained composers in China. He had studied music and philosophy in Leipzig and, after his return from Germany in 1920, had already gained considerable experience as a music teacher and music organizer in Peking before coming to Shanghai. But Cai Yuanpei, who was the former head of the University of Peking, was much better known in China. He was widely admired as a champion of education reform and a symbol of academic and spiritual freedom. Young students in Beijing had drawn inspiration from Cai when they took to the streets in 1919 in a protest movement that became known as the May Fourth Movement. With Madame Sun Yat-sen, the writer Lu Xun and other liberals he founded the short-lived China League for Civil Rights.

Cai’s presence in Shanghai—where he had become minister of education for the Guomindang government—seemed a guarantee that the school was to develop into a genuine and formally subsidized institute of professional higher education. But Cai’s directorship turned out to be surprisingly short-lived. Although it was Communism which eventually decided the future of higher education in China, one cannot help wondering what would have become of the school in Shanghai if Cai, as a leading Guomindang figure, had thrown in his full weight with it. But he left the school one year after its founding. His departure marked the beginning of a troublesome era for the Shanghai Conservatory in which politics and external circumstances were to play an increasingly disruptive role.

MONEY PROBLEMS

It seems that the Conservatory was not regarded as much of a priority project by the Chinese government in Nanjing, in spite of Cai Yuanpei’s protection. The school was

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7 Cai Yuanpei did not sever his ties with the music school completely. In 1936, a concert was held in honour of his 70th birthday. At this occasion, Cai planted a tree on the school’s campus.
Opening ceremony of the 1929 semester.

granted a budget of only 2600 yuan for the first year – hardly enough to pay for the instruments. In 1929, after Cai had left and Xiao Youmei had taken over as the new director, the government forced the school to rename itself ‘National Vocational Music School’ (Guoli yinyue zhuanye xueyuan) – a deliberate reduction in status, followed by cuts in financial support. Money was a precious commodity in republican China, and the Guomindang was in constant need of it to carry out its most urgent task – fighting Communism.

The music school survived this setback, albeit with great difficulty. College fees had to be raised, which compelled some students to quit. The school changed address no less than eight times in the first ten years of its existence, mainly due to money problems, but also because it was bombed out by the Japanese. The teaching normally took place in small rooms crammed with people and with pianos and other instruments; the dormitories were small, damp, dirty and noisy. Much idealism was needed to work under such poor conditions.

The first students graduated in 1933. There were some concerts, an attempt to start a music journal and, from 1934 onwards, a fruitful cooperation with local Shanghai radio. In that year, the school finally received an adequate grant from the government, allowing it to move to a more spacious building in Jiangwan on the northern outskirts of the city.

Prospects had changed for the better. Xiao Youmei and some others began to prepare materials for teaching music in middle schools. A growing number of prominent foreign musicians joined the staff. It was particularly Russians who gave a strong impulse to the school. The foreigners were admired by their Chinese colleagues, but the Western music which they brought along also caused deep confusion. It confronted the first generations of Western-trained musicians in China with a disturbing question: where exactly did they stand with respect to their own, native culture?

CHINESE MUSIC VERSUS WESTERN ‘SCIENCE’

The international atmosphere of Shanghai before World War II had a lasting impact on music education in China. Teaching methods, selected music and principal instruments in the school’s courses were all Western. True enough, guoyue (‘national music’) and classical Chinese literature were part of the curriculum, too; there were special teachers for pipa (lute), dizi (bamboo flute) and erhu (fiddle) from the very beginning. But

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8 Interestingly, one of the locations was a villa in Fenyang Street (called ‘Rue Pichon’ by the French), where the Conservatory settled again – this time for good – in the 1950s.
students’ interest for these Chinese instruments was rather limited. Most of them preferred the Western-oriented courses, which were apparently viewed as the more sophisticated part of the curriculum. For Xiao Youmei, the idea behind gùoyue was not so much to propagate Chinese traditional music but to create a new repertoire of Chinese national music based on a mixture of Chinese melodies and Western harmony and musical forms. From the beginning, Xiao’s ideal was to ‘upgrade’ Chinese traditional music and make it fit in with Western musical and educational conventions. Even so, he thought of traditional music mainly in terms of the venerated ancient Chinese court music, which had an aura of professionalism and respectability, as opposed to much of China’s rural music, which was the domain of peasants, beggars, low-ranking actors and Daoist and Buddhist worshippers and priests. This rural music could hardly be included in an urban music-training program. It was a world too far removed from that of Western teaching and the ‘scientific’ images of Western harmony and composition theory to be accepted as part of the school’s education. Xiao Youmei and his colleagues did not show much interest in it. The spiritual distance between urban intellectual life in Shanghai and the bawdy songs and mystic rituals of the countryside was as big in the 1930s as it is today.

The confusion over China’s native culture caused by the introduction of Western music in China was shared by many urban professional musicians at that time. Some of them adopted an almost Western-biased and colonial view of their own traditional music, taking for granted the introduction of harmony, counterpoint and equal temperament as ‘scientific’ improvements to the music traditions of China. The emphasis was on science, for in their eyes, Western music offered an objective standard. What foreigners thought about Chinese music had become a matter of major importance. As Chao Mei-pa, a Western-trained singer and professor at the University of Shanghai, wrote in 1937:

‘Retaining Chinese music is equally hard as adopting Western musical science [sic]. Will our future musicians or the world be satisfied with our production without the beauties of harmony, counterpoint and orchestra? Can the world appreciate the theatrical singing of China in its traditional way? What kind of material should we use in our music schools? Suppose we were to adopt the Western system, then how far should we go? Can we some day invent a science of harmony and counterpoint of our own without being influenced by other schools? In singing, should we adopt the Western method instead of the conventional falsetto? Should we introduce Western instruments, and can we modify our traditional instruments in a scientific way?’

The answers seemed almost implied in the way the questions were put: Chinese music and musical training had to be re-invented, one way or another. The discovery of Western standards in education and art – a discovery made against the backdrop of Western dominance in the field of military, technological and economic power – resulted in deep embarrassment among urban Chinese intellectuals with respect to their own native culture. Needless to say, their worries were not shared – and were virtually ignored – by the majority of traditional musicians in China. But they were not the ones who founded state-subsidized music schools.

THE RUSSIAN IMPACT

The ‘National Music College’ was a product of the cosmopolitan and entrepreneurial climate of early 20th century Shanghai, where foreign achievements had become – for better or worse – the standard for real ‘progress’. Such progress was not only felt in the field of music or art. Chinese and foreign businessmen had turned Shanghai into a city of grandeur, the ‘Paris of Asia’. An expatriate community of 60,000 foreigners lived in the British, French and American quarters in Shanghai under protection of a multinational army. They had made the city look very different from other places in China. The French concession, like other Western-dominated areas in the town, had its coffee houses, big department stores with luxury goods, theatres and concert halls with films from Hollywood, plays and recitals, cabarets and Peking opera. This was all part of a new world, perhaps a glimpse of a new type of society that China was heading for.

The music school was only a few blocks away from Avenue Joffre (later Huaihai Road), with its chic restaurants and illuminated shop-windows. The street was pre-eminently the haunt of White Russians, who had come to Shanghai in great numbers following the Russian Revolution. They could be found in local coffee houses playing jazz or talking with dreamy looks about the splendours of the czarist past.

The Russians in particular were to shape music education in 20th century China. They had an important influence on music life in Shanghai. Classically minded players gave piano and violin lessons to young bourgeois Chinese. Many members of the Municipal Orchestra of Shanghai were Russians, and this was indeed where the music school recruited most of its teachers. In 1929, Boris Zakharov joined the school as head of the piano section. An Italian, Arrigo Foa – concertmaster and later conductor of the Municipal Orchestra – became head of the violin section.

More Russians, like I. Shevtsov and V. Shushlin, joined the school in 1930 to teach cello and Western-style singing. Shushlin was an opera singer who had shared the stage back home with celebrities like Fyodor Shalyapin. Two other eminent Russian artists, Alexander Tcherepnin and Aaron Avshalomov, visited the school in the 1930s and began to teach composition to Chinese students. They propagated a taste for Western romanticism but also encouraged the Chinese to explore their own native music traditions.

Tcherepnin lived in Paris but made a grand tour of the Orient as pianist-composer. He stayed in China and in Japan for three years before returning to Europe in 1937. In Shanghai, he married the young Chinese pianist Li Xianmin. He developed such an interest in Chinese traditional tunes that he began to arrange or invent them on piano himself. Shortly after his arrival in China in 1934, he wrote a series of ‘Chinese’ concert études¹⁰ and organized a composition contest, inviting students to write piano

¹⁰ Recorded by Bennett Lerner on compact disc in 1985: ‘Alexander Tcherepnin Piano Music’, Etcetera Records, West Germany, KTC 1053. The accompanying booklet includes a brief introduction to the composer by Phillip Ramey and notes on the music by Bennett Lerner.
pieces with 'Chinese flavour'. The first and second prizes went to a young student, He Luting, for his piano works 'The Cowherd’s Flute' and 'Lullaby'. He Luting won lasting fame with his Cowherd’s Flute in China. Many years later, he said that he actually did not think much of the little piece, but at the time it was apparently regarded as an important step towards a new national music culture which combined the best of Chinese and Western music traditions.

COSMOPOLITANS
The Chinese who taught or studied music in Shanghai – future celebrities like Huang Zi, He Luting, Ding Shande and Xian Xinghai, amongst others – presented a new class of artists: they combined their nationalist ideals with a cosmopolitan outlook and a Western-oriented taste in music.

This would soon bring them into conflict with the more populist-oriented intellectuals in their own country. Times were changing in China. The tide of war and revolution mobilized and polarized people in almost every layer of Chinese society. There was endless discussion about the future of the nation. Westernization was perhaps a road to progress, but were not Westerners also China’s oppressors? Did they care at all about improving life for millions of impoverished Chinese? It was part of the many controversies over which communists and Guomindang nationalists went to war.

Around the corner, yet another foreign power – Japan – was trying to lay its hands on China, threatening total war. In the anxieties and the sweltering political climate of the late 1930s, discussions on Chinese music and Chinese music education easily turned into quasi-political debates. For the time being, it was still only a war of words, but the implications went much further than musical and cultural issues alone. Behind the talk about singing techniques or questions of harmony and counterpoint, very different and far more painful issues were hidden – questions about national humiliation, about China’s dignity and prestige as a nation and, ultimately, about the integrity of the individual Chinese soul.

11 The jury for this contest consisted of three prominent composers in France: Arthur Honegger, Jacques Ibert and Albert Roussel.
12 Interview of the authors with He Luting in Shanghai, 14 February 1989.
WHITE MAN – GOD’S FAVOURITE
Ding Shande remembers how, as a young student of the music school, he went to concerts of the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra. The orchestra played every Saturday evening in the Lanxin (‘Blue Heart’) Theatre at the corner of Maoming Street (Rue Cardinal Mercier of old). ‘We were allowed in because we were music students’, he recalls, ‘but we had to sit up in the gods with only a poor view of the stage. The concerts always began late in the evening, at nine o’clock, in accordance with the foreigners’ habits, so we would frequently fall asleep. We weren’t used to staying up late. I remember waking up in shock if there was a loud bang in Beethoven or Mozart.’

The audiences in these concerts counted a limited number of Chinese, the orchestra had no Chinese at all, although it included ‘artists of all nations’, as Tcherepnin observed on one occasion. The ensemble was conducted by an Italian, Mario Paci, who had come to Shanghai in 1919 and who viewed himself as a missionary of Western classical and contemporary music in the Far East.

Under his baton, the orchestra performed the ‘iron repertoire’ but also new works by De Falla, Ravel, Bartók, Hindemith, Respighi, Malipiero and others. His foreign audiences would readily agree that the orchestra was ‘the best in the Far East’. But Paci could hardly claim to be a missionary for the ordinary Chinese. True enough, a number of Chinese musicians began to make guest appearances in the mid-1930s, and some Chinese players were accepted as regular members from 1938 onwards. The story goes that the talented Chinese violin-player Tan Shuzhen was invited to turn the pages for a Western soloist and made such a good impression that he and some others were eventually accepted as Chinese members in the ensemble. It was the beginning of a growing Chinese presence in the symphony orchestra, in a period when several public sites in Shanghai still had signs which forbade entry to Chinese.

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From an interview by the authors with Ding Shande, 25 April 1992, Shanghai.
Related to the authors by Huang Bai, a teacher of folk song at the Shanghai Conservatory (Interview in Shanghai, June 1990). The other musicians were violinists Chen Youxin and William Shu, and trumpeter Huang Yijun. They were appointed in 1938. See a brochure of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, published 1989, which contains a brief history of the orchestra, pp. 2–5.
There could be no doubt about the deep rift between native and foreign communities in China. In 1925, a well-known Chinese writer published an essay called ‘White Man – God’s Favourite.’ But the author, Zhu Ziqing, was not simply ‘choosing sides’. Rather than repeating commonplace slogans against imperialist power, he tried to uncover the more delicate causes of the country’s national humiliation: ‘I still believe that the most important thing is that we examine ourselves, examine our own children’, he wrote. ‘No one, really, is God’s favourite!’

The truth of such a statement was certainly evident in Shanghai. Its streets were not only the ‘Paris of Asia’, but also the home of the homeless, of war refugees, vagrants in search of work, coolies and factory workers who suffered under brutally harsh working conditions, beggars who starved or froze to death out in the open. Their misery could hardly be blamed on one cause or one group alone. The town witnessed heart-rending scenes of civilian protest against Chinese and colonial rule. In various major incidents in the 1920s, British and Chinese police opened fire on unarmed protesters. In April 1927, Chinese gangsters associated with the ruling Guomindang killed thousands of factory workers in an unprecedented massacre, aimed at weakening communist resistance. Here were Chinese massively and brutally killing their own countrymen.

THE RISE OF COMMUNISM
The popular mood in urban China was bent on revolution. And in Shanghai, many major impulses for political change came out of the French quarter. Throughout the first half of the century, the French concession was a true sanctuary for such figureheads of revolt as Sun Yat-sen, Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai. At 76 Xingye Road – a few blocks away from the site where the Shanghai Conservatory was founded – the Communist Party formally came into being in July 1921.

Communism grew to be a tremendous force in China. The populist ideology of Mao Zedong became a powerful weapon in the wars against both the ruling Guomindang and the invading Japanese army.

The music school in Shanghai, with its students from bourgeois families and Western-oriented education may not have fitted well into Communist visions of a classless society. Its principal founder Cai Yuanpei was a high-ranking Guomindang official, and several Chinese teachers at the school were outspoken supporters of the Guomindang regime. The prominent composer Huang Zi, for example, who had returned from America in 1929 after studying music there. But for the time being, Huang Zi and like-minded colleagues had other worries. The rise of Communism was overshadowed by the violent outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in 1937. It would take

17 Details on Shanghai in the paragraphs below and French street names quoted throughout the article were taken from: Pan Ling – ‘In Search of Old Shanghai’, Joint Publ. Co. Hong Kong, 4th ed. 1987.
many years before public life in Shanghai could go 'back to normal'. And many things would never be the same again.

THE SCHOOL IN WARTIME
Future prospects for the school had looked so bright in early 1937. There were more teachers and more students than ever before – with finally enough space to house them – and there was now even a small orchestra which played and practised inside the school. The orchestra was directed by I. Shevtsov and consisted of a string group, a handful of wind players and some percussionists. With the help of a piano and a harmonium which filled in the missing orchestral parts it was possible to perform Haydn and Mozart symphonies, though it never came to a public performance. War intervened.

In August 1937, Chinese airplanes, attempting to bomb the Japanese fleet anchored off the docks of Shanghai, badly missed their target and instead hit the city, killing hundreds of civilians. It was a poorly planned action in response to Japanese atrocities in northern China. The Japanese were swift to retaliate.
In late August and through most of September and October the city and coastline were heavily attacked by Japanese planes and gunboats. Tens of thousands of Chinese were killed and thousands more crowded into the International Settlement and the French concession seeking shelter and safety from the shelling and bombing. In November, the Japanese broke the defensive lines at Hangzhou bay and began to fight their way into the city over land.\(^\text{18}\)

The music school could no longer continue in Jiangwan. The only option was to move back to the French concession, for it seemed that the Japanese did not want to confront the foreign powers vested there – or not right away, at least.

Already in August, the school had found a new home in an abandoned surgery clinic on Xujiachui Street in the southwestern corner of the city. Teachers and students outdid each other in composing anti-Japanese songs. Patriotism was ingrained in the urban Chinese spirit, and it fed well on the atrocities of war.
Actually, 'patriotic music' had been an important element in the curriculum ever since 1927, and anti-Japanese songs had already become fashionable after Japan occupied Manchuria in 1931. The music school became, in its own way, a minor front of resistance, with small deeds of heroism and a fast growing corpus of 'political music'. Charity concerts were organized to collect money for war refugees and casualties, as long as it was possible.

The Japanese gradually tightened their grip on Shanghai, conquering the town street by street and cutting it off from China's interior. State financial support for the school now had to be smuggled in via underground organizations, first from Hankou and later from Chongqing.
The music school even changed its name to Sili Shanghai yinyue yuan (Shanghai Private Music School) to avoid being associated with the Chinese government. In 1938, Xiao Youmei travelled on false documents to Hankou to contact the Chinese Ministry of Education. By now, he and his colleagues were fairly desperate. Couldn't the school be moved south to Guilin, away from the killing and bombing? The government said no. There was no safe travelling possible in China, they argued, not with all the pianos and harmoniums and other equipment as luggage. Perhaps the continued presence of foreign teachers would offer some guarantee for the students' safety.

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UNDER JAPANESE CONTROL
But no safety was to be found. The school was bombed again; the girls' dormitory and much of the central building were reduced to rubble. Local Chinese messed around in the ruins trying to pillage the school but were surprised by another bombing raid. The looters were crushed under falling debris. By some miracle nobody from the school got hurt.
The former surgery clinic was now only a few blocks away from the frontline, and shellfire and rattling machine-guns could be heard inside the French concession. Through a window on the upper floor, teachers and students witnessed how one of their Russian neighbours was killed on a rooftop by stray fire. This was the last straw: they knew they could not stay there any longer and began to carry out plans for evacuation.

The school first moved to a foreigners’ private villa, but again the frontline crept near. The only solution was to divide the school over three different locations to spread the risk of destruction. Incredibly, lessons and college life continued even now, albeit with great difficulties. The piano department became the biggest section of the school. Few new students arrived and graduation periods were curtailed to enable pupils to enroll in the Chinese army. A number of young talents – such as the composers Tan Xiaolin, Ma Sicong and Qian Renkang – rose to the fore even in these years. Qian Renkang surprised fellow students by writing a ‘modern opera’ which was rehearsed and performed in 1940. Unfortunately, the school also lost some of its strongest pillars. Huang Zi died of typhoid in 1938, at the age of 33, and Xiao Youmei, one of the founding fathers, passed away during an illness two years later, at 56.

By 1942 the Japanese were in total control of Shanghai. The music school – now situated in Western Peking Road – was put under Japanese supervision. Its new director, Li Weinig, collaborated with the Japanese. Teaching was continued in an atmosphere of quarrels and mutual accusations. The number of students dropped. The new director organized pro-Japanese concerts and bluntly dismissed anyone who
refused to cooperate. Japanese became a new part of the curriculum— the only original contribution which the Japanese invaders made to the school.29

Ding Shande continued his work as a piano and composition teacher, but he also founded a private music school in Fuxing Street, not far from the green expanse of the French Park (currently Fuxing Park). He took over a considerable part of the official school’s student community. His own school grew from 20 to 130 students within the span of three years. In spite of war and growing shortages of food and materials, Ding Shande managed to keep his pupils together and even organize a choir and a small orchestra, which were later incorporated again in the official school. One student who found his way to the private school in Fuxing Street in this period was Chou Wen-chung. He became a prominent composer of contemporary music in the United States in the 1950s.

During the Japanese occupation, teaching activities in Shanghai became increasingly difficult. Between 1943 and 1946, a growing number of staff and students fled the city. In Qingmuguan, a mountain village outside China’s wartime capital Chongqing in the far south, a makeshift music school was set up in huts built of lath and plaster. Colleges and music departments from all over the country retreated to China’s inland and combined forces in the south. The music department of Nanjing University (jinling da xue yinyue xi) happened to set up its new campus in the same village as the Shanghai school, only a few miles away. The circumstances for teaching music here were primitive. There were some pianos and harmoniums. Scores were hardly available and had to be copied—including staff lines—on brown toilet paper. But Chongqing became a truly active place for musicians, with concerts, recitals and choral performances staged to give heart to the thousands of refugees. An all-Chinese symphony orchestra was set up by Ma Sicong on the invitation of Chiang Kai-shek’s government, with He Luting as conductor. In the occupied territories, the Japanese army was now facing strong allied resistance, and the Chinese had some reason for optimism.

UNDERGROUND ACTIVITIES
In 1946, shortly after Japan’s capitulation, the Shanghai music school moved back into its former buildings in Jiangwan in the northern part of the city. Repairs were made, extra classes were given to make up for the enormous loss of time. Teachers and students of Ding Shande’s private school and of the makeshift school in Chongqing were combined with those of Shanghai’s official music school, resulting in a new and well-equipped staff of 61 people and more than 160 students. Attempts of the ruling Guomindang government to install a procedure for political selection of students—to single out communist activists—failed. The war had united a vast number of people against a common enemy and had temporarily pushed former political controversies into the background. During the war, the Communists had won widespread support by their uncompromising attitude towards the Japanese. From their military base in Yan’an they now formed a serious threat to the Guomindang. A number of music students and teachers in Shanghai had joined the Communists, either by going to Yan’an or by participating in an underground branch of the Communist Party which was founded by the school in Shanghai in the final year of the war.

29 Li Weining was a song composer who studied in Paris and Vienna in the 1930s. He became head of the theory and composition department of the school in 1937. After the war, he tried to make peace with colleagues by taking on an anti-Japanese attitude almost overnight, but he was criticized and expelled after the later conductor Li Delun and others wrote a public letter of complaint against Li and his comrades. (See Shanghai yinyue xueyuan jianshi 1927-1987, p. 21).
This underground CCP branch organized small-scale academic meetings with a double purpose: discussing music and propagating the Party's ideas. Contact with Communist forces outside Shanghai was sustained via listening to radio messages. It was a risky activity, and some members of the group were caught and imprisoned. Ten music students, including the later prominent Sang Tong and Luo Zhongrong, secretly left Shanghai to establish contacts with the Red Army in communist-occupied territory in northern Jiangsu. Sang and Luo eventually returned to the city as leaders of a 'military control commission'. They briefly supervised political activities in the music school until the Communist army took over Shanghai in May 1949.

LEARNING MORE ABOUT NEW & OLD MUSIC
It seemed as if politics already dominated the picture in the final years under Guomindang rule. In fact, musical life in the school was given important new impulses in this period. Notably the composition department was a lively and active department. The war in Europe had brought a fresh stream of refugees to Shanghai, mainly Jews from Nazi-occupied countries in Europe. Two Jewish musicians offered their services to the school. Wolfgang Fraenkel and Julius Schloss - students of Schoenberg and Berg - introduced twelve-tone music in Shanghai. They stimulated young composers like Ding Shande and Sang Tong to explore new directions. Sang Tong was the first mainland student to experiment with atonal music.

Very little contemporary music had reached the school before the war. Students were now offered more opportunities to get acquainted with modern music but also with other genres and directions in Western music which had been little known in China before, such as baroque and medieval music. They regularly met to listen to gramophone records.

Not only Western music was now taught in a broader perspective. The interest in Chinese traditional music, too, was given a new impulse, notably after Tan Xiaolin became head of the composition and theory department. Tan had studied musical composition under Paul Hindemith in America, and his 'Western' works carried the modern imprint of his teacher. But Tan was also a gifted pipa and erhu player with a thorough understanding of Chinese traditional music. He was one of the first Chinese to experiment with Western tonality in traditional ensembles.

Fritz Kuttner, who met Tan Xiaolin in Shanghai in 1947, was impressed by Tan's musicianship. Kuttner was a German music archaeologist with a passion for ancient Chinese culture. He had lived in Shanghai from 1939 onwards. For several years, Kuttner had tried to find out where in Shanghai one could hear Chinese music well played, but without success. He later reported: 'All I was able to hear was very amateurish or even primitive playing, with a poor effort to master the melodic contents of the piece. Then I happened to hear a number of young Chinese musicians who were studying with some of the professional Western teachers living and working in town;

20 Sang Tong's real name was Zhu Jingqing, but he later retained his wartime pseudonym 'Sang Tong' as his name. He was director of the Shanghai Conservatory from 1986 to 1991.
21 Western atonal music was hardly known in China, although it had been introduced there as early as 1934 by Qing Zhu in an article called 'Reactionary music?' in the first issue of Music Journal, published in Shanghai.
22 A letter of Fraenkel recommending his pupil as a great talent was reproduced in: Mao Yurun and Zhao Jingai - Dongfang de xuanli - Zhongguo zhuming zuoqujia Ding Shande de yinyue shengyia ('Oriental Melody - The Musical Career of China's Famous Composer Ding Shande'), Shanghai Book Co. Ltd, Hong Kong, 1983, p. 63. See also: Frank Kouwenhoven - 'Ding Shande Festival', in Chime no. 5, Spring 1992, p. 143-144.
23 See Frank Kouwenhoven - 'Out of the Desert: Mainland China's New Music (1)', Chime no. 2, Autumn 1990, pp. 84-86.
to my surprise, these students seemed to me highly talented and especially hard working at the complex technical requirements for piano and various string instruments.' He was at a loss to understand the difference in skills between Chinese students in the field of Western music and traditional players when performing Chinese music.

At St. John's University, where Kuttner started teaching Western music in 1944, he asked virtually all the Chinese faculty members whether they could inform him on the subject of traditional performance traditions in China, but the answers he received were evasive or apologetic. The attitude of his learned Chinese colleagues was that, in the remote past, China had perhaps achieved a great deal in terms of music theory, but very little in terms of music. Kuttner refused to believe this. He came to the conviction that Chinese scholars throughout the centuries had looked down upon music as an inferior art and had thereby degraded its social status and literally pushed it into the hands of amateurs. As Kuttner wrote: 'This was the reason I could not find any decent musician playing any decent music between 1939 and 1945 in China's largest city of nearly 12 million people. The first time I ever heard a Chinese musician perform well on the *pipa* was when Tan Xiaolin returned from the United States.'

Basically, the elitarian St. John's University was the last place in Shanghai to ask anyone about traditional music, and Kuttner's historical explanation for the lack of good players was a misconception. But his remarks are still of interest because they confirm the largely negative views on traditional music held by the Western-trained Chinese elite in those days. There was certainly more traditional music in China and played on a much more professional level than Kuttner was aware of at that time. The important thing to notice is that - apart from Tan Xiaolin - it was not being played in the Shanghai National Music School.

**MUSIC AS A MIGHTY WEAPON**

Tan Xiaolin did not live to see the end of the civil war. He died of an illness in 1948, one year before the Communists founded the People's Republic of China. Other talented musicians left the school for political reasons. They had no confidence in the bumptious peasant leaders who now seized power in China. When the Communist army crossed the Yangtze River in July 1949 and entered the city, Dai Cailun - head of the school and one of the few Chinese who had conducted the symphony orchestra of Shanghai - quietly left the campus and did not return. Many other staff members decided to wait and see. Quite a few may have had mixed feelings about the future, but all of them shared the hope that Chinese society could be transformed under Communist rule. After a brief interval, teaching activities in Jiangwan were resumed, and new ideas about music and music education began to take root.

Back in 1944 in Yan'an, Mao Zedong had propagated the use of rural folk music for political purposes and had spurred people to use folk songs and dances as a 'mighty weapon' against the enemy. It was a functional part of his efforts to mobilize the peasants in the war against Japan. The revolutionaries aimed at a continuation of Mao's views in peacetime. The cultural heritage of Yan'an consisted of politicized folk songs and folk dance-plays, choral cantatas with patriotic texts and musical mass rallies under the banner of progress and revolution. In short, art had become a synonym for propaganda.

But for the continued 'modernization' of their revolutionary music and for the recording and broadcasting of it, the Communists depended on urban middle-class specialists with knowledge of Western harmony and orchestration and of modern

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sound technique. In urban music schools, the teaching of Western music was allowed to continue, in spite of Communist misgivings about Western imperialist culture and its impact on the urban Chinese elite.

Eclectic and liberal views on art were still possible, in as far as they could be reconciled with the policies of the new revolutionary government. But in the next decade the emphasis on politics would grow, blurring the future of music education or indeed any kind of education in the People’s Republic.

**A NEW BEGINNING**

The climate of change was basically still benign in the early 1950s. The music school in Shanghai eventually became the ‘Shanghai National Conservatory of Music’ and was fully reorganized under its new director He Luting, who was a man of all seasons. He Luting loved European music but he also had affinity with Chinese folklore and had established a reputation as a revolutionary composer.

The Conservatory made a fresh start after the teaching staffs and students of two small music departments in Nanjing and Fujian had been added to the school in Shanghai. Affiliated primary and middle schools were founded. They were ordinary schools, but they selected pupils with musical talent and offered them extensive supplementary courses in music. Gifted children could thus be trained from a very early age. The emphasis was still on Western instruments – notably piano – but more students than before were accepted for majoring in Chinese music theory.

The number of foreign teachers at the Conservatory dropped after 1949. The majority of foreigners in China left the country because of the Communist take-over. But the country’s new policies also brought in new foreign allies. Cultural exchange programs were set up with the Soviet Union and various East European countries, leading to a fresh influx of foreign experts from Russia and (later) Rumania, Bulgaria and East Germany. China pledged ‘eternal friendship’ with Russia. The Soviet Union was helpful in restoring China’s national economy and served as a model of social and industrial reform. In the cultural field, Russian ‘revolutionary’ music became the new standard. Chinese students were sent to study at Russian universities in Moscow, Leningrad and elsewhere, as part of an educational exchange program.

One Russian academic remembers the young Chinese men and women that came to Leningrad in the early 1950s: ‘Unlike the Czechs and Albanians, few of them ever made close friends with Soviet students. Nobody, it seemed, worked as hard as the Chinese students.’

Composers Zhu Jian’er and Qu Wei, conductor Huang Xiatong and several other students from Shanghai were sent to study in Russia.

Meanwhile, piano pupils in Shanghai practised their Czerny études and then headed on to Mozart, Beethoven and finally Liszt. But it was above all Russian composers like Glazunov, Tchaikovsky, Rimski-Korsakov, Khachaturian and Kabalevsky who became the musical heroes of a new Chinese generation of music lovers. The Symphony Orchestra of Shanghai had become an all-Chinese orchestra, and young composers at the Conservatory tried their luck at Chinese symphonies and symphonic poems in honour of the Party and the Revolution, inspired by Russian examples.

The majority of the Conservatory staff now consisted of Chinese teachers, all of whom were highly trained professionals. The school started departments for music research and for the publishing of books and lesson materials. Musicology was not taught in Chinese universities, but music schools seemed a far more obvious place for it – the

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25 In 1956, After 1949, the school changed its name four times before it received its current name.
object of study being close at hand. The Conservatory produced various specialist music studies, as well as a handful of translations of foreign books on music. A regular music newsletter was started in 1950. It was called Shang yin$^{27}$ and appeared 387 times before publication was stopped in 1960. The school set up a workshop for manufacturing (Western) instruments, one of the first of its kind in China. It allegedly became a model for violin building companies all over the country.

PLAYING THE BANHU
Almost overnight, Chinese traditional music became a new focus of interest. He Luting invited traditional musicians from all over the country to come to the Conservatory and play and teach national instruments. Not only pipa, dizi, erhu, and sheng but also typical folk instruments like suona and sheng were eventually added to the curriculum. Representatives of minority nationalities were explicitly included in the student body in Shanghai. An official folk music department (minzu yinyue xi) was set up in 1956, led by Shen Zhibai. It was followed by the founding of a separate vocal department.

The Chinese folk music collecting movement, which had begun in Communist-occupied areas in the 1930s with the aim of collecting folk tunes for propaganda songs, was taken up in Shanghai with unprecedented fervour. The emphasis was clearly on quantity. Groups of students led by a teacher would go out into the countryside around Shanghai to listen to local singers and take down words and music of as many songs as they could get hold of. There were also excursions to other parts of the country. These trips to the countryside were basically an obligatory part of political campaigns instigated by the Government to ‘learn from the peasants’. Folk songs were collected and published in makeshift anthologies or used as materials for new compositions. Most frequently composers transferred them to the medium of the choral cantata, with new, patriotic texts. There was a hectic activity of student choirs and ensembles performing the new songs of steel and glory at school meetings.
By 1958, the Conservatory was able to recruit a large Chinese traditional instruments ensemble from among its own students. The ensemble combined some 25 instruments which had actually never been played in such a constellation before. The ‘Traditional orchestra’, far from being traditional, was an invention of the 1950s, but it was greeted with general enthusiasm. Special works were created for this ensemble. The folk music department now boasted a ‘folk composition section’ where Western principles of harmony and musical structure were applied to works for Chinese instruments.

$^{27}$ This name was given to the journal in 1955.
He Luting, the director of the school, had certain reservations with respect to Chinese instruments. He criticized them for their unstable pitch and for not having a bass register. He was one of many Chinese in favour of technical ‘improvements’ such as equal-tempered tuning and enlarged resonance chambers to enhance loudness. It would make the traditional instruments more suitable for ensemble playing. The Western symphony orchestra was regarded by many as the summit of musical art and as an example for native ensembles. ‘Each nation has its own national musical instruments, but all civilized nations have pianos, violins and symphony orchestras’, He Luting wrote on one occasion.  

But He Luting did show enthusiasm for traditional music, too. He made it a habit to invite his students over to the central hall or the courtyard of the school every morning to play the banhu and sing folk songs from Shaanxi Province for them. It was music which he remembered from his days in communist Yan’an.

THE CONSERVATORY’S GREAT LEAP
In the course of the 1950s, other music conservatories were founded in China – in Tianjin, Shenyang, Chengdu and Xi’an. Meanwhile, the Shanghai Conservatory

29 The banhu is a variant of the erhu, the Chinese two-stringed fiddle. The surface of the sound-box of the erhu normally consists of snake-skin. By contrast, the banhu has a wooden surface. The banhu is used in northern genres of opera and narrative singing.
30 From an interview with Huang Bai, a folk song teacher (and former student) of the Shanghai Conservatory. See also: Shi Zhongxing – He Luting zhuo (Biography of He Luting), Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1989, p. 138.
enjoyed growing prestige both in China and abroad. It moved to a new site in Fenyang Street in the heart of Shanghai in 1958 and was visited by Russian celebrities like David Oistrakh, Pavel Kochan and Dmitri Kabalevsky. There was talk of Shostakovich coming to China to study polyphonic music of the southern minorities, but the composer never set foot on Chinese soil. Once again, politics and external circumstances intervened.

By 1959, ten years of eternal friendship between the Soviet Union and China came to an end. Cultural and diplomatic ties were broken completely in 1963. China had plunged into an era of unprecedented political activity which not only undermined its diplomatic ties with countries abroad but also the entire course of life inside the People's Republic.\footnote{The world’s two great communist nations enjoyed their best relations between 1953 and 1958, when Russia helped China to acquire whole branches of industry that had never existed there before, such as aviation, automobile and tractor manufacturing, radio and many branches of chemical production. But quarrels over military co-operation, and mutual criticisms of foreign policies and internal reforms led to open hostility in 1963.}

The last East European teachers left the Conservatory by 1960, a year of fierce campaigning and of few regular school activities in Shanghai. Already in 1952, a number of foreign teachers had been chased away as part of a political campaign. In 1955, the Conservatory was dragged along in yet another current of socialist propaganda meetings, mass rallies and denunciations of ‘bourgeois-liberal elements’. We will refrain from separately discussing all the political ‘movements’ in this period and their subsequent impact on the school. Suffice it to say that these movements gradually wrecked normal education and eventually culminated in the violence of the Cultural Revolution, which was particularly harsh in the Shanghai Conservatory.

The clash of liberal and dogmatic views on art and music was a natural part of China’s general, soul-searching conflict – the question of how to reconcile the country’s native
The Chinese students' dormitories, where every room is shared by an average of eight people.

culture with 'modern' foreign influences. But this spiritual conflict now turned into a vulgar war of sentiments. People with liberal attitudes who dared to question the growing impact of politics and populist ideas on music education — no matter how carefully they worded their views — were severely criticized. There was an increasingly squalid atmosphere of 'conspiracies' and 'investigations'. Presumed wrong-doers were degraded, publicly vilified and forced to write humiliating self-criticisms.

Sang Tong, Chen Mingzhi, Shen Zhibai and some other music teachers in Shanghai who tried to stay aloof from all the politicizing became known as the *A man jitian* ('Arrogant Clique') and were among the first victims at the Conservatory during this period. Sang Tong lost his job in 1955. A composer with an interest in atonal music in the late 1940s, he changed his style beyond recognition under political pressure in the 1950s.

Students, too, were punished if they showed a lack of revolutionary fervour or too much interest in modern trends in Western music. By participating in the country's 'Great Leap Forward', they could show their political correctness — a quality which was now partly expressed by numbers and 'production quotas'. Student choirs raised their annual number of propaganda performances and composers made increasingly fantastic 'production plans' for future compositions. Ding Shande, who was now vice-president of the Conservatory, announced his personal plan for two years: taking into account his administrative duties, he would compose one symphony, one opera, one symphonic overture, ten instrumental pieces, twenty art songs, fifty songs for the masses and thirty children's pieces.32 The annual number of new students arriving at the Conservatory, which had been fluctuating strongly as a consequence of frequent policy changes — 3 new students in 1952 against 140 in 1956 — reached an all-time high

in 1960, when nearly 400 new pupils were allowed to enroll. It was the Shanghai Conservatory’s great leap into disaster. By now, criteria for student admission no longer focused on musical talent but were mainly concerned with elements like class background and revolutionary fervour. It was the same year in which the economic ‘Great Leap’ collapsed in China, plunging the country in chaos and famine.

THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION
The 1950s resulted in the loss of Soviet culture as a legitimate model for musical activity and in the departure of all foreign experts. The same period saw the destruction of many ancient music traditions. Native genres were ‘reformed’ and ‘remodelled’ almost beyond recognition to pay lip service to Party doctrine. Chinese opera was turned into political revue. Religious ritual and folk song were suppressed or abolished because of their links with ‘feudalism’ and ‘superstition’. Music education was gradually turned into a farce. The new China of the 1960s was a country of chaos and terror.

Between 1966 and 1973, there was no music teaching at all at the Shanghai Conservatory, only political meetings and campaigns in which a growing number of people were persecuted. Students and teachers were eventually sent to work in the countryside and in factories, while the buildings in Fenyang Street were taken over by a revolutionary opera troupe.

In this period, which became known as the ‘Cultural Revolution’, the Conservatory came under fire by orthodox Revolutionary youths. They criticized the school for having been dominated by ‘bourgeois elements’ in the early years of its existence. Figureheads like He Luting and (posthumously!) Huang Zi were singled out for severe criticism, together with a great many of the senior teachers. Everybody in the school now had to spend all their time writing big-character posters. Professors were forced to write self-criticisms and to read aloud other people’s big-character posters against them. A number of teachers were paraded around the conservatory carrying placards around their necks. In public struggle meetings, they were accused of political betrayal or a subversive love for Western music and were subjected to all kinds of humiliations. Red Guards ransacked their homes and terrorized their families.

In August and September 1966, five Conservatory teachers were killed or driven to death while as many as 80 were imprisoned. Among the first who committed suicide were Lu Xiutang, a teacher of Chinese folk music, and Li Cuizhen, a piano player. The latter, a frail and aristocratic-looking woman of 56, had studied at the Royal College of Music in London in the late 1930s and had become head of the piano department upon her return to Shanghai. One day, after a particularly humiliating ‘struggle meeting’, she was found dead, seated by her piano, with the gas turned on. She left a note which read: ‘I did my best for my students’.

In the following year, another six people were driven to death and a hundred more were locked up. They were put either in genuine prisons or in the school’s murky closets and storerooms (which were contemptuously referred to as niupeng, ‘cow sheds’). Intimidation and endless humiliation drove a number of people to suicide, while a few were literally beaten to death.

He Luting and his wife received several beatings at the hands of Red Guards and were the object of two mass-criticism meetings shown on Shanghai television in March 1968. Hundreds of people were forced to participate in denouncing the composer and his family. One of He Luting’s daughters, He Xiaoxi, a student at the Conservatory,

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33 The incident is related in: Nien Cheng – ‘Life and Death in Shanghai’, Grafton Books, London 1986, p. 79. (Li Cuizhen is there referred to as ‘Li Zhen’.) Her farewell letter is quoted rather differently in Shanghai yinyue xuexuan jianshi 1927–1987, (‘Brief History of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music 1927–1987’), p. 43, where she is alleged to have written: ‘I needed rest.’
was killed and there was an alleged attempt at poisoning He Luting. In yet another violent incident, young revolutionaries poured boiling water in one of Sang Tong’s ears, causing him to become deaf on one side. This prominent composer, one of the few genuinely talented artists of his generation, was now forced to write ‘revolutionary music’ in honour of his torturers’ idol – Mao Zedong. Both He Luting and Sang Tong survived the Cultural Revolution, but some of their colleagues were less fortunate. Shen Zhibai, a music historian who had joined Sang Tong in the ‘Arrogant Clique’ a few years earlier, committed suicide at the age of 64. Red Guards accused him of being a ‘spy’. In his final hour, he wrote a letter which ended with the words nài hé – ‘all to no avail’.

MORE WALL POSTERS
In 1970, another wave of persecutions and criticism meetings followed. It was partly directed against people who complained about the dominance of the ‘model operas’ in musical life. Three liberal-minded teachers lost their lives. Three others were persecuted to such an extent that they went mad.

In 1973, classes were resumed in an altogether paranoid atmosphere. One hundred and forty new students were accepted at the Conservatory, 80 percent of them peasants or factory workers, in order to guarantee a majority of people from China’s newly privileged class – the poor and the illiterate. In spite of a ‘critical selection’ – one hundred and forty out of nearly four thousand who had applied – it was partly an influx of people with very little true affinity for music. They were welcomed on the school’s campus with the obligatory noise of gongs and drums – the inadvertent, hyper-nervous heartbeat of the Revolution. Lessons in conducting, piano playing, singing, Chinese and even Western music history were taken up again, very cautiously and with constant reference to the one musical standard that nobody dared to question: Jiang Qing’s model operas.

These music lessons were actually a subdued continuation of the political meetings and sessions of criticisms and writing of big wall posters that had dominated the previous years. Walls and fences of the Conservatory were still plastered over with the huge pieces of red paper with big black characters on them, showing the names of the latest victims that had fallen foul of the orthodox revolutionaries. It seemed as if everyone was bullied or made to bully others in turn. As one teacher remembers: ‘People would denounce their best friends publicly and then, afterwards, would sneak into their friend’s room and confess with an embarrassed smile that “of course they hadn’t meant a word of it”’. The most common punishment for political incorrectness was to force people to clean lavatories and deprive them of the right to play their instrument.

BACK TO ‘NORMAL’
At least 27 people attached to the Shanghai Conservatory are said to have lost their lives as a consequence of the violence in the Cultural Revolution. Among the victims were Chen Youxin (55), a violinist who was severely beaten, Yang Jiaren (54), a conductor, Cheng Zhuoru, vice-director of the middle school, and Li Shaobo, middle school teacher of Western instruments. All of them committed suicide. Pianist Fan Jisen (51) was seriously ill at the time he was imprisoned. He was forced to carry out heavy labour and simply collapsed. Others, like the violinist Zhao Zhihua and the pianist Wang Jia’en, were tortured to death. Not only teachers but also a number of administrative personnel and students were brutally killed: among them Li Jiang, Lin Shuxiong and Yan Kai.

The true extent of damage is unmeasurable, and a full history of this period may never be written. In the early 1970s, many people returned to Shanghai with diseases picked up during their work in the countryside. Many more had experienced mental shock.
which they would never be able to overcome completely. People had suffered pain and deep humiliation at the hands of others who had been their former students, colleagues or even friends. The violence had been beyond any framework of moral comprehension.

Life slowly returned to ‘normal’ in the late 1970s, but normality was a relative notion. The dead could not be brought back to life and many debts would never be settled. The past became difficult to discuss once it was declared ‘over’ by the Chinese government.

Two rehabilitation meetings were held in 1976 in honour of ten teachers who had died – no more wall posters this time, but hundreds of memorial wreaths and telegrams streaming in from all over the country. Nearly two hundred people who had been persecuted at the Conservatory had their cases ‘re-examined’. People had their property returned, in as far as possible. One teacher recalls having lost a precious collection including music by Bartók, Stravinsky and other modern composers. What he received in return were some hundred different records of music by Mozart and Beethoven.

For many people confronted with the violence of the Cultural Revolution, it had been a shock to experience Chinese maltreating Chinese. In fact, the aspect of national ‘fratricide’ may go some way in explaining the ghastly proportions that the violence assumed: the very recognition that the people ‘on the other side’ were actually colleagues and friends led to violent counter-reactions in a number of cases.

A handful of culprits who took leading roles in the violence were put to trial and were punished. But many more who had taken part in the violence were only temporarily banned from their work and were not put to trial. In the early 1980s, former victims and torturers in the Shanghai Conservatory could be seen living in the same building as neighbours or working in the same department. A man might drink tea at a table together with a colleague responsible for the murder of his closest relative.

Basically, this extremely painful situation was never resolved. It still continues today. The passing of time dampens emotions, but the agony is still there, as some people will tell you privately. For some, it is actually made worse by the lack of interest shown by young students with respect to the events in their school two decades ago. ‘They don’t even want to hear about it’, one teacher bitterly complained to us. He had tried to discuss past events in the classroom.

The Cultural Revolution and the silent continuation of unresolved conflicts may help to explain an element of deep mistrust between people in some departments of the school today. It may also help to understand part of the bureaucratic problems that have emerged in the Conservatory since 1976. The administrative organization of the school faced enormous difficulties as a consequence of the traumas of the Cultural Revolution. People were no longer able to co-operate or were not skilled or trained for the jobs which they were supposed to do. In an effort to improve the situation, the leadership of the school decided to double the administrative personnel in leading positions – a measure which, far from relaxing tension, did much to make problems worse.

THE CONSERVATORY IN THE 1980s

In the 1980s, the Shanghai Conservatory veered back to its former daily routine and developed into a modern, professional and professionally equipped music institute with (in 1993) more than 500 students and a teaching staff of nearly 270. It was done with remarkable speed. One cannot help but admire teachers and other personnel for their tremendous resilience and energy in rebuilding the school and reshaping the curriculum, after all that had happened.

He Luting and Ding Shande were restored in their former positions as directors of the Conservatory. Chen Liang and Sang Tong became vice-president and chief Party
commissioner in 1979 and 1981 respectively. He Luting and various others retired in 1986, and Sang Tong was appointed the new chief director.\textsuperscript{34}

The school made a fresh start with six major departments: composition and conducting, Chinese instruments, musicology, Western orchestral instruments, voice, and piano. A new institute for music research was set up, the musical instruments workshop and recording studio were reactivated, and the activities of the middle and primary music school affiliated to the Conservatory taken up again. The Conservatory began a new scholarly journal called \textit{Yinyue yishu} ("The Art of Music"), a quarterly. With permission from the Ministry of Culture, a number of research students were accepted for a master's degree program. The school was also allowed for the first time to accept students from abroad.

China's renewed contacts with the West also brought many distinguished foreign musicians to Shanghai, some of whom gave master classes. Yehudi Menuhin, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Seiji Ozawa, Yo Yo Ma, Maurice Gendron, Michael Tippett, Toru Takemitsu and numerous others visited the school in the 1980s as part of academic or concert tours in China. The 1981 award-winning feature film 'From Mao to Mozart: Isaac Stern in China', which recorded the violinist's experiences in China, was filmed at the Shanghai Conservatory. Passing a long row of practice rooms of the primary school, Stern is said to have exclaimed: 'There is a talent behind every window!' Within ten years, the school not only made up for loss of time during the Cultural Revolution, but actually surpassed its own previous standards in a truly amazing way.

The school's most promising students began to be sent abroad, and a number of them won prizes at prestigious international competitions. Various new ensembles and orchestras were founded at the Conservatory, and the concert hall on the campus began with its 'Sunday concerts', usually featuring a mixture of Chinese and Western classical music performed by both teachers and advanced students.

Today, the school functions in many ways like a combination of a music conservatory and academic music research institute in the West. The period for undergraduate studies is four to five years, and students major in one subject, e.g. singing, playing an instrument, conducting, composition or research. Once again, the main emphasis is on

\textsuperscript{34} He was succeeded by Jiang Mingdun in 1991.
Conservatory students in the late 1980s. Helen Rees (UK), Kyoko Hida (Japan) and Chen Lei Ji (China).

the teaching of Western instruments. In fact, the current teaching of Chinese instruments has been modelled after European examples, leading to a virtuoso ‘Conservatory style’ of playing which is unrelated to the original tradition of the Chinese instruments but forms a new tradition in its own right. The instruments workshop is mainly focused on the production of Western string instruments, although it now produces some traditional instruments as well and carries out minor repairs of them.

Not surprisingly, a number of elements in the present-day curriculum are quite unlike Western conservatory conventions – even quite apart from the native instruments that are taught in Shanghai. For example, a course on singing Chinese folk songs. Or a special class for minority students where they are trained in aspects of Chinese minority cultures. Or yet another course – compulsory for all Chinese students – concerned with Communist politics and Chinese history. The curriculum also features specific composition lessons in the field of traditional music, which start with several months of instruction in the writing of melodies in Chinese folk idiom. Song writing (for voice and piano) is indeed a priority in the first year of training of composition students – presumably a remnant of an era in which the writing of mass songs (usually for unisone choir and piano) was a major tradition among Chinese composers.

The first European student ever to enter the Conservatory was Rafaela Gallio. She studied with qin master Zhang Ziqian (left) in 1980-81.
FOREIGN STUDENTS AT THE CONSERVATORY

Before the Cultural Revolution, only some ten foreign students studied at the Conservatory for brief periods, and they were not registered as foreigners. They came from Mongolia, Korea and Vietnam. Only after the Cultural Revolution did the school accept its first students from Western countries.

The first European student ever to enter the Shanghai Conservatory was Raiaella Gallio from Italy, who arrived in March 1980 and began to study guqin with qin master Zhang Ziqian. She was joined in September the same year by Odette Sanchez from France, who took pipa lessons in the school. Other ‘pioneer’ students were Gerlinde Gild-Bohne (Germany, 1981-82, Chinese music history and guqin), Marjorie-Ann Ciarlillo (United States, 1982-83, Chinese music history), Michael Helme (United States, 1982-84, erhu) and Johanna Jana Knobloch (Canada, 1983-84, guzheng).

There was no active policy of bringing in foreign students at this time. The possibility to study in Shanghai was simply passed on by word-of-mouth or discovered by foreigners incidentally. Applications were dealt with by the State Education Commission.

In the first decade after the Cultural Revolution, more than sixty foreign students enrolled in Shanghai, including 12 from European countries, 10 from Japan, 9 from America, 8 from Singapore, 6 from Australia, 5 from Zaire and a small number from Algeria, Mexico and the Philippines. In addition to this, students began to arrive from Taiwan and Hong Kong. For political reasons they were not registered as foreigners and were accommodated in the Chinese student dormitory together with Chinese students, unless they paid extra money.

35 At the time of writing, there are 16 officially registered foreign students at the Conservatory: four from the West, one from Hong Kong, one from Korea, five from Singapore, four from Taiwan and one from Malaysia.
All other foreigners were offered a room in what became the *liuxuesheng lou* (‘foreign students’ building’). At present, the normal situation for a foreign student is to share a room with one other student, unless he or she is willing to pay for two beds. The majority of the foreign students in Shanghai stay at the Conservatory for periods varying from a few months to two years. Only a small number actually complete their courses and do official exams. For most people, gaining practical experience is the main goal.36

**COSTS & PREPARATIONS: ‘SINK OR SWIM’**

Formally, foreign students can be accepted to study for a Conservatory degree (B.A., M.A. etc.) or as general advanced students or research students. Advanced students

36 Much information in this section was provided by Mrs. Wang Mingying of the foreign students office (‘liuban’) of the Shanghai Conservatory.
normally select a major—often an instrument—and can attend almost any undergraduate lectures and seminars together with Chinese classmates. Apart from this, the school has begun to set up short (usually summer) courses intended specifically for groups of foreigners.\footnote{Cf. Chime no.2, autumn 1990, entry on ‘Music courses for foreign students’, p.101-102.}

People planning to study in Shanghai on a private basis (‘zifei’) should notify the school well in advance to make the necessary arrangements and to ensure that a room is available. Students who enroll on an exchange basis (‘gongfei’) are eligible for a small grant from the Conservatory (350 yuan per month in 1993) and are offered free accommodation. The grant is sufficient only to cover food and the barest needs for living and should ideally be supplemented by grants from abroad. Private students must reckon with high tuition and lodging fees of thousands of dollars or more. There is no denying that foreign visitors have become subject to commercial speculation. Private students are expected to pay their tuition fees in US dollars. Prices change from time to time. At the time of writing (spring 1993), fees vary from $1200 to $1600 for one semester or $2200 to $3000 for a whole year, depending on the student’s status. In addition to this, the price for lodging (in a room which has to be shared with one other foreigner) is US $3 per night.\footnote{Information about current prices was kindly provided to us by Mrs. Dai Xiaolian, staff member of the Shanghai Conservatory.} Note that the foreign students’ building is used not only to house students but also, unofficially, to accommodate tourists (who have to pay RMB 40 for a bed). The number of people staying there at any given time will usually exceed the number of actual music students. In 1991, the tuition fees for short term courses (for groups of foreigners) varied from US $400 for two weeks to $1,100 for eight weeks.
The short summer courses – which we did not participate in – are organized with the help of a local or foreign interpreter. But people planning to study in Shanghai individually and for a longer period of time must be able to speak Chinese. Lectures and textbooks are all in Chinese, and the vast majority of staff and administrative personnel at the Conservatory do not speak foreign languages.

The Australian musician Tony Wheeler spent two years at the Shanghai Conservatory in 1985-86, studying both music and Chinese language concurrently. He writes the following about his experiences: ‘I had already begun to learn Mandarin in Australia, and [had] at least a very basic grounding in Chinese conversation. Exactly how basic this grounding was became apparent only after my arrival in Shanghai. Although initially intensely difficult, and indeed at times quite traumatic, [my dual study] proved to be the ideal course of action, providing me with the opportunity for necessarily intensive language study, albeit under “sink or swim” conditions, as well as for uninterrupted musical tuition. After the first few months of persistent struggle, I found myself able to communicate reasonably freely with my teachers, despite their Mandarin often being heavily accented by various local dialects.’

Note that it normally takes several years of intensive study to obtain a basic knowledge of Chinese.

REGISTRATION AND MATERIAL FACILITIES
You may need a friend to guide you through the bureaucratic tangle of formal registration. Once all the formalities have been dealt with, the housemaster in the south classroom building will hand you your official student permit and – if necessary – a key to a practice room.

Private students may first have to visit a whole series of departments to collect stamps on a registration form, as happened to one of us in 1988: we had to make rounds of nearly half the Conservatory, including various administrative offices, the dining hall, the music instrument loan department, the library and the first aid clinic – an elaborate procedure which did not even automatically grant us the right to make use of these facilities.

Formally registered students have the right to borrow a music instrument, for example, but access to library materials is strictly limited. Foreigners and lower grade Chinese students are excluded from a great many valuable resources that would be available under comparable circumstances in libraries in the West. There is a reading room with music journals which can be freely consulted.

We were not allowed to borrow any tapes or other recorded materials during our own stay, but in recent years foreigners with the status of ‘research student’ have obtained permission to borrow at least some of the library’s commercial recordings.

It is almost impossible to get to hear any of the Conservatory’s historical and field recordings, many of which are not even kept in the library but in private collections, where they are guarded very closely. It appears that many valuable books and recordings are not even catalogued. In general, you may be able to get hold of some useful materials if you can get help from your teachers or fellow-students.

Copying materials is another problem. There is only one copying machine for general use in the entire Conservatory, which is frequently inaccessible. The copying is very expensive and you cannot do it yourself – the machine is operated by administrative personnel. There are some copy shops with fair service elsewhere in Shanghai.

ACCOMMODATION & FINDING YOUR WAY

Living conditions in the foreign students’ building are quite reasonable, certainly when compared with those of the Chinese students. You stay in a fair-sized room, heated for part of the day in winter (unlike the Chinese quarters) and with a constant supply of hot water. There is a kitchen, a lavatory with showers and a washing machine for general use on every floor. If you expect to stay for a long period, you may prefer a room on the south (more sun, warmer in wintertime), though it has a big disadvantage: more noise from the Chinese students’ dormitory opposite. But noise is an intrinsic part of the Conservatory’s ambiance. There are practice rooms on the first floor of the building, right beneath you. You are unlikely to escape the constant din of musical sounds or – every morning at 6.30 – the all-penetrating, apocalyptic voices of the cleaning women.

There is a telephone in the building, but you cannot make phone calls to places outside Shanghai. Long-distance calls can only be made in the Telephone Office in the centre of Shanghai or perhaps in the private homes of Chinese friends – if they happen to have the right kind of telephone.

There is a dining hall for foreign students at the Conservatory. At the time of our stay, the service and the quality of the food were so appalling that we decided to avoid it. The food in the Chinese students’ canteen is better, but the best thing to do is to cook your own food or have a cheap dinner in one of the small restaurants in the neighbourhood. A tiny bar in Dongping Street is currently the haunt of most foreign students.

It is not possible to have a Chinese roommate, and access to the Chinese students’ quarters and vice versa is somewhat unpredictable. It is not easy from the hastily scrawled timetables (in the south classroom building) to ascertain what courses are on offer, or indeed where they are taking place. You will need the help of foreign or Chinese students to find your way. There is a Chinese administrator who is formally responsible for the assigning of teachers to foreign students and this person – very likely the first official whom you will meet when you come to the Conservatory – may also be able to offer you practical advice. (During our own stay, this was Mrs Wang Mingying, whose office is on the ground floor of the foreign students’ dormitory). But you can also contact teachers directly and simply ask them whether they want to accept you as a private student. Behind the curtain of formality, many things at the Conservatory can be arranged in a fairly informal way.

LECTURES AND CLASSES

In the beginning, one definitely has to get used to it: sitting in an unheated and draughty classroom in wintertime, with all the windows wide open. Everybody is wearing coats and puffing small clouds into the air. Dormitories may be heated during the wintertime, but not classrooms. Participating in the general curriculum means accepting some discomfort, but it is worthwhile.

Lectures and classes are given in various formats – some in large groups, some in the form of small seminars. You can cover many major subjects of Chinese music by a judicious selection of a combination of these, for example opera, folk song, narrative singing, instrumental music, history of Chinese music, etc. All lectures are conducted in Chinese, but large lectures in particular seldom depart from the textbook, so if you can read Chinese you are unlikely to get irretrievably lost. Many teachers are eager to offer any help necessary, as are Chinese classmates. 40

We remember with pleasure the practical lessons on Chinese folk song and opera, which include listening to recordings and singing in the classroom. In fact, many

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40 For the ideas expressed here and in the following section, we gratefully acknowledge the help of Helen Rees (University of Pittsburgh), some of whose suggestions are quoted verbatim.
Learning Chinese folk songs from a mimeograph. The transcriptions are in Western staff notation.

Theoretical courses are also essentially practical in nature. One of us participated in a course on music aesthetics which turned out to be of great interest. It may be a good idea to ask your teacher for permission to bring a cassette player and record some of the lessons and live music demonstrations.

Study of a Chinese instrument — usually in the form of private lessons — will enable you to participate in ensemble playing with local students and to experience Chinese music making at first hand. True enough, many instrumental lessons tend towards the 'Conservatory' style of performance, so if you want to learn how to play Jiangnan Sizhu in an 'authentic' manner, you will probably have to hoof it to a local teahouse and learn by listening and joining in there. Once you have demonstrated your seriousness of purpose, most teachers will spend a lot of time helping you. The Conservatory can lend instruments until such time as you acquire your own, and frequently your teacher will be able to assist you in obtaining an excellent instrument. (There is a factory of traditional Chinese instruments in Suzhou which is worth visiting.) Everyone should learn the guqin, with its interesting tablature and importance in Chinese intellectual history.

CONCERTS AND FIELD WORK TRIPS
The Conservatory regularly organizes concerts of traditional or Western classical music, which are announced on the Chinese notice boards opposite the concert building (dalitang).
Shanghai has a lot of live music, traditional and otherwise, going on in parks, teahouses, clubs and theatres, and local aficionados are usually very friendly and willing to welcome the serious foreign student. It is often possible to obtain permission to take photos and make recordings of musical events. Shanghai is also a good place from which to get to other areas of musical interest — it is at the hub of the train system.
A classroom at the Conservatory.

It is a good idea to organize your own trips to other places to see what goes on elsewhere. Sometimes the Conservatory may be willing to provide letters of introduction. Note that officially registered students cannot leave the Conservatory for longer periods without formal permission. If you plan a short trip to Hong Kong or other places abroad during the semester, you also need a written document from the school showing that you were given leave. Otherwise you cannot obtain an exit and re-entry permit.

The Conservatory itself organizes a special field trip for foreign students once every year. It is covered by the students' tuition. We have no experience with such organized outings, but the British student Helen Rees took part in the 1988 trip to Shandong, ostensibly arranged for the purpose of studying local folk song, and she writes the following about her experiences: 'It was rather a disaster in terms of official events – no live music at all, even the trip to the local PLA Song and Dance Ensemble fell through owing to a failure in communication, and it was really only salvaged by the accidental discovery on the part of the students concerned of a quyi festival in a local park. No relevant specialists accompanied the trip, and we did rather have the impression that sightseeing was of paramount importance. If you want to go somewhere, organize it yourself.'

It may be an altogether different experience to do some fieldwork together with a teacher on a privately organized trip. A lot depends on your own initiative, really. Many teachers are very helpful and always interested in students who demonstrate genuine enthusiasm. You may be lucky enough to find a person who can give you valuable advice or even accompany you on a fieldwork trip!

**MOUTH MASKS**

More than three years have passed since we were formal students in Shanghai. We returned to the Conservatory in 1991 for brief visits to keep contact with some of our
teachers and Chinese fellow-students and to carry out more fieldwork in the Shanghai district and surrounding areas. We are aware of the fact that university life and general circumstances in China are changing very fast. New buildings and new departments arise, new teaching methods and new facilities are introduced and Conservatory life in the 1990s may already be different from what we experienced during our initial stay.

Naturally, the ‘history’ of the school is an ongoing story. The June 1989 massacre of Beijing citizens and the crackdown on the democracy movement were witnessed and followed in Shanghai with growing apprehension and shock, and there were protest meetings as in virtually any academic institute at that time. The consequences for students and personnel have remained limited to some disciplinary measures and a dull round of compulsory political study meetings. Fears of China recoiling into its former self-chosen international isolation have turned out to be ungrounded. Foreign students began to go back to Shanghai as early as 1990, and the school has continued on its path towards modernization and internationalization. No doubt, Xiao Youmei would have been happy to see the flourish of activities and the excellent teaching in his school today.

We remember one cloudy afternoon in 1991 when we went out to the centre of Shanghai on rickety bicycles, wearing our mouth masks to offer some protection against the coal dust and exhaust fumes. (The air in Shanghai is thirty times more polluted than in London.) Cycling to the centre and back again to the Conservatory took us several hours, in spite of the distance being only three kilometres. The narrow streets of Shanghai are overcrowded with people and traffic moves exasperatingly slow. We noticed the change all around us. People were wearing different clothes. New and fashionable shops had opened their doors to customers. The onion dome of the Russian Orthodox Church on Xinle Road had been restored to its former splendour. Huaihai Road had suddenly changed into a wild landscape of miniature mountains and crevasses clouded by dust – the humble beginnings of a Shanghai subway.

Future students at the Conservatory may find it much easier to travel around and do their shopping in the city than we did. Though no longer the ‘Paris of Asia’, Shanghai is recovering from a troublesome past. It may yet become a ‘Hong Kong of the north’, with all the pros and cons of big-scale modernization and commercialization.

The atmosphere of change is also noticeable inside the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. We hope that newcomers to the school will contact us about their own impressions and write their own reports on recent study experiences in what is now the oldest and no doubt most fascinating of China’s professional music schools.

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GLOSSARY

| Cai Yunpei  | Cai元培     | Fan Jisen  | 范继森     |
| Chen Leiji  | 陈雷激     | He Luting  | 贺绿汀     |
| Chen Liang  | 陈良       | He Xiaoqiu | 贺晓秋     |
| Chen Mingzhhi | 陈铭志   | Huang Bai  | 黄白       |
| Chen Youxin | 陈又新     | Huang Xiaofeng | 黄晓同   |
| Cheng Zhuoru | 程卓如   | Huang Yijun | 黄怡钧     |
| Chou Wen-Chung | 周文中 | Huang Zi   | 黄自       |
| Dai Cullun | 戴梓伦     | Jiang Minxun | 江明淳   |
| Dai Xiaolian | 戴晓莲   | Li Cuizhen | 李翠贞     |
| Ding Shande | 丁善德     | Li Delun   | 李德伦     |
FIELDWORK ON INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLES

Naxi Guyue of Lijiang County, Yunnan

HELEN REES
(University of Pittsburgh, USA)

Foreigners visiting Dayan town in Lijiang County in northern Yunnan Province are likely to spend at least one afternoon listening to the local Naxi minority orchestra. This is an ensemble of around sixteen elderly men who play on Chinese fiddles, plucked lutes, bamboo flutes and percussion instruments in a heterophonic style that is reminiscent of the ‘silk and bamboo’ music of the Shanghai area. The group gives concerts for foreign tourists three times a week. The musicians refer to their repertoire as ‘classical music of the Naxi’, but their music is actually Han Chinese in origin. In this article, the author reports on a small network of such orchestras performing in various parts of Lijiang County. She traces the origin of these groups back to Taoist scripture associations that were active in Lijiang in the past. They were disbanded by the incoming Communist government in 1949, but some of the musicians continued to play in private, mainly for entertainment.

I first visited northern Yunnan Province¹ in April-May 1989 to investigate what forms of traditional music-making still flourish there. In the course of less than a month I encountered a wide range of musics from the Bai, Han, Naxi and Yi ethnic groups, most little known to non-Chinese ethnomusicologists (Rees 1990).² Consequently, Yunnan was the obvious choice when I had to select an area for dissertation research. One of the most consistently active musical groups I found in 1989 was the ‘orchestra’ of Dayan Zhen, the county town of Lijiang Naxi Autonomous County. In addition to playing privately, this group of around sixteen mostly middle-aged and elderly Naxi men gave concerts for foreign tourists two or three times a week. The music,

¹ The fieldwork on which this report is based was supported financially by the President’s Fellowship in Chinese Studies of the University of Pittsburgh. I am grateful to the governments of Yunnan Province, Lijiang Prefecture and Lijiang County for giving permission for my fieldwork, to Lijiang Prefecture Archive and Lijiang County Library for allowing me access to archival materials, to my work-unit, the Yunnan Art Institute, for organizing my stay in Yunnan, to the instructors assigned to me in Lijiang, He Zhong, Xuan Ke and Yang Zenglie for their expert advice, to my academic advisors in Kunming for constructive criticism, and above all to the musicians of Lijiang, who always took a gracious interest in my research and spared no efforts to help me.
² There is an excellent study on dance songs of the Yi (Thrasher 1990).
nowadays commonly referred to as Naxi Guyue (Naxi Classical Music), had many interesting features, not least of which was that it was plainly Han Chinese in origin, with Chinese tune-titles, an ensemble of mainly Han instruments, and a heterophonic texture which recalled that of the Jiangnan Sizhu tradition of the Shanghai area. In addition to this intriguing question of cultural borrowing, the music was clearly adapting rapidly to the demands of a growing number of mainly foreign tourists. Given the frequency of performance, which guaranteed a living tradition and many practised informants, and the interesting theoretical issues raised by the context in which the music existed, I settled upon Naxi Guyue as a suitable dissertation topic. After obtaining permission for my research from the governments of Yunnan Province, Lijiang Prefecture and Lijiang County, I was able to enroll for the academic year of 1991-2 at the Yunnan Art Institute, which arranged for me to spend most of that year carrying out fieldwork in Lijiang County.

LIJIANG NAXI AUTONOMOUS COUNTY
Lijiang County lies in the northwest of Yunnan Province, 600 kilometres from the provincial capital, Kunming. Although an airport is under construction, during the year 1991-2 it was accessible from there only by a 20-hour bus-ride. The county has a territory of 7,425 square kilometres, with the Jinsha River delineating the northern boundary. The altitude varies considerably, but the county town and its surrounding plain lie at 2,400 metres (Tang and Jin 1988:7-11). Of a total population of just over 300,000, almost one-sixth live in the county town, Dayan Zhen, which is the political, administrative, economic and cultural centre of Lijiang County. Ten ethnic groups inhabit Lijiang; the most numerous are the Naxi, who make up 57% of the population, with the Han (20%), Bai (11%) and Lisu (8%) as the other major groups represented. In 1961 Lijiang County was officially named Lijiang Naxi Autonomous County (Lijiang Naxizu Zizhixian Gaikuang:29 ff., 84).
The Naxi are a distinct Tibeto-Burman ethnic group spread over parts of northern Yunnan and southern Sichuan. Their greatest concentration is in Lijiang County, where over half their total population of around 266,000 lives (Zhang 1990:530-1). They are particularly well-known to Western scholars for a pictographic writing system intelligible only to the indigenous religious specialists known as dongba and a social system in which women run most commercial activities. Despite their obvious identity, those Naxi who live in Lijiang County have for several hundred years readily borrowed culturally from other ethnic groups, for example importing Taoism, Tibetan-style Buddhism, Chinese style 

Buddhism and Christianity to supplement the indigenous dongba (Li 1986:57ff.). The Chinese assumed direct rule of Lijiang only in 1723 (Rock 1947:62), but contact with the Han had been made much earlier: already by the 15th century the Naxi rulers of Lijiang were sufficiently well-educated in the Chinese classics that they were able to compose sophisticated classical Chinese poetry, an anthology of which has recently been published (Zhao 1985). A high degree of sinicization was already apparent before 1949 in and around Dayan Zhen: wealthy Naxi men from this area attended Chinese-language schools and frequently obtained civil service appointments just like their Han counterparts all over China. A clear picture of the mixture of Naxi and Han elements in the life of Dayan in the 1940s may be gained from the account written by a Russian employee of the Chinese government who lived in Dayan for several years (Goullart 1957).

Today too the Naxi are one of the most successful national minorities in mainstream Chinese society: their university entrance rate is said to be one of the three highest for any minority in the country, and some of them have achieved high political status; the present governor of Yunnan, for example, is a Naxi. As one would expect, the greatest degree of sinicization and Chinese-language competence is usually found around Dayan, particularly in the more urban areas, and in some other townships with good communications; generally, these characteristics decline as one enters more rural and remote areas, although often children can help translate because their school lessons are all in Chinese.

Lijiang County was designated an open area by the State Council and Military Commission in July 1985, and has become one of the four most popular attractions for foreign tourists in Yunnan (the others are Kunming, Dali and Xishuangbanna). During my stay there, every day there were up to two dozen foreign arrivals in Dayan. Certainly one of the most renowned tourist attractions in Lijiang is Naxi Gu Yue; it has found its way into many of the guidebooks (e.g. Booz 1989:129-30; Tang and Jin 1988:38-9).

Very little has been published on Naxi Gu Yue in any language; the best survey to date is by Yang Zenglie (1990/1991). For this reason I needed to carry out an investigation of all aspects of the music and its context. My research was focused on the following questions: 1. the history and context of the repertoire up to 1949; 2. the history and
context of the repertoire since 1949; 3. the technical musical aspects of the repertoire: the instruments involved, playing techniques, the heterophonic texture, use of notation.

HISTORY AND CONTEXT OF NAXI GUYUE UP TO 1949

For information on this subject I had to rely mainly on oral histories from elderly musicians, since many documents and records connected with the music were destroyed or lost in the Muslim Uprising of the 1860s and 1870s, during which Dayan was sacked, as well as in the political movements since the Communist assumption of power in 1949. A small number of written materials remains, most kept now in the Lijiang Prefectural Archive and the Lijiang County Library, to which the authorities kindly granted me access. There are also a few secondary sources which deal at least in part with this subject, notably Zhou and Huang 1962, and Yang 1990/1991.

My local informants told me that the term Naxi Guyue (Naxi Classical Music) is a recent invention: before 1949 there was no such name. All were clear that the music of this tradition was a regional form of the dongjing system found all over Yunnan, mainly in Han Chinese areas. Before 1949, almost every Han Chinese-dominated part of Yunnan could boast one or more dongjinghui (Taoist scripture association). These were often socially rather exclusive clubs for the male literati, and held elaborate religious ceremonies in honour of various Taoist, Buddhist and Confucian deities.

The principal deity worshipped was Wenchang, patron of literati and those taking the imperial civil service examinations; those based in county towns were often expected by the county government to provide the music for the twice-yearly Confucian sacrifice; and, although the participants were not professional religious specialists, associations owned spectacular altar furnishings, multiple sets of scriptures and in some cases offered facilities such as funeral rites, longevity ceremonies and auspicious rites for new houses to their members, which overlapped with the services usually provided by such professionals as Taoist priests and Buddhist monks. In addition, although the participants were all amateur musicians, the groups were particularly renowned for the beauty and complexity of the music which accompanied their ceremonies. Each county had its own distinctive repertoire, but some pieces were found in several different areas.

The Naxi were one of two national minorities who are well-documented as having set up the prestigious dongjing associations. As mentioned above, well-to-do members of the Lijiang Naxi had attained a high degree of sinicization and success in Chinese

3 A useful introduction to dongjing associations and their music may be found in Wu 1990.
educational and official life. By the end of the Qing Dynasty (1912), Lijiang County had at least five of these elite associations. They were located in the county town, Dayan, the township of Gezi, and three rural centers: Baisha, Shuhe and Lasha. Neither my informants nor any of the written documentation available could offer watertight evidence as to how the associations and the repertoire first came to Lijiang; but while the musicians were Naxi rather than Han Chinese, there is no doubt that the repertoire itself was of Han Chinese origin. Unlike indigenous Naxi folk music, all the tunes bear Chinese titles, there is a tradition of notation according to Chinese gongche (solfège), the music is heterophonic in the Chinese sizhu style while most Naxi music is monophonic, and most of the instruments are identical or similar to those used by the Han Chinese, but otherwise not used by the Naxi. Moreover, the area of greatest currency appears to be the most sinicized areas of Lijiang County – mainly those immediately around Dayan and on main trade routes through the county. In addition, while exhaustive research on the families of all the dongjing repertoires, although the closeness of the relationship between the tunes with the same name varies greatly in different areas. The piece Shanpo yang (‘The sheep on the hill’), for instance, shares this title with many other counties’ dongjing repertoires; melodically one of the closest matches is the Shanpo yang of the Han Chinese association of Qujing City in northeast Yunnan (Anon n.d.:1). In addition, there is a close correlation between Lijiang’s Shanpo yang and that of the classical eastern Chinese opera form Kunju (Zhongyang Xueyuan Minzu Yinyue Yanju Suo 1956:63). Stories in oral history also support a Han Chinese origin for the associations and music.

The ceremonies celebrated by the Lijiang dongjing associations, too, were typical of Han Chinese associations elsewhere: four main festivals, two in honour of the god Wenchang, two in honour of Guan Gong, as well as funerals for members and their families and some other occasional secular rituals. Personal interviews were further able to establish a pattern of transmission of the entire musical-ritual package from an established association to a group just starting up: in the Republican era there seem to have been at least four cases of this, with enough of the protagonists still alive that it was possible to obtain detailed descriptions of the process of transmission. Naxi informants told me that the commonest way to refer to the associations in the Republican era was as tanjingban (scripture recitation group), emphasizing the religious element. The more recently invented name, Naxi Guyue, is more in line with the government enthusiasm for pushing ethnic artistic heritage, emphasizing the Naxi characteristics of the repertoire rather than its Han Chinese religious origins.

The performance modes in a dongjing ceremony were extremely complex. Parts of the scripture were sung to full orchestral accompaniment; the ten tunes for this were known as dadiao. There were eleven pieces of instrumental music played to accompany wordless actions during the ritual; these were known as xiaodiao. Both dadiao and xiaodiao were played at a predetermined pitch set by the instruments; singers in the dadiao had to follow the instruments. Daiyue referred to percussion patterns that

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4 The other minority with a well-documented possession of dongjing associations is the Bai of Dali. Huang also lists the Yi and Zhaang of Mengzi County and the Mongols of Tonghai County as having had the associations (1990:16).

5 This pattern of distribution facilitated my research because I was able to conduct most interviews myself in Chinese. Owing to Public Security regulations, I was based in a guesthouse in Dayan and thus had little opportunity to learn the rather complicated Naxi language. I should like to thank here the bilingual musicians who kindly acted as interpreters when it was necessary to use Naxi: He Linghan, He Mingda, He Zhong, Xuan Ke, Zhang Longhan.
punctuated the dadi. A few sections of scripture were sung to only flute accompaniment, on a fanggongdiao (movable do) basis; the singers selected a comfortable pitch, and the flautist had to follow whatever pitch they set. Large portions of scriptural text were recited in a manner known as song: half-way between chanting and intonation, this was accompanied only by rapid beats on the muyu (wooden fish), and occasionally by other percussion too. Finally, some passages of scripture were rendered in a style called jiang xuan: this was a form of heightened speech with no instrumental accompaniment at all.

The most tuneful of the instrumental items described above, the xiaodiao and some of the dadi, were also performed before 1949 by many secular groups, minus the words to the dadi, and purely for purposes of private entertainment (as well as at the odd funeral). Unlike the generally more elitist dongjing associations, membership in these groups carried no connotations either of social status or of religious affiliation. Among the sixteen or so members of the current Dayan Naxi Guyue group who were active in this music before 1949, only two are former dongjing association members: the rest all took part in the secular, informal groups. All over Yunnan the incoming Communist government rapidly suppressed the dongjing associations in 1949; with the relaxation in political policies since 1978, associations in many areas of Yunnan have revived. In the case of Lijiang, however, only groups using the dadi and xiaodiao for secular entertainment have emerged since 1978. Consequently another route I had to take to a fuller understanding of the full ritual context obtaining before 1949 was to attend dongjing ceremonies in some other areas of Yunnan, most often at Xiaguan, 200 kilometres south of Lijiang.

The materials available in the Prefecture Archive and County Library that I was able to examine were, in the former case, a list of members’ names from the Dayan dongjing association compiled in 1933, and in the latter, several volumes of scriptures previously belonging to the Dayan association. The earliest of these date from the very late Qing period. Overall, it was possible through cross-checking oral histories with different musicians and using what written documentation exists to gain a fairly detailed picture of the history and social context of the associations for the first half of the twentieth century; obviously, the further back in time, the sketchier oral histories become.

HISTORY AND CONTEXT OF NAXI GUYUE SINCE 1949
For information on this subject I relied partly on oral documentation, partly on personal observation, and to a lesser extent on secondary sources. As stated above, the incoming Communist government disbanded the dongjing associations all over Yunnan within weeks of gaining power. However, the secular groups were able to continue playing their selection of wordless dadi and xiaodiao sporadically until the Cultural Revolution, when all such activities ceased for ten years. According to Yang’s excellent survey, there are nine ensembles playing Naxi Guyue in Lijiang today (1991:36). Seven of these are within a ten-kilometre radius of Dayan, and one fifty kilometres to the west in Shigu. I was able to visit Shigu and five of the seven near Dayan, and to attend performances by four of them. I recorded pieces as played by each group I heard, conducted interviews with musicians in each area and did as much photographic documentation as possible.

Without doubt the most active group is the Dayan Guyue Hui, largely because of the demand from foreign tourists: they give about three concerts a week, and also meet privately once a month for informal playing. Part of the reason for their phenomenal popularity among foreign visitors, many of whom go to their concerts two or three times during the course of a week-long stay, is that they keep the music ‘traditional’, resisting any temptation to ‘update’ it or introduce modernized instruments. Baihua,
three kilometres southwest of Dayan, has a group which meets every Sunday afternoon for informal playing and occasionally entertains foreign tour-groups; Jinshan, three kilometres southeast of Dayan, meets similarly once a month, and the other ensembles appear to get together less regularly. Currently all the active groups play the reduced repertoire of dadiào and xiaodiao, although since 1978 they have begun to add in some passages of scriptural words to the dadiào again. Every time the Dayan group gives a concert for foreign tourists, they include at least two dadiào, each performed with some of the musicians singing appropriate scriptural words. The groups at Baihua and Jinshan, most of whose participants are former dongjing association members, are still able to perform at least one passage of fanggongdiao, and most of the groups have recovered some of the daqiyue. However, none of these ensembles possesses scriptures, and nowadays song, jiang xuan and the more complex dadiào are never heard. In order to obtain a recorded sample of these items, I had to ask He Yian, 85-year-old doyen of the Dayan orchestra, a highly knowledgeable former member of the Dayan association, to recite some passages specially.

The government now encourages these secular groups as preservers of a Naxi musical heritage. Permission was granted in 1988 for the Dayan orchestra to perform for foreign tourists, and the professional, state-supported Lijiang Naxizu Zizhixian Minsu Gewutuan (Lijiang Naxi Autonomous County Song and Dance Troupe) frequently bases compositions on elements borrowed from this music. In the winter of 1991-2 Lijiang County government sent a group of about fourteen musicians to Canton as part of the Dongba Culture Exhibition Performance Troupe. Just under half of them were members of the Dayan orchestra; the others were professionals from the Song and Dance Troupe, and most of their pieces were from the dongjing repertory. To anyone familiar with Naxi history, the association of dongjing music, an import from the Han, with the indigenous dongba religious tradition, was rather incongruous; but it illustrates the value attached to this musical tradition by the authorities as a part of the Naxi heritage. Nowadays, too, the reconstituted Naxi Gu Yue is a viable commercial proposition: whereas in the past neither dongjing association nor secular group version was intended to bring in revenue, the sale of tickets at the evening performances for foreign tourists by the Dayan ensemble results in a payment of five yuan to each performer. Given that they play on average three times a week, this is a substantial addition to the income of each member: especially for the elderly men, pensions are usually less than 100 yuan a month. Two recording companies have also found the recent popularity of the music an enticing prospect: both entitled Naxi Gu Yue, ZAX-9103 and WS-92101 include several pieces of the dongjing repertoire (Rees 1993:42-3). In addition to commercial exploitation and private entertainment, most of the ensembles active today also play for funerals of their members; I attended one such in the village of Xia Shuhe, about six kilometres south of Dayan.

One problem encountered nowadays by these groups is that of recruitment. Most members are over sixty, and several musicians expressed regret that most Naxi young people prefer popular music to traditional music-making. The Dayan ensemble does include at least five regular participants between the ages of 15 and 45, and does not look in imminent danger of dying out; however, this does not appear to be the case in most of the other areas I visited: Baihua, Baisha and Jinshan in particular lack young recruits. Xuan Ke, the energetic English-speaking leader of the Dayan orchestra, has established a summer school for young Naxi wanting to learn the music; just over twenty students attended the school held in 1991.

TECHNICAL MUSICAL ASPECTS
I made analytical recordings of the Dayan orchestra during tourist concerts spread over September to November, recording each player at least once, and some twice or three
times. The choice of Dayan for systematic analytical recordings was purely practical: they perform so frequently that there was no difficulty with two microphones in achieving a quorum. By recording the musicians at concerts rather than individually minus their fellow-players, I hoped to gain a relatively representative performance by each individual in the normal, heterophonic context; and by obtaining several recordings of the same person, to ascertain how much scope for individual variation there is. From these recordings I am able to build up a full score of several pieces to show how each instrument contributes to the distinctive heterophonic texture. Recordings were also made at Baihua, Jinshan and Dayan of the performance of each group as a whole in order to compare regional styles. To increase my own familiarity with the music, I played the flute with the Dayan and Baihua ensembles.

The instrumental ensemble used in Naxi Guyue is extremely complex. The bowed lutes are represented by four sizes of huqin; plucked lutes by the pipa, sanxian and sugudu, a four-string plucked lute known only in Lijiang; and wind instruments by a pair of flutes and a bobo, a locally made double-reed pipe similar to the Han guan. The percussion instruments are the most varied, and include yunluo, daluo, dagu, a pair each of nao and bo, xiaoccha, bangu, tishou and muyu. Most of the instruments are locally made rather than being standard factory-issue, and some are over eighty years old; so I measured and made photographic records of all of them, ascertained as far as possible the materials used and the manner of construction, and collected stories about individual instruments. It is generally thought that only the sugudu and bobo are indigenously Naxi; however, the two lowest-pitched huqin and the pipa are rather unusual local variants. Playing technique I established as far as possible by observation and individual interviews.

The dadiao and xiaodiao of Naxi Guyue were traditionally taught by having students memorize the tunes to the syllables of gongchepu — rather as some European pedagogical traditions expect students to sing melodies to the solfège syllables. Nowadays most people use cipher notation to learn the pieces. Consequently, a further facet of my research was the examination of five gongchepu scores still extant, the earliest of which dates from the 1920s, and their comparison with some currently used cipher notation scores. Several of my informants were able to give a detailed description of the transmission process before 1949 and as it is now, and to sing large sections of the repertoire to gongchepu.

FIELDWORK ON OTHER MUSIC IN LIJIANG

Although most of my energies were concentrated on the ever more complicated question of Naxi Guyue in its historical and present-day manifestations, I also investigated all the other forms of music to be encountered in and around Dayan to piece together the overall musical context in which Naxi Guyue exists. Since Naxi Guyue is most prominent in the immediate vicinity of Dayan, I concentrated my search for other music on the same area. Some forms of music-making were easily found. In another importation from the Han Chinese, amateur Dianju (Yunnan Chinese opera) ensembles, made up of Naxi enthusiasts, abound throughout the urban area of Dayan. On festival days, whether traditional or declared recently by the government, it is common to see traditional Naxi dances, accompanied either by singing or by a single instrument, usually bili (a Naxi term referring in the Dayan area generally to a vertical fipple-flute) or hulusheng. Chinese scholars term these two different kinds of dances gewu and yuewu. The dancers generally hold hands and circle to the right to the accompaniment of a repetitive melody. I attended dances on New Year’s Day and

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6 Characters for all but the best-known instruments are given in the text. However, as many are not standardized and frequently appear in different forms, I have adopted the usage in Yang 1990.
Labour Day (1 May) which took place in the late evening in the main square of Dayan, and one in Puji village during the afternoon to celebrate Li Xia Jie (Beginning of Summer). The other very obvious kind of musical activity in Dayan is disco, usually based on Chinese pop-songs: this is so popular with the young people of Dayan that the disco held every night at the No.2 Guesthouse is always packed out. Professional music-making in Dayan is confined to the disco band of female vocal, trumpet, saxophone, drumset and electric keyboard, the Lijiang Prefecture Dianju Troupe and the Lijiang Naxi Autonomous County Song and Dance Troupe. The latter performed on average about once or twice a month, so I had ample opportunity to observe them. Most of their compositions are inspired by the folk music or dance of the Naxi and other national minorities of Lijiang, or by the propaganda demands of the Communist Party, and they employ a full arsenal of local Naxi, standardized Han Chinese and Western instruments.

It was more difficult, however, to locate some of the other kinds of music described in a general survey (Kou 1986) as typically Naxi. In order to record and learn something about folksong, dongba chants and performance on the Jew's harp and the leaf, I had to ask around and make appointments with practitioners for special demonstrations. The general perception, that most indigenously Naxi forms of music are commoner in rural areas and those further from Dayan, appears to be broadly accurate: the most obvious forms of music-making today in Dayan itself are certainly Naxi Guyue and Dianju, both traditions borrowed in the first instance from the Han, and, of course, the ever-present disco.

**SOURCES OF BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON LIJIANG**

Fortunately it is possible to back up the musically-oriented information I collected in Lijiang with a wealth of documentation about the area. Several historical documents, including xianzhi, survive from pre-Republican times, and are accessible in libraries and through reprints. The most important are also brought together in Rock 1947. Among more recent publications, there are brief descriptions such as Naxizu Jianshi (1984) and Lijiang Naxizu Zishixian Gaikuang (1986), and two series of significance. Four volumes in the ‘Materials from investigations into the society and history of Chinese national minorities’ series (Zhongguo Shaoshu Minzu Shehui Lishi Diaocha Ziliao Congkan) offer essays by various scholars active since 1949 on a great variety of Naxi topics, primarily of the Lijiang area. The second Chinese-language series of great importance to the study of the Lijiang Naxi is ‘Lijiang Cultural and Historical Materials’ (Lijiang Wenshi Ziliao), currently standing at ten volumes issued irregularly since 1985. Unlike the more prestigious series mentioned above, this is not officially published in the provincial capital, Kunming, but is printed locally in Lijiang. The articles cover a multitude of topics and are almost all by local residents. The greatest amount of scholarship, both in Chinese and in Western languages, deals with the dongba and their pictographs, and is surveyed in Jackson 1989. This subject is of less direct relevance to my work. Finally, there is an excellent map of Lijiang County produced by the survey and mapping office of Yunnan Province (Yunnan sheng cehui ju), which greatly facilitates research.
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COMMECIAL RECORDINGS CITED


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THE CURRENT SITUATION REGARDING

The Teaching of Ethnomusicology in China

QIAO JIANZHONG
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Translated by Jonathan P.J. Stock

This conference paper provides the perspective of a well-placed Chinese academic on the development and practice of ethnomusicology in mainland China. It forms an interesting supplement to a recent presentation on a similar subject by Professor Du Yaxiong (Du 1992). Mr Qiao offers a review of the development of ethnomusicological study in China, summarizes the current situation and concludes by raising two open-ended points which he believes particularly significant to the further development of the discipline in China.

In China music has always been very highly regarded. As early as the 5th century BC, Confucius included music among the six basic subjects of education (the others being poetry, literature, astrology, ritual and history). But it was not until 1927 that China officially established a music college at the higher educational level, and it was only in 1962 that such music colleges added musicology departments.

China was one of the first countries to investigate music theory and related questions. As early as the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods (7th to 3rd centuries BC) China produced the Yueji, ‘Records of Music’, which has been an invaluable source for later researchers. But it is only since the 1980s that ethnomusicology has been treated as a proper branch of learning, with discussion of not only methodology but also the aims and scope of ethnomusicological research as well. Thus, ethnomusicology in China has a very ancient basis but is in another sense a very young, active discipline.

Footnotes and references have been added by the translator. This paper was presented at the Annual Conference of the International Council for Traditional Music, UK Chapter, held in Ambleside, Cambria on 21-23 April 1992. It formed part of a forum on the position of ethnomusicology in higher education. Quite a number of questions were raised by members of the audience, but unfortunately neither these nor Mr Qiao’s responses were recorded. I am obliged to Dr Terence Liu of the National Endowment for the Arts for sending me a copy of Professor Du’s paper cited in the abstract above. Further perspective may be gained from Zhang (1985).
A HISTORICAL REVIEW
Higher musical education in China has a history of more than sixty years, beginning with the establishment of the Shanghai State Music Conservatory in 1927. These sixty years have seen the beginnings of a curriculum in traditional music, including historical and theoretical studies as well as a great deal of performance. We will now briefly review this history. Three stages can be distinguished: The Early period (1927–1949), The Second Stage (1949–1979) and The Situation Today (1980 onwards).
The Early Period (1927–49) was characterized by extensive and lively cultural and educational exchange between the West and China. The Shanghai Conservatory was established under Western influence, but with a particularly Chinese emphasis, one of the first tasks being the setting up of a curriculum for the study of Chinese musical instruments. Perhaps it was because of this that Liu Tianhua, at the Music Institute of Beijing University, composed and arranged teaching materials for the performance of the two-stringed fiddle *erhu* and the pear-shaped lute *pipa*.
During this period a number of studies of Chinese music history were undertaken, one being that of Wang Guangqi, a doctoral student in Germany, who also produced a comparative study of Chinese and Western music. Also, the scholar Yang Yinliu was one of the first at this time to concentrate on living musical traditions rather than historical and theoretical aspects alone. Yang was also the first to extend the teaching of traditional music beyond performance to include theory as well.
In 1938–45 scholars investigating the Yan’an area of northern China discovered the continued existence of a venerable tradition of village music similar to that described by my colleague Xue Yibing. It was possible for parts of this repertoire to be documented and preserved, and the operation had a great influence on subsequent traditional music research in China.
To sum up, in this early period traditional music studies in Chinese higher education concentrated on performance plus some theoretical work. However, as the subject was only taught at one institute, it was still exploratory in nature.

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2 The translation of the term *minzu yinyuexue* is problematic, *minzu* potentially meaning either 'national', i.e., ethnic, 'National', i.e. Chinese / traditional, or 'national minority', i.e. the non-Han peoples living within the Chinese borders. *Minzu yinyuexue* could thus refer to ethnomusicology, Chinese traditional music research, or the investigation of the musics of ethnic minority groups in China (see Du 1992:10). In translating this paper I have tried to use whichever of these three possibilities seemed more appropriate to each individual usage, rather than opting for a single, global translation. Discussion of the converse problem, the translation of the term ethnomusicology from English to Chinese, may be found in Tang 1991.

3 See Lieberman (1979:217-8) for a list of publications in German by Wang Guangqi (Wang Kuang-ch'ii).

4 At the same ICTM-UK Chapter meeting, Xue Yibing presented a paper entitled 'The Present State of Traditional Village Music Associations in Northern China: Three Case Studies'. A detailed abstract of this paper may be found in the *Newsletter of the International Council for Traditional Music, UK Chapter* No. 3 (1992), pp. 10–11. Xue presented a development of work introduced to many Western scholars in his joint article with Steven Jones (Jones & Xue 1991).
During the thirty years of the Second Stage (1949–79) music in Chinese higher education underwent a striking expansion. Nine institutes specializing in the study of music were established, as were dozens of music departments in arts institutes and teacher training colleges. Within each of these traditional music was given an important place. Four main approaches to the teaching of national music were pursued during this period:

1. Famous folk and traditional musicians were employed to teach their own music at these colleges. This led quickly to the acceptance of such teaching as normal and led to a rapid rise in the performance ability of Chinese traditional instrument students. The development of teaching materials was an important part of this process.
2. In each music college a curriculum for the teaching of the theory of traditional and national music was begun. Students were given direct experience of folk song, ballad singing, opera and instrumental music through performing and listening.
3. A research organization was established at each college. One of these was set up in the Central Music Institute and known as the National Music Research Institute, the predecessor of today’s Music Research Institute at the Chinese Academy of Arts. Under the leadership of Yang Yinliu the researchers of this Institute carried out fieldwork and research into subjects such as Xi’an drum music, Hebei wind and percussion music, Buddhist music from Beijing, Uighur maqam, Fujian nanyin balladry and instrumental ensemble music. Afterwards the results of all this work was published and used as teaching material.
4. Although many ancient Chinese books deal with music, very few of these included the music of oral traditions. A landmark publication produced in 1960 by a team of sixty researchers was Minzu Yinyue Gallun, ‘On National Music’. Ten associated volumes of transcriptions and supplementary materials were also prepared.

So, during the period 1949–79 the study of Chinese traditional music expanded and increased greatly. However during the Cultural Revolution (1966 until effectively 1978) all research ceased.

THE SITUATION TODAY (1980 ONWARDS)
Prior to 1979 the term minzu yinyuexue was never used in China. Instead, we referred to ‘national music theory’, ‘folk / national music research’ and similar terms. This fact accurately reflected the orientation of research until then. Chinese scholars had emphasized classification, melodic analysis and the study of modality, scales and the structure of individual compositions. Historical issues, cultural and social aspects, folklore, regional linguistic differences and other contextual factors were largely disregarded. After 1980 China’s ‘open door’ policy and a resurgence of activity in the social sciences, as well as heightened contact with the development of ethnomusicology in Europe and America, triggered a huge expansion of activity. This activity can be divided into three main areas:
1. A number of representative books from the past century of Western ethnomusicological enquiry were translated and published in Chinese, for example works by Ellis, Bartok, Kunst, Nettl’s Theory and Method and the New Grove.
2. Many researchers have begun to follow ethnomusicological methods in their work, particularly students working through BA, MA and PhD degrees. Apart from studying the music itself, these students’ theses include social and cultural information, and sometimes also material from folklore, geography and religion. An undergraduate degree is normally five years in length, an MA takes two or three years and a PhD two years.

To summarize, the past sixty years has seen the development in Chinese higher education from performance-centred studies of indigenous instruments to a more complete framework including academic BA, MA and PhD degrees in specialist national music departments.
Two final remarks must be made. 1. All this activity takes place in specialist music conservatories - there are few music departments in other institutions of higher education - so students' opportunities for exposure to related social sciences, such as anthropology, is minimal. 2. As Chinese history is long and its music extremely varied, almost all research so far carried out has been retrospective, concentrating upon traditions within China. In 1980 two new organizations were formed as part of this trend: the Chinese Traditional Music Research Society and the National Minorities Music Research Society. With more than six-hundred members, these societies meet once every two years. Ethnomusicology is continuing to develop in China; its position in institutions of higher education is strong.

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5 The former is the Zhongguo Chuantong Yinyuexue Hui, the latter the Zhongguo Shaoshu Minzu Yinyuexue Hui.
NEW VIEWS ON ETHNOMUSICOCOLGY AT THE

VIII European Seminar in Ethnomusicology (Geneva)

KEITH HOWARD
School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London

The European Seminar in Ethnomusicology (ESEM) has reached a crossroads in its development. Formed for and by professional ethnomusicologists at Belfast in 1981, it was initially chaired by the late John Blacking. Full seminars have been held in Köln in 1983, then annually in Belfast, London, Paris, Poland, Sienna and Berlin. September 1991 saw almost 100 participants gather for the eighth seminar at the Bossey Conference Centre near Geneva, where the Ateliers d'ethnomusicologie acted as host. Major sessions were devoted to themes like polyphony, aesthetics and China & the Far East. The seminar was remarkable for its generous inclusion of 'non-scientific' contributions like films and live performances of music from Africa and Asia. In this article, the author reflects on the seminar and presents his own ideas about the future of European ethnomusicology. He argues that European scholars should reconsider their attitude of 'impartial observers' and should escape from their ivory towers to cooperate far more closely with musicians and others in the field of live musical performance. He suggests that ESEM offers the ideal platform for such a development.

Participants in the VIII European Seminar in Ethnomusicology came from Austria, Belgium, Britain, Byelorussia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Georgia, Holland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Stated and Uzbekistan. The seminar focused on five themes: ethnomusicological approaches to polyphony, aesthetics, fieldwork methods, China and the Far East, and the applications of ethnomusicology in contemporary society. To remind participants that ethnomusicology can never be purely historical and scientific research, for the first time since Belfast in 1985 'non-scientific' contributions featured at Geneva, with film of Blacking, and performances of music from Burkino Faso, Bolivia, Switzerland, China and Korea.

DEVELOPMENT OF ESEM
Since 1981, membership restrictions for ESEM have been relaxed to admit students and those on the periphery of the discipline. Although initially an informal association, ESEM is now too big to maintain without some form of committee structure. The necessity of a hierarchical transformation appears to be generally recognized, but the
death of Blacking in January 1990 has left the Seminar with no charismatic leader. Yet ethnomusicology has developed in different ways in each European country. Only if ESEM successfully transforms its structure in a way which will appease each ethnomusicological perspective can it become the main agency on this continent for the promotion of the discipline. Essentially, ESEM should function as the European equivalent of the American-oriented Society for Ethnomusicology. This was implicit in Blacking’s original conception. Indeed, while president of the Society for Ethnomusicology in the early 1980s, he insisted that that Society should primarily serve the interests of American scholars (Blacking, in Howard 1991: 73–4).1

As a means to consolidate its position, ESEM needs to initiate a regular publication series.2 And, subsequent to any ESEM transformation, ESEM ought to surmount regional journals in its publications and act as co-ordinator for national ethnomusicological associations.

CHANGING VIEWS
Apart from publications, how can ESEM become effective? First, I believe that European scholars should be committed as much if not more to ESEM than to the Society for Ethnomusicology or the International Council for Traditional Music. Second, we must escape from our ivory towers – much ethnomusicological research remains confined to the seemingly closed worlds of European universities – to join those on our doorsteps involved in the performance and appreciation of live music. Only by doing so can we hope to increase co-operative contacts with the media and influence public awareness of musics throughout the world. And, only by doing so can we widen the audience for our discipline.

The rationale behind ESEM’s prerequisite transformation thus extends beyond membership considerations. It reflects an awareness that, in the current musical climate, ethnomusicologists can take political roles. The rules governing academic pursuits have clearly changed. The old view that anthropologists (and, hence, disciples of Blacking) should remain impartial observers seems hardly sustainable in the contemporary world: consider the dilemma Colin Turnbull related in *The Mountain People* (1976), where a culture was dying, consider the colonial attitudes of many fieldworkers who not so long ago laid down the basics for what we study now, or consider the examples of the misuse of anthropological data cited in J.A. Barne’s *Who Should Know What?* (1979). We recognize our moral obligations to informants and musicians (even if we do not behave as if those obligations should be binding); we are beginning to appreciate our responsibility for limiting personal prejudice to our audience and our students.3 What we choose to study, what we support in subsequent teaching and what we publish – both in recorded sound and in writing – reflects our value judgements (judgements about musical quality, but perhaps also contextual data).

TRADITIONAL CONCEPT OF ‘TRADITION’ AND ‘FOLK’
Today, more than in previous generations, music is conveyed through the mass media. Ethnomusicologists appear ambivalent in their attitudes towards the media. Many

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1 This interview was originally published in *Cahiers de musiques traditionelles*, Ateliers d’ethnomusicologie, Geneva, vol. 3, pp. 187–204.

2 A motion at the 1991 general assembly that gave a mandate to the council to develop publication plans was passed with a clear majority.

3 The debate hardly moved to specifics. Most ethnomusicologists accept the unsatisfactory nature of, say, David Fanshawe’s *Africain Sanctus* (Philips, 6558 001, 1975), where local musicians appear neither to have had a say in the final record nor to have received a fair share of the recording’s royalties. Many also complain that European festivals such as WOMAD and a host of record labels control and profit from selling music from the Third World to European consumers.
criticize the requirements of journalistic producers. Others have discovered that
attempts to broadcast a faithful representation which informants would be happy with
may not serve the interests of our own society, or may not reach a large audience.
Many are wary of commercial projects. Others think they may be able to influence the
decisions of impresarios, or argue that commercial enterprises make possible support
for loss-making ventures which document more ‘authentic’ music traditions.
The year ESEM held its first meeting, 1981, was the year when the International Folk
Music Council became the International Council for Traditional Music. Notions about
the essential nature of ethnomusicology seemed temporarily secure. Yet, the concept of
tradition – and, by extension, authenticity – always had the makings of fallacy. Prior to
1981, definitions of ‘folk music’ were for many years subjected to tortuous debate (see
Elbourne 1976), many of which sought to undermine the provisional 1954 definition
adopted by the International Folk Music Council:

‘Folk music is the product of a musical tradition that has been evolved through the
process of oral transmission. The factors that shape the tradition are: i) continuity
which links the present with the past; ii) variation which stems from the creative
impulse of the individual or the group; and iii) selection by the community, which
determines the form or forms in which the music survives (...) The term does not
cover composed popular music that has been taken over ready–made by a community
and remains unchanged, for it is the re–fashioning and recreation of the music by the
community that gives it its folk character’ (Anon. 1955: 23).

Cecil Sharpe and others responsible for this inadequately considered the mechanics of
cultural change which, combined with the increasing place of ‘world music’ in Europe,
leaves such a definition looking extremely naive. If the justification for our study lies
primarily in examining man as music maker, we need to continue our exploration of
how music is used by people. We cannot afford to let our own musical tastes discolour
our perspectives. In the mid–1950s, the mass media was in its infancy; now it is the
primary agency for music transmission throughout the world. If ethnomusicology is to
survive as a discipline, we must work not only with disappearing or dead oral
traditions, but should develop strategies for the music heard today.

TAKING OUT THE ‘ETHNO’
Many genres labelled ‘fusion’ or euphemistically described as ‘world music’ or ‘world
beat’ have pedigrees that can be linked to notions of ‘tradition’. By narrowing our
focus to what we perceive as ‘authentic’ or ‘traditional’ forms we perform the same
selective operation as musicologists who work on western art music. This demeans
ethnomusicology, which alone is concerned with the whole world of music:

‘What we would like to do is forge closer links between the discoveries of
ethnomusicology and the interests of musicologists in general. To me, it is a tragedy
that musicology has been divided into a lot of separate compartments. I don’t think
Guido Adler ever intended it should be that way when he joined Chrysander and
Spitta to form the Vierteljahrsschrift für Musikwissenschaft (in 1884) (...) I believe we
may be able to take the ‘ethno’ out of ethnomusicology before long. Then we may once
more have a unified musicology, a musicology truly fertilized and enriched by the
contributions of ethnomusicology’ (Blacking, in Howard 1991: 73).

At the Geneva seminar, a day–long round table considered the issues I have begun to
raise here within the theme, ‘The applications of ethnomusicology in contemporary
society’. The programme explained the theme as follows: ‘The spreading of so–called
traditional musics beyond their original context has enriched the musical culture of
many; however, it may also endanger misrepresentations of other cultures and distorted musical practices.'

The assumption that the media does misrepresent and/or distort was pervasive, quasi-academic judgements on ‘so-called traditional musics’ frustrating any concern with today’s musical market place.

First, Rober Günther (Köln) read a paper titled ‘The ethnomusicologist in contemporary society’. He moved perilously between old definitions and present musical praxis. He began by pointing out that ethnomusicology has no fixed strategy or goal and that ethnomusicologists provide a link between the giver/musician and the receiver/audience. The ethnomusicologist is a mediator who must use his skill, competence, and personality as a ‘responsible agent’. Initially, Günther avoided politicization, stating that the scholar’s willingness, his ‘readiness to take an interest in whatever music [is] heard’, was the key to achieving our goals. Underlying all this was, however, what Günther described as a ‘personal view of the consequences of ethnomusicological application’, in which judgements should be made about authenticity and tradition. Later, Cherif Khazendar (Paris) from the Extra-European Arts Committee (EEAC), made the proposed judgements much more explicit when he stated that the contemporary tendency to transform music to make it commercial is extremely dangerous. Khazendar believed ‘world music’ to be a new form of colonialism; since ‘commercial impresarios tend to be attracted by the sensational and the exotic and their main concern is commercial success’, ‘world music’ sold the masters of the East like ‘hot bread’.

The jury is still out. Frans de Ruiter (Den Haag), again speaking for the EEAC, considered that no clear division had yet been made between musical traditions and contemporary genres. He asked how we should behave towards adapted forms, whether we should accept a 1,000 year old genre as more ‘authentic’ that its 100 year old equivalent. In response, Frank Kouwenhoven (Leiden) suggested by analogy that there was little problem in sponsoring both popular ‘world music’ and less approachable ‘authentic’ regional genres: publishers of loss-making academic texts sustain their profits by producing popular cookbooks. De Ruiter countered by stating that there is no profit to be made from the arts, and Peter Crowe (Bordeaux) returned to the spirit of what Khazendar had said: ‘First we took their minerals, then their food, now we take their minds’.

THE ETHNOMUSICOLOGIST AS A MEDIATOR
The whole issue is clearly contentious, all the more so since ethnomusicologists surely support the musical cultures and musicians they work with. On one hand, as Wim van Zanten (Leiden) pointed out, scholars can help impresarios in Europe by making recommendations on local musicians and music. The Seminar was told that the EEAC aimed to go one step further, using native musicologists to ensure suitable choices are made (I doubt that many native musicologists are unbiased). On the other hand, De Ruiter stated the EEAC recognized that performances of local genres needed to be tailored to a European audience. So, he briefly discussed how concerns about concert duration, stage presentation, and issues such as the obscurity or approachability of specific musics (different tone systems, harmonic patterns, religious content, and so forth) could be resolved.

Carole Pegg (Cambridge), citing Mongolian musicians touring Britain, proposed that as Günther’s mediators, part of the ethnomusicologist’s role is to facilitate exchange. Ethnomusicologists should counter the colonialist legacy by not seeking to profit from the musicians worked with: ‘performers who are brought into unfamiliar environments should be looked after with proper care and concern.’ 4 This seemed reasonable to those

4 Cited from the abstract to Session 21 at the Seminar.
present, but is actually rather curious on reflection, since the nature of the ethnomusicological exercise is to profit from other people's music: ethnomusicologists hold their jobs precisely because of their knowledge and expertise.

Sylvia Delorenzi-Schenkel (Lugano) defended her role as mediator in a paper titled 'The spreading of real and so-called traditional music by the media on the one hand and by children of emigrants on the other hand'. She offered two accounts. One noted how Swiss children of different ethnic origins learnt songs from each other. Delorenzi-Schenkel proposed adding taught sociocultural information as a means to enhance cross-cultural understanding. The second account was more fascinating, for it considered different ethnomusicologist and mass media approaches to music itself. From the mid 1980s, Delorenzi-Schenkel produced a series of 'so-called ethnic music' programmes for a Zurich radio station. Her objectives – to make a special kind of programme consisting of many traditional musics, stimulating audience interests by challenging them to 'open their minds and ears' – contrasted those of the media producers, who wanted a new programme style that featured exotic music to entertain a large audience. Initial naivety came from both sides: programmers had only a general idea of non-western music distorted by limited commercial recordings; Sylvia assumed more local and regional sound worlds would be most appropriate. Soon, her use of field recordings and aboriginal music caused arguments as the media moghuls complained about their unsuitability for a general audience.

Delorenzi-Schenkel admitted her audiences were small, but defended her choices by recalling subsequent letters sent by listeners that indicated their enthusiasm. Many at the seminar were sympathetic, since similar issues face other mass media ventures which ethnomusicologists have attempted. Yet I wonder how long ethnomusicologists can retain their integrity if they fail to reach the general public. In Britain, I have just completed two radio programmes on Korean music commissioned by the BBC. They will probably each be broadcast once, at a time when few people listen and they will then be forgotten. The cost and effort involved in each programme is not easy to defend against the popularity of, say, Kershaw's weekly 'world music' slot.

EAST EUROPEAN VIEWS

Colleagues from former east European states provided a further strand in the round table. Each assumed that the ethnomusicologists should be directly involved in decisions about quality, authenticity, and the nature of recorded or staged performances; implicitly, each now felt able to react against Russian (cultural) totalitarianism. Slawomira Kominek (Warsaw), looking at the Lithuanian minority in Poland, proposed that within folklore music, song and dance are all useful in the development of new ethnic or national identity. But she noted that the resultant 'musical folklorism' is primarily stylized, stressing the exotic as it simplifies musical sounds and symbolic images. Extending from here, Zinaida Mozheiko (Minsk) sounded warning bells. To her, attempts to create an environment of 'authentic tradition' ran a danger of standardization which might destroy ethnic images. She claimed that such attempts were often promoted by commercial sponsors who wished to make presentations attractive more than authentic, and isolated minority groups as they encouraged preservation of the old and discouraged economic transformations.

Boris Avramets (Riga), in contrast, believed national folkloric materials enabled the integration of ethnic groups into the global system of cultural ties. Ethnomusicologists could help revive Latvian independence through reactivating ethnic music and restoring the music's socio-cultural contexts. Anna Czechanowska (Warsaw) continued in the same vein, arguing from her observation of state music education in Kazakhstan that identity with a specific musical culture aids the discovery of ethnicity. The issues are
common throughout the world, and perhaps it is now possible and timely that scholars from west and east should share experiences to develop strategies. Those who spoke indicated the urgency of the problem, and ethnomusicologists clearly have a role to help rediscover regional cultural identities where for many years Russia has ruled.

**LOCAL VERSUS GLOBAL APPROACHES**

Increasing exchanges between west and east Europeans are introducing new approaches and new methods into ESEM. At Geneva, 17 papers were presented by east European colleagues. Beyond the concerns of the round table, two typical approaches contrasted — though never exclusively — much west European practice. In one, native musicologists coupled research with education to studies of their own music. In the other, ethnomusicologists as ‘scientists’ developed global, cross-cultural theories about music and identity. Edisher Garakanidse (Tbilisi) took the native approach in his paper, ‘Les dialectes musicaux de Géorgie’. Ewa Dahlig (Warsaw), in a paper on Polish fiddling, described how homophonic rhythmic drones shift to obligato heterophony. Calling on a personal and detailed knowledge, she challenged the theories of Polish musicologists.5 Saule Utegaliyeva (Alma-Ata) described polyphony in the music of Turkic people; Yelena Pushkaryova (Moscow) looked at Nenet personal songs.

More global approaches, adopted by Izaly Zemtsovsky (St Petersburg), Iosif Zhordania (Tbilisi), Helen Vassylchenko (Moscow), Margarita Karatygina (Moscow) and others, seem to run the risk of misrepresenting specific cultures. Zemtsovsky commenced with the Greek word *agon*. He developed the notion of antiphony as a form of intoned dialogue. Claiming that the roots of language lie in an exchange of sound, he showed relationships between terms for contest/battle and song amongst the Turks, Yakuts, Romanians, Inuit, Slavs, Finnish, and throughout the cultures of the Mediterranean and Middle East. Zemtsovsky’s aim had nothing to do with the disavowed notion of diffusion. Rather, he described three ways in which people could evolve monodic songs to polyphonic forms, namely, signals, call and response, and integrated polyphony. Yet, the argument was always weak, first because Zemtsovsky noted that the concepts of monody and polyphony allowed an unrealistic academic division and second because all emic discussion was lacking.

Zhordania gave a more evolutionary approach to the same topic. He noted the similarity of polyphonic forms amongst most Caucasian groups but religious and language differences. From this he concluded that polyphony was an ancient form of expression which survived migration. This, however, turns diffusion theories upside down, and Curt Sachs would surely disapprove. Justification was offered from genetics. Retaining Zemtsovsky’s notion of dialogue as the basis of polyphony, Zhordania contrasted it with the development of speech. Asians, he claimed, developed articulated speech 400,000 years ago, hence archaeology shows a sudden enlargement of their brains. Caucasians followed only 100,000 years ago. Polyphony, he maintained, stemmed from the 300,000 years without speech. I would counter by arguing that Asian primogeniture is debatable, not least given Japanese manipulation of data. Max Peter Baumann at the 1990 ESEM seminar fell into a similar trap when he showed conclusively (but wrongly?) that the Japanese were more musical because their brains had better developed right hemispheres (1990: 52–56, citing Tsunoda 1985).

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5 This sentence explains why I left quotation marks around ‘scientists’. Although I accept the desire of some to prove that ethnomusicology is indeed a science, musical performance is an art. Many, like Dahlig, still subscribe to some extent to Mantle Hood’s concept of bi-musicality in ethnomusicology: performance is, to them, a vital part of their work. John Blacking, as a pianist, would have argued for art: he taught anthropology and ethnomusicology within the Faculty of Arts at Belfast (Howard 1991: 65 and 69).
Karatygina discussed issues of musical genre, with reference to nomadic cultures. Arguing that genre functions as a model of human systems, she proposed a 'new' multi-disciplinary approach in which it should be considered as a cultural phenomenon with specific relation to social organization. She demonstrated the approach through cross-cultural comparisons. Veit Erllmann (Berlin) criticized the theory. He noted little new, for genre as an analogy for cultural context has been much studied in America over the last 20 years (Anthony Seeger’s *Why Suya Sing* (1987) is one example). Carole Pegg criticized the comparisons. Karatygina had used a Mongolian example played only by a small group in the west, not by the dominant Khalka as claimed; there was a clear need to refer to ethnicity.

Details also marred Vassylchenko’s paper. She sought to show the relationship between voices (as primary) and instruments (as secondary) modes of musical thought. In the Mediterranean and in South India, she noted instruments were inferior to the voice. Her examples from Asia were chosen to demonstrate the symbolic nature of instruments. Shaman drums were claimed to house the spirits of animals, stones in southeast Asia the souls of the dead. These were generalizations which specific examples could disprove, but Vassylchenko also ignored ethic perceptions. Thus, the importance of the emperor in Chinese thought was passed over for seasonal concerns. In Korea, Chinese–originating terms for court music were promoted as indigenous folk ideas. In Java, onomatopoetic reasons for calling a gong *gunung* were ignored in favour of a complex derivation from *gunung*, ‘mountain’. And Confucius, who is said to have spent seven years playing a single tone on the zither, was implicitly discarded with the comment: ‘instrumentalists never become cultural heroes’.

I do not wish to dismiss such global theories. The shortcomings, partly a reflection of Russian theoretical practices, also result from limited possibilities for personal fieldwork and inadequate library facilities. In west Europe, the penchant for detailed studies of local cultures, particularly found in those of us following the British anthropological or French sociological tradition, and in many ways a response to the discarding of evolutionary perspectives, may actually need to be rethought as small-scale cultures disappear. West European scholars have proved quite poor at developing theories for music which are valid cross-culturally. Yet, whatever the intrinsic value of such theories, detailed accounts must neither neglect nor be used as the basis for global concerns if ethnomusicologists are to prove their worth as political animals, whether as mediators, promoters, or mass-media producers. Bridging the scholarship of east and west Europe is, perhaps, one of the most important challenges now faced by ESEM.

**BRIDGING EAST AND WEST**

Two papers can serve as my examples. In one, Susanne Zeigler (Berlin) described her work with 1930s analytical recordings – recorded on three parallel phonographs by Gippius, Ewald and Emshheimer – of Georgian polyphony. Using examples from her own 1991 fieldwork from the region where the songs originated, she contrasted the old (richness of harmony, freedom between parts, elements of improvisation) with the new

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6 A volume titled *Problems of Terminology in Asian, African and American Musical Cultures* was published in Moscow in 1990. The papers given in Geneva by Karatygina and Vassylchenko take much of their data from the ten papers in this volume.

7 A recent review of Blacking’s *A Commonsense View of All Music* criticized it for overly relying on the Venda: ‘Worst of all in a book purporting to examine musical foundations and universals, the supporting material is unacceptably Venda-centric’ (Josephson 1991: 268). I felt much the same could be said about the excerpts played at the seminar from Blacking’s *Dancing* (1987–8), a series of programmes made for Ulster Television, where Blacking seemed closer to his African materials than to the Western dance floor.
THE NEED FOR A BROAD PERSPECTIVE

Papers presented in the China and the Far East session further demonstrated that narrow focus on one area should never ignore wider concerns of ethnomusicology. Six papers were presented in a session organized by the European Foundation for Chinese Music Research (Chime). Five, by Dai Xiaolian (Leiden), Frank Kouwenhoven (Leiden), François Picard (Paris), Jonathan Stock (Belfast) and Huang Bai (Leiden) focused on China. One, by Ingrid Fritsch (Bonn), assembled much contemporary and historical information to describe the now dying female blind goze musicians in Japan. Stock’s paper, titled ‘Construction techniques in music for Chinese two-stringed fiddles’, was well framed and appeared conclusive. But it was not, for Stock carefully avoided two concerns of ethnomusicologists in Belfast in the recent past: Blacking and Baily’s exploration of the biological mechanisms for patterning techniques and melody construction on instruments, and Kippen’s computer generation of modelling patterns. Kouwenhoven, looking at a single 1934 composition by He Luting, Cowherd’s Flute, sought to defend his perception that ‘most Chinese composers have failed to find convincing solutions in their attempts to adopt western tonality’. But Kouwenhoven assumed that his perception of western tonality, unfortunately illustrated with a particularly romantic choral reworking of the piece, was correct. He failed to consider Chinese perceptions of the use of western musical elements and by so doing, in common with many east European papers, he ignored emic views. This problem, particularly in the case of Indonesian music, has recently been the subject of debate between Jody Diamond and others in EthnoFORUM; in respect to Chinese music it reflects a further dimension to the debates at the 1979 Durham Oriental Music Festival reported by Robert Provine, Fang Kun and Thrasher in Asian Music 12/2 (1981).

In conclusion, it is fair to report an increase in ethnomusicological interest. Yet, as a discipline, ethnomusicology is far from established. In terms of methodology, many challenges must be faced if east and west Europeans are to develop common ground, and if detailed and specific accounts are to be balanced by cross-cultural perspectives. Further, ethnomusicology still seems to hold only a tenuous position, be it in academia (witness the number of ESEM members who have not been to seminars for several years) or in influencing the production of commercial recordings and media.

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8 In contrast, papers offered by Amon Shiloah (Jerusalem) and Jean During on the aesthetics of Arabic music appear to have demonstrated the strengths of adopting a narrow focus. Unfortunately, timetabled parallel sessions meant that I was unable to hear neither the papers nor the lively debate they generated.
programmes. Ethnomusicologists need to develop strategies for action if they are to be effective mediators and promoters of music cultures. Again, although the expansion of ESEM is welcomed, the Seminar needs to transform itself, developing an organizational structure and a clear programme within which all Europeans can face common challenges.

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Elizabeth Wichmann’s *Listening to Theatre* is a valuable addition to the literature on Chinese traditional dramatic forms, providing an accessible and interesting account of the linguistic, musical, vocal and instrumental aspects of Beijing opera. Chapter I describes Beijing opera plays and their performance, specifically considering aesthetics, stylisation, the use of conventions, principal role types and the structuring of the thematic contents of opera plots.

Chapter II focuses on language, beginning with a brief discussion of language levels (classical and vernacular) and moving on to analyse lyric types and structures, the role of rhyme in song texts and the patterning of speech tones. Stage speeches, prose, poetic and conventionalised are introduced, along with their differing structural and dramatic functions. In Chapter III various elements of the musical system come under examination, namely melodic-phrases, metrical types and modes. Chapter IV maintains the musical core, dealing with patterns of composition from standard modal and rhythmic perspectives and then from the more idiosyncratic viewpoint of a single performer or performance. Chapter V explicates issues connected to the voice, including topics such as breathing, pronunciation, heightened speech and role-specific vocal characteristics. Attention is turned to the instrumentalists, their placing on the stage, their instruments and the function of the music they provide in Chapter VI. The main body of the book is completed by Chapter VII, a brief essay interrelating Wichmann’s four aural components of Beijing opera performance: language, musical system, voice and orchestra. Supplementary material includes appendices on cipher (which Wichmann calls ‘cipheric’) notation and Mandarin Chinese sounds and lists of names and terms with their modern characters, Western language (rather curiously termed ‘English and European’) and Chinese written sources and plays attended by the author. The excellent photographs of musical instruments taken by Douglas Peebles
also deserve mention, and the general standard of printing and presentation is highly commendable.

It would be impossible to discuss in detail every aspect of this wide-ranging book here. Clearly, the author has lavished much care on her fieldwork and the construction and presentation of her argument. Wichmann provides many facets of Beijing opera with a thoughtful and interesting explanation, and the text is strongly supported by music examples (using cipher notation) and figures.

Just occasionally, the author's desire to produce an approachable manuscript not overloaded with Chinese terminology leads to over-earnest or inconsistent translations. For example, yan or 'unaccented beats' is given in its more literal reading as 'eyes' (p. 39). Guomen [instrumental passage], literally 'through the door', however, is somewhat clumsily rendered as 'instrumental connective' (p. 77), while the semantic and rhythmic line segment dou, literally 'pause', remains dou throughout (p. 33). Zi, character or word, is translated as 'written-character', which, to my mind at least, jars when Wichmann deals with spoken or sung textual aspects of operatic performance. Wichmann points to the possible confusion of employing character for both a dramatic persona and a unit of the script (p. xv), but context would surely guide the reader safely through this potential ambiguity.

Discussion of fiddle tuning (p. 111) in the inverse modes seems contradictory in the upper and lower paragraphs of this page. If I understand the author's point correctly, absolute string tuning remains the same in both a principal mode, such as erhuang, and its inverse, fan erhuang, but the relative modal rationalisation of these pitches differs. Thus, the open note on the higher string of the fiddle in erhuang will be heard as re, while the same open note in fan erhuang music is heard as sol. Some clarification here might assist, especially for the reader who is not overly familiar with tuning conventions of Chinese spike fiddles.

But criticisms such as these are of minor importance and instead of dwelling on them it is more useful to discuss a selection of issues raised by the book which help to introduce its content, its main arguments and its contribution to the study of Chinese opera.

The author's preface makes it clear that the book is based on a dissertation researched and prepared in the late 1970s and early 1980s, with additional fieldwork taking place in the summers of 1984-86 (p. xv). This goes some way to explaining the disappointing brevity of the bibliographic material provided: only a handful of references date from the early 1980s and there is not a single mention of published Chinese or Western research in this field after 1984. One might, for example, have expected to see more use made of Bell Yung's work on Cantonese opera than the single Chinopera News source cited. The usefulness to the scholarly reader of the bibliography as a research resource is also limited by a restriction Wichmann has imposed on the scope of her work: 'such topics as the historical development of Beijing opera, its social milieu, the visual aspects of performance, and the process of training stage performers and musicians are dealt with only sparingly, when they have an important bearing upon actual aural performance' (p. xiv).

Ethnomusicologists might care to argue that historical, social and other aspects are not to be so conveniently disconnected from performance sound as the author's statement appears to suggest, and, indeed, a principal area of ethnomusicological study is the concern with relating these disparate aspects to one another. Wichmann is very likely aware of such a potential criticism, but seeks to disarm it through continuing that, 'Although the study deals fairly extensively with material of potential interest to literary
scholars, ethnomusicologists, vocal scientists, and linguists, it is written from a theatrical, performance-oriented perspective' (p. xiv). While this certainly ties in with the publication’s avowed purpose ‘to describe the major components of aural performance as they are understood by Beijing opera practitioners and connoisseurs’ and ‘communicate an understanding of how those components are used to create a performance, and of how that performance is appreciated by its audience’ (p. xiii), it can be questioned whether this is indeed the most effective perspective from which to write such a study. Might not the consideration of (or, at the very least, reference to) a broader range of historical and social data, such as is instinctively recognised by Chinese practitioners and connoisseurs, assist the Western reader to understand the topic in question more profoundly? Is the description of sound events and the translation of generalised ‘insider’ explanations for them enough, or might it also be the task of the author to provide some form of analysis beyond that offered locally and to point out where indigenous theory and practice diverge? After all, a discussion of who can break the ‘rules’ and when could be just as illuminating as one of the ‘rules’ themselves.

Connected to this last point, time, place and individuality seem overly absent from this study. Although the author carefully cites her Nanjing-based research and tutors, this reader at least was left wondering just how similar Beijing opera was in other periods or locations. Most material is presented in the ethnographic present tense, and it is difficult for the reader to assess how generally applicable the author’s findings are to Beijing opera in general. Similarly, an apparent over-reliance on the theoretical explanations of the scholar Wu Junda might have been tempered by the critical transcription and analysis of more real, performed examples. After all, do all singers agree with Wu Junda’s theoretical prescriptions? Are there aspects of Beijing opera which Wu, as an indigenous academic overlooks? A case in point is provided by the concept of the ‘basic melodic contour’, which Wichmann introduces as follows:

* Xipi and erhuang modes each have a basic melodic contour (*jichu changqiang*, lit. “basic-melodic-passage”) in two lines - an opening line and a closing line. The basic melodic contour for each mode is constructed upon characteristic pitch progressions. In xipi the characteristic pitch progressions are 1 2 3 [cipher notation pitches] and 3 2 1; in erhuang, they are 2 3 2 and 1 2 1 (p. 79).

To assess the validity of the ‘basic melodic contour’ and its role, if any, in aria composition, the reader needs to know whether the concept is one recognised by Chinese opera singers and audience members, or is used by singers as an educational device when learning Beijing opera, or is a compositional or improvisatory tool, or perhaps acts as a prop employed as a form of mnemonic life-line during performance or is a theoretician’s abstraction? In that the contours provided by Wichmann (p. 80) actually contain rather more notes than the simple ‘characteristic pitch progressions’ cited for each mode, where do these extra pitches come from and what status do they have? Furthermore, in that Chinese opera singers frequently perform songs with more than a single couplet, and in many cases appear to consistently adapt the set couplet contour during longer arias, how are such diversions explained with regard to the basic contour? A discussion of the aural dimension of Beijing opera would surely benefit from the analysis of how actual song structures are composed, performed and received as well as that of the theoretical models upon which such songs appear to be based. I certainly do not argue against the concept of the basic melodic contour *per se* (see, for instance, Stock 1993), only for a clearer identification of its status *vis-à-vis* Chinese musical theory and practice.

The clarity of Wichmann’s discussion of ‘keys and cadences’ is likewise diminished by an apparent lack of critical attention to terminology and the difference between
music theory and actual music making in Beijing opera. Rendering the Chinese term *diao* here (p. 83) as 'key' seems unfortunate. 'Mode', which Wichmann uses elsewhere, would give the Western reader a stronger impression of music using effectively the same series of pitches but apportioning relative emphasis within this series differently. Key, on the other hand, rather suggests that similar patterns of emphasis are reproduced out at a different level of absolute pitch. But, more importantly, the author continues to describe how 'deviation from the pattern of cadential tones at the ends of lines occurs only in the expression of the most intense emotions; these cadences are essential to modal identity' (p. 84). Again, this does not appear to tally with practice as revealed through the perusal of transcriptions of longer song structures (see, for example, Lu & Wu 1983 or Zheng et al. 1986). Here, deviations from the standard cadential pitches seem both quite common and not entirely compromising to modal identity. Likewise, if the pattern of cadence tones was truly essential to the maintenance of modal integrity, how is it possible for male and female role songs to have contrasting cadence patterns (p. 86) yet still be considered as belonging to the same mode? Perhaps Chinese modes are in practice rather more robust musical constructs than Wichmann's theoretical description allows. Or perhaps Chinese musicians are rather better at creating varied song structures than their theorists give them credit for. This is an issue which needs more attention than it has so far received, although Wichmann's account is certainly valuable for its descriptive richness.

Another intriguing feature of Wichmann's discussion of musical elements is her use of a form of flow diagram, which interrelates the different elements and patterns discussed in the text. Although sympathetic to the idea in general, I find the specific layout and content somewhat bewildering (p. 109). Key appears again, now as a sub-section of mode, and is linked in a 'mutual, two-way' influential relationship with cadences, but feeds into melodic construction in a 'hierarchical, uni-directional' way. Above key in this one-way hierarchy is song structure and above that modal rhythm. Is it really possible to separate these elements so precisely? Where does melodic construction differ from song structure, or from basic melodic contour, or melodic tendencies, and where do cadence patterns fit in? Are they not subsumed within the basic melodic contour or tendencies? In that we can only find songs in one or other of the major role types (Wichmann's diagram incorporates male and female versions), how far is it possible to talk about features like modal rhythm (the patterned placement of textual syllables within each line) or melodic construction outside the bounds of these particular role types? I am not sure that Wichmann believes it possible to do so, but her diagrammatic format leans towards the suggestion that it may be.

Chapter IV begins with an interesting overview of the tripartite process by which the music for newly-written historical plays and traditional plays is created (pp. 131-2). However, I wondered whether specialist composers are ever employed, as they are in certain regional opera styles, and exactly which performers it is that fix the melodies and metrical structures that will be sung in an opera? Does everything fall ultimately to the lead singer in a production, or is each soloist responsible for preparing his or her own role? How are such issues negotiated within an opera troupe? Again, the author might claim that this lies beyond the remit of her topic as delimited in the preface (see above), but it appears an ideal instance where description could be given greater depth by the incorporation of social data. And Wichmann's decision to take examples for the chapter from traditional plays alone (p. 132), albeit practical, means that the opportunity to locate the work more exactly in its time and place (1980s Nanjing) is again passed over.

The latter part of this chapter presents three comparisons of the third part of the compositional process, the creation of specific melodic-passages. To begin with the
author considers the performance of different lines of the same type sung by the same performer in the same opera. Then Wichmann looks at performances by different performers of the same lines from one opera. Finally, the focus is turned to the same operatic lines as performed by the same singer on different occasions. Illuminating examples are provided in each place, and the author relates musical differences to the changing context of the story, singer or performance in each case. One or two theoretical problems with the comparisons that take place could however be raised. Those familiar with the work of other Chinese opera scholars on the connections between textual speech tone and melodic contour (Pian 1972, for example) might wish the contrasting tone levels of the texts in Example 27 (pp. 153-4) to be brought into the analysis. Or, if text-setting conventions are sublimated to mood in instances of this sort (or if Pian’s text-setting theory is itself questionable), some explicit response to the earlier theory would be advantageous. A second potential problem exists with the comparison of songs from different performances or from the same performer on different occasions. Can the analyst be certain that the transcriptions used (which were not made by the author herself) were all prepared with exactly the same care and attention to detail? Are there any apparent differences which arise more from the agency of the transcriber, or indeed the original sound recordist, than the singer? Ethnomusicologists, because of the history of their discipline, may question the value of this kind of comparison, and may need more reassurance than the author provides. Wichmann, however, seems only partly conscious of this problem, reporting Wu Junda’s statement that one of the transcriptions of the three singers featured in Example 28 (pp. 157-64) is ‘relatively sketchy; ornamentation is not included’ (p. 164), but devoting thirteen pages to the comparison and its analysis nonetheless.

Towards the beginning of Chapter V the author provides a fascinating description of breath control and function (pp. 178-83). Quite a number of insights are communicated here, especially as concerns the aesthetic system which regulates use of the breath in Beijing opera and the terminology with which vocal qualities, techniques and faults are categorised. After a dense description of matters of pronunciation, of which I found the earlier part of the section on special Beijing opera pronunciations (pp. 188-9) most useful, Wichmann returns to the subject of aesthetics (pp. 201-3). ‘Key’ reappears, now seemingly in reference to the absolute pitch setting of a song (p. 210), and, incidentally, the text in note 10 (found on pp. 204-5) suggests that gongchepu modes are directly equivalent to specific absolute Western keys. In fact, gongchepu was fundamentally a relative pitch system, although conventions of its use do point to its use to record fixed musical pitches. Also, there are differences in arrangement of half-steps, steps, potential leaps and cadential notes from one gongchepu mode to another, which are not carried over by the term key. In general, however, Wichmann’s discussion of aesthetics is stimulating. Although the index helps the reader track down the numerous references to this subject throughout the book, perhaps these could have been regrouped as another chapter in themselves, or at least as a major section possibly located within the final chapter. Given the title of the book, Listening to Theatre, the aesthetics which condition composition, performance and reception, do seem worthy of a more focused consideration.

Speech tone, although absent from Wichmann’s earlier musical comparisons, is central to her discussion of heightened speech. Here she also employs diagrams furnished by Wu Junda to demonstrate the difference between a phrase in contemporary Mandarin and in operatic Zhongzhou dialect (see, for example, p. 207). As in earlier chapters, it is possible to question the analytical status of these diagrams. Note 19 (p. 295) indicates that they are ‘conceptual’, which begs the questions as to whether transcriptions of the phrases as used in actual speech or performance would reveal corresponding differences? In my own experience of spoken Mandarin, speakers tend to iron-out the speech tones of subsidiary words in many phrases, and the overall
phrase has a contour of its own, perhaps indicative of the mood of the speaker or relationship of the speaker and listener. Mandarin speakers also link their words together, without the gaps (silences?) in the Mandarin phrase pitch diagrams. Although classical poetry may be declaimed in a manner similar to that suggested by Wu Junda's diagram, everyday speech may not. Rather than relying entirely upon theoretical prescriptions, it may be better to first disentangle considerations such as these from the phrases in question and then to work from transcriptions of actual performances. Again, a heightened critical sense from the author could have alerted her to the theoretical weakness of this segment of the book.

Purists may object to Wichmann's use of 'orchestra' to refer to the instrumental ensemble(s) which accompanies Beijing opera, especially since the 'basic orchestra consists of eight musicians' only (p. 241), and xiao (vertical flute) players to the inference that their instrument has a membrane like that on the dizi (transverse flute) (p. 232). I also wondered about the fiddle jingerhu, a term frequently encountered in descriptions of Beijing opera music but absent from this account. Presumably this is an alternative name for the erhu, which, as the photograph (p. 227) makes clear, is not quite the same in construction as the standard, conservatory tradition instrument of that name. Also, during my own research I have noticed jinghu lead fiddle players often have a pair of instruments with them, one principally for use in erhuang mode music and another, possibly a little smaller, primarily employed in xipi mode music. Wichmann, however, provides no further information on this subject. In discussing the adaptation of guqin, here translated as 'fixed-melodies', Wichmann states that 'they are arranged in 1/4, 2/4, or 4/4 meter, rather than in 3/4, 6/8, etc.' (p. 250). This is reasonable enough, although it does carry the latent (but largely unwarranted) suggestion that melodies in triple or compound duple metres are common in Chinese music. But these are minor criticisms of what are generally useful and clear descriptions, both of the instruments themselves and their role in Beijing opera.

The final chapter effectively underlines relations between the elements discussed until now in relative isolation. As part of her argument Wichmann presents a series of four figures formed of superimposed, annotated non-concentric circles (the first is on p. 264). These illustrate quite clearly the relationships described in the text. Unfortunately, only the last of these is labelled as a Figure, which means that the first three cannot be specifically referred to in the text or appear in the list of illustrations. (A similar point could be made about the speech tone and voice resonation diagrams of Chapter V.) Seemingly unimportant, such labelling does help the reader locate such figures on subsequent readings, and get an idea of how the work fits together, either by scanning the lists of contents and illustrations or by browsing through the pages of the text itself. Nonetheless, this final chapter is tightly constructed and convincing. Wichmann's thesis is that the combination in performance of the aural elements of Beijing opera creates a unique 'sound world' within which 'the essence of human feeling in traditional Chinese society is captured and movingly portrayed' (p. 274).

*Listening to Theatre* is a useful and interesting book; it is rich in description, and would be a valuable addition to any collection of Chinese opera or music publications for that reason alone. Wichmann's stated aims of describing 'the major components of aural performance as they are understood by Beijing opera practitioners and connoisseurs' and communicating an understanding of how those components are used to create a performance, and of how that performance is appreciated by its audience' (p. xiii) are, by and large, well achieved. The ethnomusicologist or anthropologist might often wish for greater analytical clarity however, particularly with regard to the use of theoretical material provided for the author by the helpful Wu Junda. After all, a Chinese audience's appreciation of a Beijing opera performance is surely based more upon their experience of actual performances than their absorption of teaching notes, and Wu was
able to take for granted a broader knowledge and experience of Beijing opera on the part of his Chinese-speaking, performance-oriented student than may be available to the typical reader of this book.

Furthermore, although Wichmann builds up a fascinating picture of the ‘sound world’ within which Beijing opera performances occur, it is difficult to link this world to the historical, political, social or personal worlds of the Chinese operatic performers and listeners whom Wichmann met and studied with. To my mind, her concentration on traditional tales as opposed to newly-written historical stories, her avoidance of historical or social issues or of locating the terms of her study more specifically in Nanjing in the late 1970s - early 1980s and her failure to engage more meaningfully with the research of other contemporary Chinese drama scholars detract from the overall theoretical weight of the book. This may not worry Wichmann, she sets out to present a descriptive account of her chosen material and does so effectively, but it may disappoint the ethnomusicologist, anthropologist or sinologist looking for a deeper analysis of exactly how the Beijing opera cultural system fits into contemporary Chinese life. And every well-written book will tend to raise more questions than it can answer. Ultimately, Listening to Theatre: The Aural Dimension of Beijing Opera is a good book, with much to recommend it, both to the specialist and general reader.

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(University of Durham)

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NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

The editors of the CHIME Journal encourage all readers to submit news about their own research projects and fieldwork trips, announcements of meetings, notices of recent publications, abstracts of papers, theses and dissertations, and news about performance activities in the field of Chinese music. The editors reserve the right to edit contributions before publication. For the announcements below, we gratefully acknowledge the assistance of: Barred ter Haar (BH), Bernard Kleinkamp (BK), Chen Qiaoming (CQ), Chen Yi (CY), Francois Picard (FP), Hans van Dijk (HVd), Joanna Lee (JL), Julian Yu (JY), Li Shuqin (LS), Lawrence Witzieben (LW), Mamix Wells (MW), Nicholas Wheeler (NW), Peter Crowe (PC), Peter Mieic (PM), Qin Daping (QD), Rachel Harris (RH), Steve Jones (SJ), Sabine Trebinjac (ST), Su Zheng (SZ), Tan Hwee San (THS), Tatjana Vinogradova (TV), Wieland Eggermont (WE), Wang Hong (WH), Yang Mu (YM). These announcements were compiled by Antoinet Schimmelpennink (AS) and Frank Kouwenhoven (FK).

RESEARCH PROJECTS

RITMO
Researchers in France have started a study group on rhythm and tempo in oriental music. It is called RITMO (Recherches sur l’Image du Temps dans les Musiques Orientales) and is led by Professor Jean During. Two sinologists participate in this group; they are Sabine Trebinjac and Lucie Rault-Leyrat of Nanterre University. (ST)

CHINESE THEATRE & NIANGHUA
Tatjana Vinogradova graduated as a sinologist in 1984 from Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) State University, Oriental Faculty, Chair of Chinese Philology. Her current field of research is images of theatre in Chinese popular prints (nianghua). She is working on a doctoral thesis on this topic. Vinogradova previously published some twelve articles in Russian journals concerning different aspects of nianghua. For more information, contact her at: Library Institute of Oriental Studies (St. Petersburg Branch), Dvortsovaya nab.-18, St. Petersburg, Russia. (TV)

CHINESE MUSIC MATERIALS ARCHIVES
The Chinese Music Materials Archives (Zhongguo yinyue ziliao guan) were officially established at the Chinese Conservatory in Beijing on 21 July 1992. The archives aim at collecting and preserving Chinese music materials and making them publicly available to interested researchers. The opening ceremony of the Archives was held during the 7th annual conference of the Society of Chinese Traditional Music (Zhongguo chuantong yinyue xuehui). Scholars from mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Canada, Germany and Japan attended the ceremony. The Archives hope to assemble many more writings, recordings and audio-visual materials in the near future and will actively conduct field-registrations of traditional music culture. (Source: Renmin yinyue 1992/9, p.38).

RITUAL THEATRE
Researchers in Taiwan, Europe and the United States have started a project under the auspices of the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation (Taiwan) for research on ritual theatre in China. Participating scholars include Wang Ch’iu-Kuei (Tsing-Hua University, Hsin-chu), Jacques Pimpanneau (Kwoon-On Museum, Paris), David Holm (Macquarie University, Sydney) and Kenneth Dean (McGill University, Montreal). The project will focus on the collecting of ritual texts, photo and video materials of ritual theatre performances in China. A substantial archive of materials on ritual theatre in Taiwan has already been founded at National Tsing-hua University in Taiwan. For more information, contact Professor Wang Ch’iu-Kuei, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, National Tsing-Hua University, Hsinq-chu, Taiwan 30043, ROC Taiwan. (see also our report on the 25th Chinopera meeting, below).

INSTITUTIONS

THE ASIAN CULTURAL COUNCIL
The Asian Cultural Council offers a variety of fellowships for research and travel in Asia. Asian Art and Religion Fellowships are awarded to American scholars, specialists and artists for research and projects in Asia involving the inter-disciplinary analysis of Asian arts and religious traditions. The Humanities Fellowships Program assists American scholars, doctoral students, and specialists in the humanities to undertake research, training, and study in Asia in the following fields: anthropology; conservation; museumology; and the theory, history, and criticism of architecture, art, dance, design, film, music, photography, and theater.
The Japan-United States Arts Program provides grants to American artists, scholars, and specialists in the visual and performing arts for projects in Japan that encourage the understanding of Japanese art and culture and allows their Japanese counterparts to visit the United States for similar purposes. Application deadlines are February 1 and
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August 1. Contact the Asian Cultural Council, 1290 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10104. (Source: SEM newsletter).

CHINESE STUDIES AT SOAS
A Centre for Chinese Studies was founded last year at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. It is headed by Dr. Elisabeth Croll. The Centre covers both classical and modern Chinese studies across all disciplines. Regular activities include lunchtime seminars at which SOAS staff and postgraduate students discuss their current work.

The SOAS archives recently acquired the China Inland Mission archives, which are of interest to scholars in the field of missionary and colonial history.

For more information, contact SOAS archivist Rosemary Seton at SOAS in London. (Source: Great Britain-China Newsletter, No.51, Winter 1992-93.)

EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR CHINA
Following publication last year of a Directory of British Organizations with a China Interest, the Great Britain-China Centre in London is now preparing a supplement introducing key organizations across Europe that deal with China. A Euro-China Trade Association already exists and it is hoped that with publication of a guide to the main educational, cultural and professional organizations and associations, co-operation in other fields will also be easier. With the assistance of a grant from the Ford Foundation Miss Nicola MacBean of the Great Britain-China Centre visited a number of European capitals this spring for discussions with colleagues involved with academic, cultural and commercial links with China. A draft version of the guide is currently in preparation. (FK)

CHIANG CHING-KUO FOUNDATION
The Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange supports institutional enhancement, research grants, conferences and subsidies for publication. The specific programs available in North America, Europe and the Pacific region, and Taiwan / Hong Kong are slightly different. In 1992, the application process began June 1 and concluded November 1. Check 1993 deadlines.


In Europe, the Pacific and Taiwan / Hong Kong contact: Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange, 14F/A 106 Hoping East Road, Sec. II, Taipei, Taiwan 10636, Republic of China. Tel: 02-737-7292; fax: 02-737-7294.

Fellowships for Ph.D. dissertation research and for post-doctoral research in the USA, Canada, and Europe are administered locally.

In the USA contact: the American Council of Learned Societies, Chiang Ching-Kuo Fellowship Program, 228 East 45th Street, New York, NY 10017-3398, USA. Tel: 212-687-1505; fax: 212-949-8058.

In Canada contact: Secretary-Treasurer, Canadian Asian Studies Association, Centre for Asian Studies, McGill University, 3434 McTavish Street, Montreal, Quebec E3A IX9, Canada. Tel: 514-398-8129; fax: 514-398-1882.

In Europe contact: Chiang Ching-Kuo Fellowship Program, The Sinological Institute, University of Leiden, P.O. Box 9515, 2300 RA Leiden, the Netherlands. Tel: #31-71.272217; fax: #31-71.272603. (Source: SEM Newsletter).

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN HONG KONG
The Chinese University of Hong Kong has recently instituted a Ph.D. program in ethnomusicology. M.Phil. degrees in ethnomusicology and historical musicology and Ph.D.s in composition and music theory are also offered. Full-time graduate students are normally expected to have reading fluency in Chinese and English. Visiting research students working on graduate degrees in the United States or elsewhere are also welcome. The Chinese University is scenically located overlooking Tolo Harbour in the New Territories, and facilities include the Chinese Music Archive and the New Asia Yale-In-China Language Centre.

Current ethnomusicology faculty members are Chan Sau-yon (Chinese opera), Tsao Pen-yeh (ritual music and narrative song) and J. Lawrence Witzelben (instrumental music). Yu Siu-wah, a specialist in Chinese music history and arhu performance, will join the faculty in the spring of 1993. The department also includes more than twenty part-time teachers of Chinese musical instruments and opera. Recent scholars visiting the faculty have included Qiao Jiangzhong from the Music Research Institute in Beijing. The University and Music Department have been actively involved in sponsoring a variety of international conferences and colloquiaums, including conferences on Taoist Music and Ritual, Nuo (exorcistic) Theatre and Culture, and the 31st World Conference of the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM). Hong Kong offers an unparalleled variety of Chinese musical traditions, both indigenous and transplanted, and substantial Indian and Filipino communities provide other opportunities for research. The city is also conveniently located for access to mainland China, Taiwan, and East and Southeast Asia.

The graduate program of the Music Department of the Chinese University of Hong Kong currently has
GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN TAIWAN

Three universities in Taiwan currently offer graduate programs in musicology or ethnomusicology. They are the National Taiwan Normal University, the Cultural University, and the National Institute of the Arts. In addition, Jiaotung University has a graduate program in music theory and composition within the Graduate Institute of Applied Arts, and Tonghai University just started its graduate program in piano performance and conducting this semester. Several universities are also preparing to start their graduate programs next year, namely, Zhongyang University and Soochow (Tongwu) University. (Source: ACMR Newsletter Vol. 6, No. 1, Winter 1993)

SOCIETY FOR MUSIC ANALYSIS

The Society for Music Analysis was inaugurated in Britain on 1 January, 1992, by Jonathan Dunby (Chairman), James Ellis (Vice-Chairman), Deborah Roberts (Secretary) and Catherine Dale (Treasurer). It aims to provide a focus for analytical activity and to raise the profile of the discipline within, and beyond the music profession. It is open to all interested parties and intends to gain a wide membership from musicians in the UK and abroad. The Society publishes a quarterly Newsletter, edited by James Ellis. Membership of the Society includes free receipt of this Newsletter, as well as discounts on various subscriptions of European and American music journals, consultation on and reduced fees of conferences, Seminar days and TAGS (Theory and Analysis Graduate Student) days. Membership fees: £25 (Ordinary) or £15 (Student). For more information, contact: Dr D. Roberts, Secretary SMA, c/o University of Reading, Department of Music, 35 Upper Redlands Road, Reading RG1 5JE, England UK. (AS)

JAAP KUNST FOUNDATION

Scholars in the field of Indonesian culture and musicology in Holland recently established the Jaap Kunst Foundation, named after the distinguished Dutch ethnomusicologist. The foundation aims at encouraging ethnomusicological research with respect to areas directly related to (the work of) Jaap Kunst, or belonging to the scientific tradition founded by Jaap Kunst as an ethnomusicologist. It will stimulate ethnomusicological work by support for publications, and by organizing scientific symposia in which the work and/or the methodology of Jaap Kunst are discussed. A Jaap Kunst Award has been established which will be awarded at regular intervals to an outstanding (ethno)musicologist. The award consists of a bronze medal, a prize of – at present – 5000 Dutch gilders, as well as the occupation of the Jaap Kunst Visiting Chair at the University of Amsterdam for a three-month (trimester) period. This period will in part be supported financially. For this award the Governing Board will ask the advice of an international board of experts (Advisory Committee). The Advisory Committee consists of the following members: Prof. Dr. Mantle Hood (USA), Prof. Dr. Dieter Christansen (USA), Prof. Dr. Franz Födermayr (Austria), Prof. Roberto Leydi (Italy), Dr. Palint Sárosi (Hungary) and Prof. Dr. Erich Stockmann (Germany). The Award will be awarded for the first time in 1995. The Governing Board of the Foundation consists of: Prof. Dr. Rembrandt F. Woltport (chairman), Dr. Wim van Zanten (secretary), Ir. Egbert D. Kunst (treasurer), Mrs. Sjouke M.L. Bringrewe-Kunst, Dr. Egbert D. Kunst and Dr. Ger D. van Wegen. Prof. Dr. Mantle Hood is Honorary chairman. Address of the Foundation: Stichting Jaap Kunst, Aalsmeerder Veerhuis, Sloterkade 21, 1068 HE Amsterdam, the Netherlands. (AS)
hanges precariously on a steep slope where a peasant has found a patch of land that will still bear crops. The place is a powerful testament to the ingenuity of the human race against the odds, but life there is hard. The peasant girls have rosy red cheeks, not blooming health but chilblains caused by extremes of temperature. The people there have an innocence and courtesy not found in the cities. "Are you a foreigner?" I was asked many times, and amid the shy stares there was no suggestion of hostility or resentment.

The festival had the blessing of the local authorities and was being promoted as an opportunity to encourage free enterprise. A huge market was set up, and hundreds of food stalls. The local press was in evidence and special events had been organized for their benefit. I have heard of local people feeling resentful at this kind of hijacking of their traditional gatherings, but my impression here was that the traditional festival was going on side by side with the official additions, and not too much affected by them.

Armed with a tape recorder I went in search of musicians. My first singer, encountered on the road, sang me a special song amidst peals of laughter, 'Welcome the foreign lady to Lianhuashan'. My problems as a beginner in the ethnomusicology world started with the language. My Chinese is serviceable but the peasants (both Han Chinese and the Muslim Hui minority) had limited Mandarin, heavily accented and lapsing into dialect. Not only I but also some Beijingers there could hardly understand a word. The locals weren't too impressed by my accent either. 'Please tell us the words of the song' was met with a sing-song recitation — completely unintelligible to me. Questions like, 'Where is this song from?' or 'Who sings it?' were met with a different response from each person. These perhaps rather irrelevant questions had never occurred to them, and people would often answer at random to keep us happy.

The local police were less impressed with their foreign guest when we started bringing dirty peasants into our nice clean hotel for recording. 'Why don't you want them in?' Because there are foreigners staying here' was the perplexing response — the foreigner in question was me. Once we had the musicians in our room and had recorded some excellent songs, we encountered the problem of how to repay them. Money? Or would a gift be more appropriate? One less than successful gift was a bottle of local wine. The singers proved receptive, opened the bottles and were soon enjoying themselves so much drunkenly belting out their songs, that we had difficulty in persuading them to leave.

We had some confusion over the instruments. The most common was the banghu — a 2-stringed, bowed instrument like the erhu. The first two that we came across had their strings tuned a minor 6th apart. Was this a local peculiarity? It sounded pretty peculiar. A third musician tuned to a perfect fifth (and a better player) decided that the other two were not as they should be — apparently they just did not have the ear to tune the instruments to a perfect fifth. (Is this an arguable point?)

In the evenings people gathered in large groups around popular singers. There were many Hui men at the festival but the most popular singers tended to be Han. The Hui singers had a slightly different tune, and no Hui women sang. The prevalent tune amongst the Han singers was the Lianhuashan lling. People would sing in the form of question and response, man versus woman, usually several people joining in. The crowd would press in close to catch the words and laugh appreciatively. Originally a form of love song, at the festival the subject was more ribald jokes and cheerful exchange of insults.

Modemization had come to Lianhuashan. The noodle stalls were all armed with cassette players. Fortunately for the lovers of tradition, they were belting out, not Madonna, but the Lianhuashan lling (the local tune).

One evening (the singing only really got going after dusk), I found a particularly big crowd, watching what appeared to be dancing. A real spontaneous folk dance! I pressed closer only to find that the music was Western Rock. Disco had come to Lianhuashan. Four or five youths were bobbing and jerking awkwardly and the crowd was staring with open-mouthed fascination. The modern world! A close shave for the hopeful ethnomusicologist.

On the last night of the festival the Lianhuashan lling was ringing out all over the mountain. The tune is made for mountains. High-pitched, strained voice, almost falsetto for the men, and a soaring melody. Inside the temple several hundred people were crammed together, 'accompanying the Buddha' in an all-night vigil. Religion is strong here (the Han majority follow mainly the Tibetan form of Buddhism) in spite of exhortations like 'Crush feudal superstition and strive for a socialist future' painted all over the village walls.

On our way down the mountain we were pulled up by a local custom in the form of a rope stretched across our path by the village children. Price of passage was a song, and who better to have sing than the foreigner. After the third stop this was getting a bit wearisome, but fortunately for me, we discovered that bribery and corruption had come to Gansu and the children on the rope proved a lot more amenable to a handful of sunflower seeds than the strains of Greensleeves. A shame, really, but than Greensleeves sounded very odd rolling over those bare Gansu hills. (RH)

CHRISTIAN HYMNS IN GANSU

Joanna Lee, who graduated from Columbia University, New York in 1993 with a PhD in musicology, recently accompanied two colleagues on an intrigu-
ing field work trip through Gansu Province in 1992. Here are brief excerpts from two letters to CHIME in which she describes the object of study (Christian hymns) and some of her field experiences.

"I have two American friends who are rather prominent folk musicians, Robert Stewart Jamieson and his wife Gloria. In 1987, they took a research trip to China, funded by the Durfee Foundation. They asked to be sent there because Jamieson was born in Lanzhou (Gansu), in 1922. His maternal grandfather, William Wallace Simpson (1859-1961), from Tennessee, was sent by the China Inland Mission (aka Christian and Missionary Alliance) to rural southern Gansu in 1892. Simpson took with him his banjo, his music, and his missionary zeal. Jamieson’s parents lived and worked in that area spreading the gospel. Grandfather Simpson left China in 1949, at the eve of the Communist takeover, leaving everything behind (including the banjo, which is now in a small museum in southern Gansu).

The trip in 1987 was a success. Not only did Jamieson and his wife locate many Christian groups which were still intact and active (it was amazing that after decades of persecution, these groups still kept their faith), but they also recorded some of their hymns. My musical interest in this project came about when I heard the field recordings. The Christians were singing in the style of an American folk/religious tradition — shape note hymnody — as practices in the American South (and has since almost died out), no doubt a legacy left by Simpson.

The Durfee Foundation sent the Jamiesons back to China in September-October 1992, to conduct more of this research. The Jamiesons took me and a historian from Yale University to double as researchers and translators. We were keen to unearth more facets of the Simpson legacy in that area. At present, I am transcribing the entire hymn repertory which I recorded, more than 120 hymns. The Christians rely on a 1923 hymnal (in Chinese, without any musical notation) which contains texts to 387 hymns. However, since the music was orally transmitted, what they knew now is but a mere one-third of the repertoire. However, even these 100+ hymns are already representative of a ‘Christian’ tradition in southern Gansu: the repertoire is an incredible mixture of Anglo-American standard hymns, shape note hymns of the American south, hymns probably composed by Simpson himself, Swedish hymns (Simpson’s first wife was Swedish), Chinese pentatonic melodies, American secular melodies (e.g. Swanee River, Go tell Aunt Rhody, The Girl I left behind me), and ‘spirituals’ composed by the Christians themselves. We also attended a Sunday service, in which they sang Psalms — apparently a tradition that died out in Tennessee in the first decades of this century. I made field recordings and videotaped highlights of this trip, including the above-mentioned Sunday service.”

"Gansu 1992: What a trip! First of all, the only way to get in (without inviting trouble) is to be sent in by an institution (Gansu is still an unopened area). There was no other way to get there than to arrange the trip through CITS (and pay exorbitant prices). Only CITS can officially arrange special entry permits into unopened areas. We were very lucky to have our own guide and car (plus driver), and in Lintan and Hezuo county towns, we just ate wherever we were. The poverty of these areas really moved me, but as Stewart Jamieson told me, when they visited in 1987, there was no electricity in that entire area. When we got there last October, not only was there electricity, but there were video cinemas, and even a karaoke! I was shocked to see the karaoke there, but rural outback China is really catching up with the world, although it is still way behind coastal Chinese cities, especially those in the south. Gansu is quite really beautiful. We travelled from Lanzhou to Labrang (Xiahe), where a major lamasery is situated, and then entered the ‘Southern Gansu Tibetan Autonomous Region’, which is our ‘field’ area. This region is mainly inhabited by Muslims, Tibetans, and Chinese (in descending order). A rich mixture of cultures, colours, foods, and music (of course). We were escorted by the county ‘bigwigs’ wherever we went, but no one was interfering with our data collection. Southern Gansu Tibetan Autonomous Region is also developing its tourist business, so the head of the tourist bureau also treated us like VIPs.”

Joanna Lee will be giving a report on her findings at the forthcoming CHIME Conference at SOAS in 1994. (JJAS)

RESEARCH ON DUNHUANG PIPA SCORES

Marnix Wells is a researcher of ancient Chinese music. He graduated in (mostly classical) Chinese at Oxford in 1967 and continued his studies on a free-lance basis in Taiwan Japan and Korea, where he earned his living in various shipping related businesses. In the Far East, he learned to play pipa, qin and suona, and took up tafü guan. His current main focus of research is rhythmic structure in ancient and traditional Chinese music, which he views as a rather neglected and underrated field of study. He received much encouragement and guidance from Prof. Lee Hye-kui who has done work on Song music and lyrics preserved in Korea. Wells has published lengthy essays in the Korea Musico- logical Society Journal, and in Asian Music. Below, he briefly reports on some aspects of his own recent research and on his personal experiences during a Silk Road Music Conference which he attended in Xi’an last year.
The Xi'an Music Conservatory had always treated me cordially, ever since I first dropped by their gatehouse in May 1989. Last year I received an invitation from Deputy Director Mr. Lü Rirong to give a paper at the Xi'an Conservatory's International Silk Road Conference. I wrote on West River Moon, no. 13 of the 10th century Dunhuang *pipa* tablature. It seemed to provide a convenient test case in reconstructing this music, since lyrics to this title have a quite definitive structure whose outline has remained constant till modern times.

Hayashi Kenzo’s interpretation of the Dunhuang manuscript (p3930B) which follows the tradition of Japanese *Togaku* (Tang Music), was first translated and published in Chinese at Shanghai in 1954. Hayashi’s explanation of tuning and fret positions has met with general acceptance. The main problem with respect to the Dunhuang scores seems to lie in rhythmic interpretation. Namely: a) what are the relative time-values of the notes? b) what is the time signature? c) how many notes should be allowed per word? d) how many beats should be allowed per word?

Hayashi understood: a) time-values to be almost entirely constant; b) time-signatures to be mainly 6-beat measures (with some 8- and a few 4-beat and free-time); c) one-note-per-word (on the pattern of surviving Song dynasty lyrics with notes appended); and d) one-beat-per-word. He endeavoured to liven things up somewhat by allowing sweeps across the open strings at every note in the received performance style of ritualized *Gagaku* (famous for its ‘frozen’ tempo). Unfortunately one-word-per-note does not produce a snug fit with the melody, and only covers about half the score.

From the standpoint of the received Chinese tradition, particularly latterday lyric opera as exemplified by the highly melismatic *Kunqu*, Hayashi’s rhythms present a problem. 6-beat, or triple, time-signatures (i.e. regular bar divisions) are almost unknown in traditional scores. There is a distinct reluctance among modern Chinese to entertain the idea of notes with constant time-values, a fixed equation between verse-lines and musical measures, and above all on-note-per-word in anything other than deadly boring Confucian rites.

How to reconcile the conflicting demands of received tradition, the direct evidence of the tablature, and Japanese *Togaku*? Laurence Picken at Cambridge and his former students (Music from the Tang Court 1, 1981, at al.) continue to demonstrate the close connections between *Togaku* and the classic (8-9th century) *Tang* court.

*Togaku* scores show a preponderance of measures in time signatures of 4-, 6- and 8-beat with a melodic structure based on notes of constant time-values i.e. quarter notes. Picken concludes: ‘continuous melodic movement in notes of equal duration appears to be characteristic of this repertory’ (4, 1987 - 21).

There are exceptions: in the strings’ part quarter-note ‘broken octaves, or repeated notes (…) imply minims / half-notes from winds or voice’ (5, 1981 - 133). This exactly matches what we appear to see in the Dunhuang strings’ (*pipa*) scores.

In other words the *Togaku* support a) and b) of Hayashi’s reading of the Dunhuang time-values. As regards c) and d), they cannot shed direct light since *Togaku* scores, like those of Dunhuang, bear titles but no lyrics.

Two scholars from Shanghai have more recently come up with radically new, but mutually conflicting, solutions. Ye Dong (1981) accepts, for the most part a regular triple time signature (3/4) but rejects constant time-values per note and one-note-per-word. Interestingly, he tacitly accepts on-beat-per-word. Chen Yingshi (1988), his successor in the field, reflects any regular constant in time-value per note, time signature (he changes at almost every bar), notes or beats per word. His version is closer to received tradition in allowing words at the end of lines more time. However he avoids awkward notes by removing them from his vocal line and assigning them to the instrumental part only.

It seems to me acceptance of basically constant note-values and time signatures, as per Hayashi’s Dunhuang transcriptions and in harmony with Picken’s *Togaku* readings, does not compel us to accept Hayashi’s on-note or one-beat per word. There is nothing traditional about Ye’s one-beat per word (and disjunct note clusters) nor Chen’s elastic time-signatures. For the basic setting I propose we follow the received pattern of the lyric tradition as exemplified in the Nine Keys’ Great Completion (Yun Lu 1746). I hope to present my paper more fully in an article in Chime No. 7.

On completing my paper last September, I received a note saying that the conference had been changed to domestic but I was still welcome. Nothing to do but prepare a short transcript in Chinese. The conference was intimate and open in style. There was much discussion of the flat-li scale, characteristic of Shaxi, and its antiquity. An ethnic Mongol and Tibetan participated while Han scholars from Urumqi spoke on the links between *Tang* balletic canatas (*Daqū*) and the renowned *maqam* of the Doran *Uighurs*. A special *Maqam* Conference was held in Beijing in early November.

The first night we were treated to an enchanting performance in costume of *Chang’an Gugue* led by Professor Jiao Jie. This secular music with lyrical titles forms the *Tang* and *Song*, preserved by Buddhist and Daoist instrumental groups, is now written as ‘Ancient (not ‘Drum’) Music’. Strings and vocal parts have been restored on the basis of hints in scores and titles. The notational method resembles that practised in the Song though the oldest date recorded is from the 15th century. The group toured
6 European countries in 1991 but lack of funds for return freight compelled them to donate their instruments to their Spanish hosts. Some of the percussion pieces had still not been re-made.

One day after a tasty Conference lunch I was pacing the grounds, intoning West River Moon in anticipation of my presentation, I was startled by a half-stifled snatch of lark-like aria just behind. I turned sharply to find a barrel-chested lady, embracing a tub of laundry, with sealed lips and an inscrutable smile. I fumbled for my paper. Yes, but would I give her a day to prepare? Next day at siesta hour I visited Ms. Xue Hongping, my new prima donna friend, to record her sing my score with piano accompaniment. It seemed the most natural thing in the world, as if it had just popped out of a baroque song book. Only the concluding octave leaps elicited a slight protest. She acknowledged it more cantabile than Ye’s, and only slightly less than Chen’s (and Chen had removed the difficult endings from the vocal part).

This experience was topped only that night by Ms. Wang Welping of the Shanxi Song and Dance Theatre. After a performance of national Tang creations, Ms Wang, a pipa virtuoso in received style, expressed interest in my interpretation of West River Moon. She had played West River Moon after Ye’s transcription and pronounced it as one of her favorites. As Ms. Wang played my score with flowing fingers and subtle portamentos, Ms Li Mei, a researcher from Urumqi, spontaneously joined in the song. There seemed nothing wooden or monotonous about a structure built on a foundation of constant note-time-values.

Ms Li wrote of the experience in the Conference Bulletin No. 2: ‘Mr Welf’s transcription has similarities with Mr Ye’s but its rhythm is steady, allowing on more fully to apprehend the ancient style. It gives a performer room to express himself and exchange rich imagery. Above all the setting of the lyrics, whose meaning fits as if they were part of the original cycle, makes one thing of a magnificent mural.’ 

**NEWS**

**GUQIN EXCHANGE TAIWAN – CHINA**

A ‘Joint Concert of Guqin Sounds from the Two Shores’ was held July 11-12 and 15 in Shanghai and Beijing respectively. It was co-organized by the Centre of Chinese Guqin Friends in Beijing, the Hezhen qinishe from Taibei and the Jinyu qinishe from Shanghai. This was the first exchange between Taiwanese and mainland Chinese guqin players in more than 40 years. Established qin masters as well as new talents from both sides played a large number of pieces. The Folk Song Choir of the Chinese Musicians’ Association and singers from Beijing sung qin songs for solo and choir. In addition to this, a special ‘Yaji’ (‘Elegant gathering’ – an informal guqin performance session) was held on 16 July. (Source: Renmin yinyue 1992/9, p. 39).

**GARLAND ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WORLD MUSIC**

The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music, to be published by the Garland Publishing Co. (USA), is an ethnomusicological encyclopedia consisting of ten volumes of about 400,000 words each. The general editors are Timothy Rice and James Porter from the University of California at Los Angeles. The editors for the East Asia Volume are Yoshihiko Tokumaru of Ochanomizu University and Bei Yung of the University of Pittsburgh. The editors for China are Bei Yung (Pittsburgh) and J. Lawrence Witzleben of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The Chinese portion of the encyclopedia will contain about 175,000 words and includes contributions from 35 authors. It will probably be published in 1995. (LW)

**WANG YING-FEN TEACHING IN TAIWAN**

After getting her Ph.D form the University of Pittsburgh in April 1992, Ying-fen Wang is now teaching at the Graduate Institute of Art History of the National Taiwan University (NTU). Besides teaching, Wang is also helping NTU to plan its future music program / department. As a first step, she organized a lecture series on musicology, which took place at NTU on every Wednesday night from Oct 14 to Nov 25 1992, and was open to the NTU community as well as the general public. The series included seven talks given by four ethnomusicologists [Han Kuo-Huang, Rulan Chao Plan, Kyle Heide and David M.Y. Liang], one systematic musicologist (Wang Mei-chu, who received her Ph.D from the University of Hamburg and is teaching at Soochow University), one historical musicologist (Zeng Hanpei, who received his Ph.D from Universitàt Wien and is teaching at Zhongyang University), and one music theorist and composer (Wu Dinglian, who received his Ph.D from UCLA and is now teaching at Jiaotong University). (Source: ACMR NewsletterVol. 6, No. 1, Winter 1993)

**VISITING SCHOLARS IN TAIWAN**

Rulan Chao Plan spent six weeks as a guest-lecturer at Zhongyang University in Taiwan. Han Kuo-Huang is currently teaching at the National Institute of the Arts as a visiting professor for this academic year. In addition, he is offering a course on world music at National Taiwan University. David M.Y. Liang is teaching full-time at the Graduate Institute of Arts at Cultural University. Miao Jing, a folk song specialist from the Yinyue yanjiusuo (Music
Research Institute), Beijing, has been visiting Tai-
wan during December 1992 for lectures at the
National Taiwan Normal University and the National
Institute of the Arts. (Source: ACMR Newsletter Vol.
6, No. 1, Winter 1993)

MODERN ART EXHIBITION
Sixteen contemporary artists from the People's
Republic of China show a selection of their installa-
tions, paintings, drawings, sculptures and video art
in the Kunsthall in Rotterdam, Holland, from 14 May
to 15 July 1993. It is a presentation of independent
modern Chinese art from the 1980s to the early
1990s, the first of its kind in Europe. The artists are
in Europe by invitation of the Haus der Kulturen
der Welt in Berlin, where their works were on display
earlier this year. Various extra activities took place
in Berlin, including concerts of avant-garde music,
a film festival and a rock festival with the all-female
band Cobra, the band Tang Dynasty and various
other groups led by Cui Jian, Wang Yong and Zang
Tianshuo. In Rotterdam, too, a number of extra
activities will be organized, including poetry ses-
sions, lectures, films and concerts.

The rapid and astonishing development of an in-
dependent direction in the modern visual arts in China
is basically unknown in Europe. In the West, Chi-
inese art is still primarily associated with modernist
ink-wash paintings which are rather firmly rooted in
tradition. The production of such paintings is en-
couraged by government organizations and fea-
tures prominently in official cultural exchange pro-
grames.

From 1979 to 1990, the People’s Republic wit-
nessed a process of far-reaching social and cultural
liberalization. After the ‘New Spring Exhibition’ in
Beijing in February 1979 and a few other large cities
the same year, exhibitions were held which included
art that varied from post-impressionism, expres-
sionism, abstract art and academically painted nudes
to experimental art through the traditional medium –
the ink-wash technique. But already by October
1979, there was strong reaction from conservative
forces. Abstract art and nudes were criticized in the
official press for being Western and immoral, and
while there was no open attack on satirical art
directed at politics, the artists responsible were
banned from exhibiting.

On the outside, developments in modern art seemed
to have come to a halt, but in the studios and art
schools people were toiling to find their own direc-
tion and to create innovative works. Some of their
products suddenly rose to the fore during the so-called ‘Art Movement ’85’. Two art journals,
which were set up in 1995, acted as a stimulus for
this movement: Meishu Sichao (‘The Trend of Art
Thought’) in Wuhan, which was founded to promote
discussions and bring forth in-depth theoretical
analyses, and the Peking weekly Zhongguo Meishi
Bao (‘Fine Arts in China’) which had illustrations,
detailed commentaries and exhibition agendas.
These journals propagated pluralism and summoned
the Chinese art world to bear in mind that ‘A New Era
Demands New Art’.

Pluralism indeed dominated the art boom and writ-
ing about art in this period. From expressionist
outpourings to philologically inspired calligraphic
discoveries, from lyrical adoptions of folk art motifs
to vast projects such as a completely staged ar-
chaeological excavation on industrial wasteland –
Chinese artists discovered a whole new world of
expressive possibilities. There was an overgrowth
of attractive titles, and of group names heralding the
future with world-embracing and history-spanning
visions; this movement reached sublime heights in
which the work of art itself sometimes became a
matter of secondary importance.

Compared with the relatively small number of politi-
cally provocative works produced in 1979, 1985 saw
the advent of a great many artists and groups who
parodied social customs inside and outside the art
world, or who made absurd works commenting on
the recent past, notably the Cultural Revolution.
The style and shape of their works were usually derived
from Western art.

Artists all over the country participated in the 1989
pro-democracy demonstrations. In Beijing, people
marched under the banner of the ‘Fine Arts in China’
weekly (Zhongguo meishi bao), and the ‘no U-turn’
traffic sign which was the symbol of the ‘China-Avant-
garde’ exhibition held in February that year. For
independent art circles, the ‘China–Avant-garde’
exhibition – with some 300 works, providing an
overview of the Art Groups Movement of 1985–1987
– formed a tremendous victory over the official art
world.

After the massacre, innovative Chinese artists ei-
ther moved abroad or retired from the public arena,
continuing work in the confinement of their studios.
There were no art exhibitions for nearly two years.
The conservative press launched large-scale at-
tacks on the 1985 Art Groups Movement, while
artists cautiously maintained a low profile. But for-
mal criticism began to abate by the middle of 1991;
and by the end of that year, art magazines were
again allowing themselves more latitude.

In July 1991, sixteen artists between 26 and 31
years of age displayed works showing various kinds
of realism in the Beijing History Museum, under the
title Xin shengdai huazhan (Exhibition of the New
Generation). This and some other exhibitions fo-
cused on the kind of realistic works that became
typical of the post-1989 period: drawings and pain-
tings in this that reveal – and sometimes caricature
– the reality of life in present-day China, often in
reaction to the idealized images of more official art.

In this respect, they are reminiscent of the earlier realist works of 1980–81. In addition to the revival of realism, there are also some new developments, like works of art caricaturing official political propaganda and paintings combining 'Cultural Revolution' propaganda with commercial advertisements. The 1989 massacre has — for the time being, at least — put an end to the patriotic spirit which pervaded the artistic atmosphere of the 1980s. There is no longer the urge to create a 'Chinese modern art' which can help restore the country's national self-confidence. Instead, by concentrating on and reacting to their changing cultural environment, artists contribute to the realization of a 'modern Chinese art'.

There have been incidental efforts to show the work of Chinese avant-garde artists or art groups in Europe, as in the project Périphènes South France 1991. But so far, there has been no comprehensive attempt to show the various developments of modern independent Chinese visual arts together and to view them in a broader cultural context. The 'Haus der Kulturen der Welt' in Berlin has accepted that challenge, and has organized a travelling exhibition which can be seen in the Kunsthall in Rotterdam (15 May to 16 July), thereafter in Oxford (mid-July to end of August) and in Odense in Denmark (from September onwards).

While it remains impossible to show the full range of artistic work done in the People's Republic of China, the sixteen Chinese artists participating in this exhibition offer a broad array of current styles and directions in independent art. The focus is mainly on Chinese artists still living in the People's Republic (twelve participants). Half of them represent the generation of artists who created the first peak of modern art in China in the mid-1980s. The other half are a younger generation which went public after the caesura of 1991. They differ essentially from the former group in that they carried the development of visual arts in new directions. The exhibition in Rotterdam includes paintings, installations, videos and photos, and will be supplemented by original documents, photos and information panels concerning the ten turbulent years 1979–1989. The catalogue of the exhibition (available in a Chinese–English version) provides short biographies of about 45 more male/female artists together with examples of their work, as well as essays on modern literature, film, music and theatre in China. For more information, contact the Kunsthall Rotterdam, Westzeedijk 341, 3001 KB Rotterdam, tel. (0)10 — 440.03.00. For elaborate information about contemporary Chinese art, see: Hans van Dijk — 'Painting in China After the Cultural Revolution: Style Developments and Theoretical Debates.' Part I: 1979–1985, in: China Information, Vol. VI, No. 3 (Winter 1991–92), pp. 25–43; Part II: 1985–1991, in: China Information, Vol. VI, No.4 (Spring 1992), pp. 118. (HVD)
JIN'GE (FOLK SONGS)
The Jin'ge Yishu Yanjiu Hu (Research Society for Jin’ge 錦歌 研究会) held its first conference in Zhangzhou, Fujian Province, on Sept. 8, 1992. Eight papers were submitted. The discussions on the conference were basically concerned with the following three issues: 1) Terminology; some state that the artistic form under discussion should be called gezaiyi, while others prefer jin’ge. Nowadays, those places preferring jin’ge include Zhangzhou City and the surrounding counties. Xiamen and Taiwan favour the name gua (gezai) for the reason that gua embraces the meaning of shan’ge and xiaodiao (different types of folk songs). It is formed by absorbing various shan’ger and xiaodiao tunes. 2) Whether siguian preceded jin’ge or vice versa, one view is that the social status of nanyin improved in Fujian during the Qing dynasty. The jin’ge musicians also performed nanyin. They started to use instruments which had been used for accompanying shangsi-guan, i.e. pipa, dongyang, erxian and sanxian in jin’ge accompaniment in stead of the yueqin. This view represents the idea that siguian preceded jin’ge. Another view, that jin’ge preceded siguian, implies that the siguian were original accompanying instruments in jin’ge. 3) Gezaiyi – the course of the formation of the xiangqiu. A more generally agreed view is that the forebear of the Fujianese xiangqiu is gezaiyi which was integrated and developed in Taiwan from such Fujianese folk arts as jin’ge, caicha and chegu. Another view is that gezaiyi originated from niange, a genre of folk narrative singing where the singer accompanies him or herself while telling stories. At the beginning of this century, some singers were also costumed, thus originating jin’ge. (Source: ACMR Newsletter Vol. 6, No. 1, Winter 1993)

WIND INSTRUMENTS
A conference on Chinese Wind Instruments (Guanyue xueshu yantaihui) was held at the tenth anniversary of the Folk Wind Instruments Research Society of the Chinese Musicians' Association in Beijing September 10-12, 1992. Some 100 specialists attended the meeting, and nine papers were read concerning the history, performance practice and on the research of special forms of folk performance. They included: 'Some Questions Concerning the History of the Chinese xiao and di (vertical and horizontal bamboo flute)' by Lin Keren; 'Multiform Performance of the Chinese Bamboo flute' by Liu Zhengu; 'On Drum Music from Liaoning Province, Northeast China' by Yu Haixu; 'Some Understanding of the Development of Wind Instruments of the National Minorities' by Ni Zhenhong; 'On the Development of the pien in Ensembles' by Yu Dunanqi; 'A Preliminary Discussion on the Relation between Suona Performance and Qigong' by Zhang Ning; 'The Oral Techniques of Sheng Playing and the Abdominal Vibrato' by Wang Bingyi. For more information, contact The Chinese Musicians' Association, Chaoyang daijie 203, Beijing, China. (WH)

PROGRAMS IN MUSICOLOGY
The First National Conference on Programs in Musicology, organized by the Central Conservatory of Music, the Research Institute of Music, the Chinese Academy of Arts and three other institutions, was held in Pinggu, Beijing, 21-23 September 1992. The participants were scholars from many parts of China representing different conservatories and music research institutes nation-wide. More than 20 papers and discussion topics were presented at the Conference, on subjects covering an historical review of the development of programs in musicology (including ethnomusicology) in China, its future direction, the goals and scope of the discipline, the curriculum, and teaching methodologies. Su Zheng of Wesleyan University, USA, was the only special guest from abroad, and was invited to deliver a three-hour keynote talk on 'Musicology and Ethnomusicology in America: Education and the New Trends'. (SZ)

37TH SEM (SEATTLE)
The 37th annual meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology was held at the Hyatt Regency Bellevue Hotel in Seattle, Washington, October 22-25, 1992. The following papers on Chinese music were presented: Joseph S.C. Lam (Univ. of California, Santa Barbara) - 'Reconstructing a Reconstruction: Confucian Ritual Music in Qufu, China, 1900'; Li Guangming (UCLA) - 'Beyond Onomatopoeia, The Case of the Shuq Jing of Beijing Opera'; Jun Jingu (Osaka Univ.) - 'Formation of Text and Tune in Performance in a Narrative Tradition of Rural Northern China'; Francesca Rebollo-Soroll (Univ. of California, Berkeley) - 'Music for the Oral Literature: The Case of the T'ianjin Shidiao and the Expression of Urban Identity'; Valerie Samson (UCLA) - 'Continuity and Transformation in San Francisco's Cantonese Opera Clubs: 50 Years of Hoy Fung (1943-1993)'; Tak-wan Pak (Univ. of Pittsburgh) - 'How Shall We Praise Our Lord in a Foreign Land? Music of a Chinese Christian Church in the United States'; Daniel Ferguson (Univ. of California, Davis) - 'The Shandong Highwayman: Mechanisms of Inclusion and Resistance and the Predication of Cantonese Identity Through Cantonese Opera'; Mercedes Dujuanco (Univ. of Washington) - 'Traditional Music in a Changing Chinese Political Economy: The Case of the Chaozhou Xian Shi Yue String Ensemble Music Tradition in South China'; Yang Mu (Monash Univ., Melbourne) - 'Academic Ignorance or Political Taboo? Some Issues in China's Study of Its Folk Song Culture'; Jimin Zhou (Univ. of Maryland, Baltimore County)
Muqam festival in Beijing, Nov. '92; the two players on the right hand side are from Turfan. The *satar, suona* and *nage-la* drums are the basis of this ensemble. The man sitting in the middle is a conference delegate from South Korea. Nicholas Wheeler is sitting behind him.

- 'The Cross-Pacific Contact and its Impact on the 'New Wave' Movement in China; Li Ping-Hui (Univ. of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras) - 'Internal Organization and the Function of Percussion Music: The Belguian Ensemble of Taiwan; Ying-Fai Tsai (Univ of Pittsburgh) - 'Heterophony in Cantonese Ensembles: A Study of the Relationship between Improvised Melodies and the Nature of Instruments'; Frederick Lau (California Polytechnic State Univ., San Luis Obispo) - 'Sources of Early Twentieth Century *Dizi* Music'. (Source: ACMR Newsletter Vol. 6, No. 1, Winter 1993)

**MUQAM FESTIVAL IN BEIJING**

In November 1992, Beijing hosted a Festival of Uighur Muqam in China, formally announced as *Zhongguo Weiwu'er Mukamu Xiile Huodong* ('Series of Activities Related to the Muqam of the Chinese Uighurs'). The programme featured a four-day international symposium, various concerts and an exhibition of Uighur musical instruments. Nicholas Wheeler, a research student of Chinese minority music currently at the Central Conservatory in Beijing, attended part of the festival performances and reports on them here.

The opening of the Festival was an official ceremony - which I did not attend - at the Great Hall of the People in the presence of various foreign ambassadors and a number of Chinese leaders including Li Tianying, a senior member of the State Council. It shows how seriously the Chinese government views the position of the Uighurs in the fabric of Chinese society and culture.

The first event that I attended was a concert of 'symphonic *muqam*', presented by the 'Music Lovers' Orchestra of Xinjiang' featuring Uighur *muqam*-inspired orchestral compositions by Shao-
Uighur instruments and the orchestra, or purely orchestral arrangements or imitations of muqam tunes. Monodic and modal characteristics of muqam were blurred by the addition of harmonies. The pieces generally suffered as much rhythmically as they did melodically. The complex and energetic rhythms of muqam were emasculated in the symphonic arrangements. Tempi were rather slow, creating a rhythmic atmosphere that was distinctly downbeat. Much of the orchestra was overbearing and pompous, while clumsy, sectional writing weakened the melodic cohesion which is so characteristic of authentic muqam. There were some successful combinations of Western and Uighur instruments, for example the doubling of the dutar with a marimba, and the cello with an aijeke, but such successful moments were rare and brief. I believe that the monodic nature of muqam cannot easily be transferred to the vast canvas of a romantic symphony orchestra.

Later, I attended a performance by the Xinjiang Muqam Artistic Troupe of the complete Cübbiyyat suite from the classical On ikki Muqam. This concert was held in the Great Hall of the People and as entrance was by invitation only, the hall was less than half full. According to the programme notes, the version of Cübbiyyat Muqam performed was a combination of poetry, music, and dance based on the original Cübbiyyat Muqam structure. In transferring it to the stage, the aim was to preserve the folk characteristics and historical features of muqam while introducing the music and dance to a wider audience.

According to the programme, the dance component of muqam – being spontaneous and improvisatory in nature – has not been recorded in historical records in the same way as the music and texts have. For the purpose of presenting the Cübbiyyat Muqam on stage, various folk dances had been selected "based on the restrictions of the rhythm and the emotional content of the music and words". There was some marvellous dancing, but nevertheless, the final result was only partially satisfying. I could not understand the lyrics, but from a visual viewpoint the relationship between the various items was not apparent.

The biggest treat of the Festival was an exhibition of materials related to muqam, with a great many photos of exceptional quality, illustrating different styles of muqam performances from areas around Xinjiang, as well as some modern paintings of scenes from muqam performances. There was a large collection of Uighur instruments, including both ancient and modern versions, and a videotape showing live performances. It is regrettable that no reproductions of the photos or commercial recordings of muqam were available for purchase.

The most prominent feature of the exhibition was the presence of two groups of musicians from Xinjiang – mostly older men who represented the Dulan and Turfan styles of muqam. They were not members of the Xinjiang Muqam artistic troupe and were not "professional" musicians, but their raw-energetic and vibrant performances of selections from muqam suites were the most electrifying of any in the Festival. Some of the musicians got up and danced, inviting spectators to join in. It was a privilege to be able to hear the qalin, a large, trapezoidal litar, played by the Dulan group of musicians. The Dulan orchestra consisted of the qalin, the Dulan rawap, aijeke and daf. The Turfan orchestra consisted of a satir, suona and a set of nagela drums.

Public performances of muqam are rare in Beijing, and this Festival certainly enabled people to gain a lasting impression of this ancient and vibrant musical culture of the Uighurs.

I cannot report on the four-day symposium, because I only attended one day of discussions, and because most of the papers were presented in the Uighur language, with only brief summaries in Chinese which are not sufficient to make an intelligent discussion of the symposium possible. (NW)

RECENT ACMR MEETINGS
The Association for Chinese Music Research (ACMR) held its Thirteenth Semi-Annual Meeting on October 22, 1992 in conjunction with the 37th meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology in Seattle, USA. The following papers were read: J. Lawrence Witzleben (Chinese Univ. of Hong Kong) – Kejia (Hakka) Instrumental Music in Dabu: A Preliminary Report; Mercedes Dujunco (Univ. of Washington) – Variation in the Performance Practice of Chaozhou Xianshiyue; Jimin Zhou (Univ of Maryland at Baltimore County) – Musical Criticism in Recent Years; Bell Yung (Univ of Pittsburgh) – Chinese Music in the U.S.; Some Thoughts on a Collaborative Survey Project.

The Fourteenth Semi-Annual Meeting of the ACMR was held in Los Angeles on March 26, 1993, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies and the 25th meeting of Chinoerop. The following papers were read: Frederick Lau (Cal. Poly.) – ‘Minjian Music Activities in Chaozhou: Fieldwork Report’; Bell Yung (University of Pittsburgh) – ‘Progress Report on the Garland Encyclopedia of World Music, East Asia Volume’. The procedures of this meeting will be published in the forthcoming issue of the ACMR Newsletter.

SILK ROAD MUSIC, XI’AN
An Academic Meeting of Music of the Silk Road (Sichou zhi lu yinyue xueshu yanjiuhui) was held in Xi’an on October 31, with 30 participants. More than 20 papers were submitted at the meeting. There were presentations in two categories: 1) papers concerning the study of the interflow of musical
cultures on the Silk Road, such as 'The Position of Xixia in the Music Cultural Exchange Between the Central Plains (Zhongyuan) and the 'Tang Court' by Sun Xingqun, and 'Reasons for the Success of Music of the Western Regions (Xiyou) at the 'Tang Court' by Feng Wenchao; 2) papers concerning the study of existing music on the Silk Road through the archaeological perspective and the examination of wall-painting, notation, musical instruments and musical modes. These papers included 'Dance Music in Dunhuang and Silk Road Communication' by Xing Xiaohua (dance music in Dunhuang is the only well-preserved mukam), 'A Study of Morphological changes of the konghou (harps)' by Li Mei, and 'The Central, East and West Asian Influences on Malaysian Music' by Luo Yileng. (Source: ACMR Newsletter Vol. 5, No. 1, Winter 1993)

CHINESE MUSIC HISTORY
A Conference on Chinese Music History (Zhongguo yinyue shixue yantaohui) was held in Yangzhou on November 5, with over 60 participants. From the various discussions, two main issues emerged: 1) periods of Chinese music history: some scholars suggested using dynastic periods following Yang Yinlu's practice, while others suggested periodization according to stages in musical development like those used in the Li Ji's 'Chinese Music' in the music & dance volume of the Chinese encyclopedia Zhongguo dabi ke quanshu. Li divides Chinese music into 'the period dominated by dance music, the period of operas, and the period with various developments in different musical genres'; 2) recent music history: issues such as: how to present the vein of new music development and the synthesis of new and traditional music? The conference also touched upon the question whether the Opium War (1842) or the introduction of school songs (xuetang geyue) marked the beginning of the recent music period. (Source: ACMR Newsletter Vol. 6, No. 1, Winter 1993). The papers of the conference will soon be published. To stimulate mutual exchanges and to improve upon the accessibility of research materials, the Chinese Music History Research Society recently decided to establish a network of service centres in Shanghai, Beijing, Jinan, Lanzhou, Fuzhou and other places, to provide members of the Society and scholars from China and abroad with written and audio-visual materials concerning Chinese music history. The service centre in Shanghai is part of the Musicology Department (Yinyuexueyi) of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, 20 Fenyang Road, 200031 Shanghai, China. (Source: Zhongguo yinyue no.1, 1993, p.14)

EAST–WEST RELATIONS
The Editorial board of the Journal Yinyue Yanju (Music Research) recently organized a meeting on 'Relations Between East and West'. The meeting took place 24-25 November 1992 in Beijing and was chaired by the main editors of Yinyue yanju, Zhao Feng and Li Yadao. Major topics were the place of Chinese music in international culture and Western influences on Chinese music. Many participants agreed that music in China today is deeply influenced by European trends, and has not succeeded in establishing its own rules and systems. Some scholars remarked that transcriptions of Chinese traditional music should not totally depend on cipher notation, Western chromatism, Western bar divisions and rhythmic signatures – as is currently the case, for example in the large Anthologies of Chinese Folk Music. The need is felt for a separate notational system for those genres of music that rely on fluctuating pitches and where local language cannot be separated from the music. Other participants in the meeting pointed at recent positive developments in some minority regions and border areas in China, where music teaching materials are currently developed on the basis of local music traditions, for example in Quanzhou, Fujian Province, where middle school teaching materials already pay ample attention to nanyin, with very good results. During the 'East-West' meeting in Beijing, new denitions were developed for the ideas of 'learning and profiting from the west' (yang wei zhong yong) and 'nationalization' (minzu hua). (Source: Renmin yinyue, 1993 no.2, p.39).

SHENQI MIPU
A special exchange conference on the Shenqi mipu (a classical anthology of guqin music, 1425 AD) took place in Beijing from 25 November to 1 December 1992. It was jointly organized by the Chinese Musicians' Association, The Centre for Friends of Chinese Guqin Art and the Beijing Guqin Research Society. A special guest at this conference was the Hong Kong-based researcher John Thompson, who presented the results of his many years of study on the Shenqi mipu scores and exchanged views with colleagues from the mainland. During the conference, Thompson played his interpretation of several of the pieces in the collection. (Source: Renmin yinyue 1993 no.2, p.17). For more detailed information on Thompson's research project, see Chime No. 3, Spring 1992, pp. 116-117.

ORIENTAL MUSIC SOCIETY, SHANGHAI
The Third Conference of the Oriental Music Society (Dongfang Yinyue Xuehui) was held at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music in conjunction with the 65th Anniversary of the Conservatory, from 28 November to 1 December 1992. Most of the participants in the conference were local scholars. About thirty papers were presented. Speakers from abroad participating in the conference were Runlan Chao

Pian, who gave a special lecture on 'The Life and Work of Chao Yuan-ren', and Han Kuo-Huang, who presented a paper on 'The Foreign Elements in Malaysian and Indonesian Popular Music'. (Source: ACMR Newsletter Vol. 6, No. 1, Winter 1993)

During the conference, a special meeting was held in commemoration of professor Ye Dong (1930-1989), a respected scholar of the Shanghai Conservatory, who is best known for his work on deciphering the Dunhuang pipa scores and other ancient music scores. There were papers and speeches from scholars from China and abroad and from Ye Dong's wife Luo Zhongying, and a special booklet was presented: "Tansuo zhe zhi ge: jinian yinyuejia Ye Dong jiaoshou 1930-1989" ("The Song of the Explorer: In Memory of the Musicologist Professor Ye Dong"), containing 20 pages of essays tributed to Ye Dong and 16 pages of photographs. (Source: Renmin Yinyue 1993 no. 2, p.17). See also the section miscellaneous publications.

CHINESE MUSIC IDEOLOGY

A conference on Chinese Music Ideology in the 20th Century (Ershi shiji guoyue xishuang yantaohui) was held at Robert Black Teacher's College in Hong Kong, from 16 to 19 February 1993. It was sponsored by the Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong, and included a number of papers by scholars from the People's Republic of China. For information, contact Liu Ching-chih, Centre of Asian Studies, The University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam Road, Hong Kong. Tel: 859-2460; Fax: 559-5884. (Source: ACMR Newsletter Vol. 6, No. 1, Winter 1993)

25TH MEETING CHINOPERM & MEETING AAS

The 25th meeting of Chinoperl was held March 25-27 1993, in conjunction with the Annual Association for Asian Studies Meeting at the Ackerman Union, University of California, Los Angeles. The following papers were presented: Jingsong Chen (Univ. of California, Riverside) - 'Notes on Dramatic Theories of Aristotle and Li Yu'; Catherine Diamond (Univ. of Washington, Seattle) - 'Macbeth or not Macbeth: Peking Opera and Western Texts'; Shuchu Wei (Whitman College) - 'The Function of Repetition in Yuan Zaju: Xie Tianxiang and Dou E Yuan'; Peter Li (Rutgers Univ.) - 'Lao She and Chinese Folk Literature'; Mark Bender (Ohio State Univ.) - 'Name Adoption among Suzhou Pingtan Performers: Implications for Performance'; Wenwei Du (Swarthmore College) - 'Xiaolou: Comic Elements as Social Commentary in Suzhou Pinghua Storytelling'. A special demonstration and performance of Jingyun Daguer was given by Sun Shujun from the China National Broadcasting Storytelling Troupe, translated by Kate Stevens (Storyteller, Retired Associate Professor, Univ. of Toronto). The following video presentations were also included in the program: 'Performative Transmission in Popular Religion: the Jiajiang Troupe in Southern Taiwan Festivals' by Donald S. Sutton (Carnegie Mellon University); 'An Introduction to Chinese Ritual Masks', by Chiu Kui Wang (National Tsing Hua University), and 'Deception and Power in the Female and Male Roles in Dang Ma', by Alan Kagan (University of Minnesota).

On Saturday morning, Professor David Johnson of the Chinese Popular Culture Project and the History
Department at Berkeley organized a panel at the AAS entitled 'The Chinese Ritual / Drama Project: A Report on the First Year.' The panel was chaired by Prof. Wang Ch‘i-ku-iu (Tsing Hua Univ., Taiwan) and it contained the following contributions: Wang Ch‘i-ku-iu – ‘Overview of the Ritual / Drama Project’; David Holm (Macquarie Univ., Australia) – ‘The Death of T‘ao-hsi, Ritual Drama of East Central Shensi’; David Johnson – ‘New Light on the Ritual Drama of Southeastern Shensi’; Kenneth Dean (McGill Univ., Montreal) – ‘Northern Dipper Opera, Exorcistic Drama of Pu-tien, Fukien’; and Sau Y. Chan (Chinese Univ. of Hong Kong) – ‘Opera and Religious Practice in Kwang-tung Villages’. Some of the talks were illustrated with brief clips from videotapes.

RECTIFICATION
Unfortunately, a mistake was made in the announcements section in Chime No. 5: on p. 146, in our report ‘A Weekend of Qin Music’ in Chime 5, p.146, the name of the guqin association should read Jinyu qinshe instead of Yujin qinshe. (AS)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

R.I.P. HAYMAN
Thank you for the issue no.5 of CHIME. It is great work you are doing to present Chinese music in a clear and comprehensive manner. I appreciate the notice you included on my work under People and Projects (p.136). Unfortunately it provided an address of a company where I once worked but that no longer exists. No one can contact me at that address or phone number. Also, as I have two namesakes in music called Richard, the name I use in all publishing and with which I am known as a composer and writer is R.I.P. The address and spelling of my name below are correct: R.I.P. Hayman, Quaker Farm, 278 Quaker Road, Pomona New York 10970 USA. Phone/fax: 914-354-4005.

The book I am writing will be titled Music in Revolution and is to be published by the Greenwood Press. It is a sad topic in many ways, but I share hope in the courage and independence of Chinese composers now working in exile.

I am currently performing in New York with my 'Far Wind' ensemble of Chinese instruments and a new shadow puppet play Flaming Mountain by my wife Barbara Pollit. It is an adaption from "Journey to the West" in celebration of the Year of the Monkey which should still bring changes to China. Keep up the good work!

R.I.P. Hayman
New York, USA

A NEW GENERATION
I received the issue of Chime No. 5, with the article in which you wrote about my music. Thank you so much! Several Chinese newspapers and journals originally wanted to pay attention to my piece "18", but there was too much formal opposition in China, unfortunately.

I am currently in Beijing. My impression is that artists of my age and generation do not have the opportunities that Tan Dun and his colleagues had in the early 1980s. In my view, big changes have taken place in Chinese thinking and in social life over the past few years. As far as my own position is regarded, I believe that I am very different from Tan Dun's generation with respect to my artistic style, language and ideas. For one thing, I don't like the idea of my pieces being performed in a concert hall, I would prefer more informal surroundings. You wrote very well about my music in Chime. There is one minor mistake which I hope can be rectified. I was not – as your article states – a student of Yang Liqing. True enough, I learned a great deal from him, too, but formally my teacher was Ma Youzao. All the best,

Yu Qiang, Beijing

THE AGE OF PLURALISM (CHIME 5)
I have read your article 'The Age of Pluralism' about Chinese composers living abroad, with particular reference to the passage about my music. A propos of this I would like to raise several points:
1) About Great Ornamented Fuga Canonica: I believe that you derived your information about this piece from the spoken introduction to the BBC recording I sent you, and from Lawrence Whiffin's entry about me in Contemporary Composers. Both documents make it very clear that I am using Chinese concepts rather than Chinese raw material. The method of ornamentation that I referred to is a well-known and documented Chinese method (studied in secondary schools in China) of creating new music from pre-existing entire pieces. It differs from ornamentation used in other musical cultures in that it preserves intact the entire original piece, albeit in proportionally enlarged form. The ornamented version then becomes a basis for further ornamentation, and so the process continues indefinitely. The most distinctive and widely acknowledged example of this process is the Chinese folk melody Lao Liutan and its many generations of variants, which are derived in this manner and can be found in folk music even beyond the borders of China.

'Great Ornamented Fuga Canonica' does not, as you say, 'use a theme from Bach's Musical Offering', but is based on the entire piece every note of which is preserved. Similarly, 'In the Sunshine of Bach' does not 'treat a theme from "The Art of the Fugue"
in serialist fashion', but ornaments Bach's entire piece (not from 'The Art of the Fugue' but, in the first movement, a piece from the 'Forty-eight Preludes and Fugues' and, in the second movement, from the 'Musical Offering') in contrapuntal fashion. While it is true that improvisation / ornamentation is a universal principle for developing musical material throughout the world, different nationalities have different ways of going about this. The method of ornamentation exemplified by Lao Liuban, and which I used in my pieces, is widely acknowledged by Chinese musicologists and musicians to be distinctly Chinese; the BBC and Mr Whiffen did not mention it in detail simply because it was considered to be unnecessary in the context. Your comment that in 'Great Ornamented Fuga Canonica' there are no conspicuous borrowings from Chinese music' needs I think to be revised in the light of this.

2) This brings me to the question of Chinese idiom in music. In your article you say that "Chinese idiom" to me implies the use of typical Chinese intervals, typical Chinese ornaments or rhythms, but I can detect nothing of that in the "Fuga Canonica". However, I would like to suggest (and I believe that the overwhelming majority of Chinese musicians and musicologists would agree with me) that the elements you mention, together with instrumentation, embody Chinese idiom at its most superficial level. Deeper than this are Chinese structures and forms, style, colour and so on. And at a deeper level still there are such things as Chinese ways of thinking in music. When Chinese idiom is viewed from this deeper perspective, Mr Whiffen's comments do make sense.

3) You claim that "Great Ornamented Fuga Canonica" is neither a homage to Bach nor a tribute to Chinese tradition, and draw comparisons instead with Messiaen, Scriabin and Richard Strauss; and later you state that in 'Reclaimed Prefr', 'the final result is again closer in spirit to (late) Scriabin than to Bach'. I would be interested to hear the reasons why you think my music resembles the Western composers you mentioned.

4) In your last sentence you say that 'some of his best works do contain oriental elements, not so much their structure or melodic materials but in their delicate sense of colour and of dynamic contrast'. I have three comments to make here:
(a) You are right that in the pieces under discussion I do not use Chinese melodic materials, but as for structure, I would like to say that it is precisely the structure of my works that is most Chinese! This is because, as I mentioned earlier, in these compositions I make use of the method of ornamentation based on structural expansion exemplified by Lao Liuban. The significance of this method of ornamentation is more structural than melodic.
(b) You identify my 'sense of colour' as being Chinese, but this is only half true. The colour of Chinese music is linear (melodic) rather than multi-dimensionnal. The colour contrast contained in orchestral multidimensional texture is not a mainstream traditional Chinese musical element.
(c) Dynamic contrast is also not a mainstream Chinese musical element. In traditional Chinese music the emphasis is on melodic variation and timbre / colour contrast. Except in a few classical pieces such as 'Ambush on All Sides' for pipa, strong dynamic contrast is rare in traditional Chinese music.

Whilst in China, we composers were constrained by a communist leadership who were by and large musical amateurs, to write music which conformed to certain political directions, and which was audibly Chinese. Now that we have come to the West, we appreciate our increased freedom to experiment. I have taken this opportunity to delve into the more conceptual elements of Chinese music, and I hope that in my continuation of this search I may encourage listeners to think more deeply about what constitutes cultural identity in music, rather than pass instantaneous judgements based on superficial and purely audible criteria, as has been done so much in the past.

Julian Yu,
Victoria, Australia

(Author's reply:)

Dear Julian,

I am very sorry for a number of misunderstandings and wrong statements in my article, and I am happy that you have taken the trouble to set them right. But I do feel the need to respond to your remarks and to clarify my position. In recent years, many Chinese composers have developed strong ties with the West. They have adopted a clearly Western-influenced idiom; in music they write for Western instruments, work in Western surroundings and have their works mainly performed for Western audiences. In your case, I am convinced that this is a conscious choice, and judging from your music, an entirely responsible one. So why not accept the consequences? You are now being compared with Messiaen, Scriabin, Strauss and perhaps still other Western composers. These comparisons may be wrong and irrelevant from your perspective, but apparently they make sense to (some) Western ears. I have no intention of suggesting that you bluntly imitate Western composers. I am simply detecting incidental - perhaps accidental - similarities, which - in my personal view - underpin your strong inclination towards 20th century Western musical idioms.

Perhaps it seems as if I am denying the presence of a 'Chinese identity' in your music. I can understand
that you feel it that way, but it was certainly not my intention. Can your music be called Chinese music? Is it sufficiently tied up with Chinese culture as a whole to be regarded as an extension and development of it? As far as I am concerned, the answer should be 'yes' — simply because you are a Chinese composer, and because there are no other absolute criteria for 'Chineseness.' You, as a native artist, are defining for future audiences what 'Chineseness' in music — in your music — means.

But after reading Lawrence Whilin's statement about your 'characteristic Chinese idioms' I was led to believe that your music contained audible references to Chinese traditional music. The fact that I couldn't detect them in most of what I heard prompted my remark about the absence of 'conspicuous borrowings.' This should not be read as a criticism. But I do not think of audible criteria as 'superficial' when it comes to judging traditional influences in contemporary music.

Are melody and rhythm the embodiment of Chinese music only at its 'most superficial level'? In my experience, they are by far the most important elements to convey a musical message in any style or period of music. This should certainly hold true for Chinese traditional music, but also for the greater part of Chinese avant-garde music that can be heard in the world today. I am not suggesting that the presence of Chinese melodies and rhythms are a necessary objective, or that these will guarantee a 'Chinese way of thinking' in music. Hardly so. But I am unhappy to see their importance played down. If you take out Chinese melody, you do not just scratch the surface of traditional Chinese pieces — I would say you actually destroy their identity. Many of your colleagues, from Tan Dun to Chen Qigang, are interested in working with Chinese melodies, and they don't write 'superficial' music and are definitely not amateurs.

I totally agree with you that there is more to Chinese music than just the tunes and the other 'audible' aspects, but most of the elements that you yourself mention — form, style, colour — again have everything to do with what can be heard. I don't know what to make of the 'still deeper level' which you refer to — a Chinese way of thinking. I do not deny that a composer's intellectual culture is the fertile soil for his music, but his 'way of thinking' usually shines through — and can only be judged from — the musical idiom, the language in which he expresses himself.

Of course, you are free to reject Chinese tunes and sonorities and other audible aspects of Chinese traditional music in your own compositions. I do not argue that a Chinese composer should by all means resort to such elements in his search for an appropriate style. (I don't attach much importance to the idea of a 'national' style.) But I also find it difficult to accept your view that 'purely audible' elements are of secondary importance in Chinese traditional music — or in any music, for that matter.

You emphasize the use of 'ornamentation by augmentation of entire pieces'. I can easily share your fascination for this structural principle in — for example — Lao锡ban, and I readily accept the idea that you use it in your own music as a traditional Chinese concept. But from the popular teahouse piece to the vast symphonic canvas of your Fuga Canonica is still a rather big step. While the two pieces apparently share an identical structural idea, this does not incite me to recognize the basic structure of your music as derived from Chinese tradition. I am sure you will agree with me that structure is not a one-dimensional aspect. It is a complex and organic whole of principles of organization on all possible levels. A great many — if not most — of these structural levels in your own music strike me as overtly Western: the melodic phrasing, the pitch organization, the rhythmic organization, the counterpoint, the instrumental balance etc. I have pointed this out in my article, but once again: it is not a criticism. I am only critical about the contention that you use 'characteristic Chinese idioms', because this simplicity suggests that the average Chinese listener will be able to recognize your music as 'Chinese', which I think he won't. — Not yet, at least!

When I made your remark about your 'Chinese' sensibility for sound colour and dynamic contrast, I was thinking of specific examples, like the role of percussion in Chinese opera or the effects of guqin music in performance, where such elements can be very prominent. Your use of colour contrast and dynamics is apparently based on Western traditions, but your strong affinity for it may still result from your Chinese background. Admittedly, that was speculation on my part, and you may not agree.

Finally, and apart from all this, I would like to say that you have brought up a number of important points, and that I appreciate your readiness to comment on those aspects of cultural identity which are relevant to your own music. Every composer makes his own choice here. In my opinion, one of the most fascinating aspects of contemporary Asian music is indeed that so many different choices appear to be possible — and that so many bear fruit!

Frank Kouwenhoven

MEETINGS

RITUAL MUSIC, PITTSBURGH, MAY '93

The Music Department and the China Program of the University of Pittsburgh are co-sponsoring a conference on 'Music in Chinese Ritual: Expres-
sions of Authority and Power', to be held May 5 to 9, 1993, on the university campus, with major funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Fourteen invited scholars from diverse disciplines will present papers or serve as discussants focusing on the relationship of ritual music to the music of opera; the role of music in state rituals; and music in the rites of marriage and death. Participating scholars are Maurice Bloch, K'un-fang Ch'iu, Ellen Judd, Joseph Lam, Ping-hui Li, David P. McAlister, Rulan Chao Pian, Robert Provine, Anthony Seeger, Anthony Yu, Chün-fang Yu, and the three co-organizers of the conference: historian Evelyn S. Rawski, anthropologist Rubie S. Watson and ethnomusicologist Bell Yung. The aims of the conference are the integration of the analysis of music into the investigations of ritual; the strengthening of interdisciplinary exchanges, especially between ethnomusicologists and anthropologists, social historians and religion specialists who pursue ritual studies; a better understanding of how power and authority are ritualized constitutions; and the development of methodological treatments of ritual, particularly of music in ritual.

Except for the opening lecture, the conference is closed to the public. A limited number of observers will be invited to participate. For information, contact: Bell Yung, Conference Co-chair, Music Department, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Pennsylvania 15260. Tel: 412-624-4051. (Source: SEM Newsletter).

COGNITIVE MUSICOLOGY, FINLAND, AUG. '93
The First International Conference on Cognitive Musicology will be held at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. The Conference will be conducted in English. Major focus will be on a cognitive approach to musicological and ethnomusicological research. For further information, contact: Dr Jukka Louhivuori, University of Jyväskylä, Department of Musicology, PO. Box 35, 40351 Jyväskylä, Finland. (Source: SEM Newsletter).

IX ESEM, BARCELONA, SEPT 1993
The IX European Seminar in Ethnomusicology (ESEM) is scheduled to take place Sept 10-15, 1993 in Barcelona. Major themes are: 1) Ethnomusicology and Interdisciplinary Approaches; 2) Frontiers in Ethnomusicology - Geographical and Conceptual; 3) Dance and National / Ethnic Identity; 4) Organology; 5) (a special session) Mantle Hood's Quantum Theory of Music; 6) (reserve theme) Theory of Music; 6) (reserve theme) Mini-papers on Work in Progress. The John Blacking Memorial Lecture 1993 will be presented by Professor Bernard Lortat-Jacob (CNRS, France). Approximate duration of papers presented: 20 minutes. Abstracts of lectures should be submitted before 1 May 1993 to the Technical Committee, c/o Mr Antoni Anguera, president IX ESEM Barcelona 1993, Servei de Cultura Tradicional, Porta Ferrissa 1, 08002 Barcelona, Spain. Tel: #34.3.3021522; fax: #34.3.3012241. (PC)

TEACHING NON-WESTERN MUSIC, OCT 1993
The Music Academy of Basel (Switzerland) will organize the Second International Symposium Teaching Non-Western Music in the West on October 15-17, 1993. More information can be obtained from the organizers: Dr. A. Gutzwiller, K. Richter and K. Zuckerman, Studio für Aussereropulische Musik, Musik-Akademie der Stadt Basel, Leonhardsstrasse 6, CH-4051 Basel, Switzerland. Tel: #41.61.2615722, fax: #41.61.2614913.

38TH SEM CONFERENCE, OCT 1993
The Society for Ethnomusicology will hold its Thirty Eighth Annual Conference at the University of Mississippi, Oxford, Mississippi, October 27-31 1993. For information, contact: Chris Goertzen, Program Chair, Department of Music, CB#3320, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27599-3320.

HAN DYNASTY RELICS, NOV. 1993
An International Conference on the Han Dynasty Murals and Stone (Brick) Carvings in Nanyang, China will be held from 1 to 6 November 1993 at the Meixi Hotel in Nanyang, Henan Province. Nanyang is a region where a considerable number of stone carvings, statuettes and murals dating from the Western and Eastern Han dynasties have been preserved. These relics have immeasurable historical, artistic and scientific value. They shed light on aspects like politics, economy, ideology, culture, music, dance, acrobatics, painting, literature, theatre and architecture in the Han period. This international conference aims at an interdisciplinary approach of the study of these stone carvings and murals, with emphasis on their relation to Han Dynasty culture.

The organizers invite foreign scholars to participate in the conference. Conference fees are US$ 200 for foreigners and RMB1800 for Mainland Chinese, which include meals and outings. Travel expenses and boarding should be paid by the participants. For further information or for registration, contact the organizers before 30 June 1993. Write to: Liu Yongping and Su Lei, Nanyang diqu wenwu guanli guanliyuan, No. 4, Meixi lu, Nanyang City, Henan Province, 473056 China. Tel: #86.377.358702 / 358710 / 358684.
EAST ASIAN LIVING VOICES, SEPT 1994
From 9 – 11 September 1994, the European Foundation for Chinese Music Research (CHIME) will organize a two-day conference on 'East Asian Voices – living folk traditions in eastern Asia'. The conference will take place at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London and will be hosted by the Ethnomusicology Department of SOAS. Major sessions will be devoted to 'Voices addressing the Gods' and 'Voices addressing Mortals'. The conference is open to scholars in the field of music, anthropology and East Asian languages (notably Chinese, Japanese and Korean) and to others with a scholarly interest in the vocal folk music, living folk-mythology, epic and vocal rituals of China, Japan, Korea and adjacent areas. There will be special emphasis on minority cultures, and special attention will be paid to interdisciplinary research, cross-cultural studies and research with the help of audio-visual materials (film, video and sound recordings). The conference will be held in conjunction with the Xth European Seminar in Ethnomusicology (ESEM) and the 3rd Teaching World Music Conference. For further information, contact Frank Kowenhoven, CHIME Foundation, P.O.Box 11092, 2301 EB Lel- den, The Netherlands, Europe. Phone/Fax (31) 71 – 133.123. (FK)

PUBLICATIONS

BRITISH JOURNAL OF ETHNOMUSICOLOGY
The first issue of the British Journal of Ethnomusicology was published in London last year. The editorial board consists of John Baily, David Hughes, Carole Pegg and Richard Wildress. The following articles on Asian music were included: Nick Gray – "Suinend"; An Example of Petegeak in the Balinese Gendér Wayang Repertoire; David W. Hughes – Thai Music in Java, Javanese Music in Thailand; Two Case Studies; Carole Pegg – Mongolian Conceptualizations of Overtone Singing (xöömii); Jonathan Stock – Contemporary Recital Solos for the Chinese Two-stringed Fiddle Erhu; C. Tingey – 'Musical Instrument or Ritual Object? The Status of the Kettledrum in the Temples of Central Nepal'. The Journal also includes several book and CD reviews. The Journal can be ordered from the ICTM-UK Chapter, c/o Centre for Music Studies, SOAS, Thornhaugh Street, London WC1H 0XG. Subscription rates: £12 for individuals, £15 for institutions, £6 for students & UK unemployed. ISSN 0968-1221. (PC)

CHINOPERL NO. 16
The 16th volume of Chinoperl Papers, a publication of the Conference on Chinese Oral and Performing Literature, was due to be published in March 1993.


PACIFIC ETHNOMUSICOLOGY
Richard Moyle is currently preparing a series Occasional Papers in Pacific Ethnomusicology. This is a new data-oriented publication intended for material too long or specialized for publication elsewhere. Moyle is soliciting papers in such fields as music ethnography, analysis, descriptions of recorded collections and archiving. For information on manuscript submission or subscriptions, contact Richard Moyle, Editor, Anthropology Dept., University of Auckland, New Zealand. Fax: 64-9—3737441. (AS)

MUSIC AND RATIO
Clarence Barlow, composer and teacher of Sonology at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague, Holland, is the editor of The Ratio Symposium Reader. This is a collection of papers read at the Ratio Symposium, held at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague in December last year. It includes the following contributions on Asian music: Keith Howard – ‘Mode as a Scholarly Construct in Korean Music’; Su Chi-Lee – (on Daoist music); Henz Dieter Reese – 'Fundamentals of the Tonal Systems of Japanese and Chinese Music'. Various papers on Indian music are also included.
For information, contact: Clarence Barlow or Marije Reuvers, Royal Conservatory, Julian van Stolbergaan 1, 2595 CA The Hague, The Netherlands. Tel: #31-70.3814251. (AS)

MISCELLANEOUS

ATOVSKY, Sheldon - 'Heterogeneous Schizothymia and the Current Musical Mélange: The Role of Tradition in New Music in Contemporary Society from a European-American Composer's Point of View.' In: *Chinese Music* 15(4), December 1992, pp. 69-76.


CNRS AUDIOVISUEL - Catalogue des Films. Sciences de l'Homme et de la Société, 1986-1992. [Order from: CNRS (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) Audiovisuel, 1, Place Aristide Briand, 92195 Meudon Cedex, France; Tel #33-1-45075886; Fax #33-1-45075900].


DUJUNCO, Mercedes M. - 'Variation in the Performance Practice of Chaozhou Xian Shi Yue (Summary.)' In: *ACMR Newsletter*, Vol. 6, No.1, Winter 1993, pp. 34-37.


MORTON, Brian and Pamela Collins, ed. – *Contem-


REESE, Helen - 'Review of Recent Materials on the Dongjing Music of Yunnan.' Thorough discussion of one book, an article and five commercial cassettes on the music of the so-called dongjinghai ('Daoist scripture associations'). In: ACMR Newsletter, Vol. 6, No.1, Winter 1993, pp. 41-44.
CHIME JOURNAL, NO. 6, SPRING, 1993


WHEELER, Nicholas John – Musics of the Ethnic Minorities of China: An Annotated Bibliography of Articles Published in Chinese Periodicals. Master’s Thesis submitted to the Victoria University of Wellington, Australia, 1992. Covers articles on the musics of the ethnic minorities of China published in three major Chinese music periodicals: Zhongguo Yinque, Zhongguo Yinque xue and Yueqi, over the decade 1981-1991. The articles are listed in three different indices: Minority Index, Subject Index and Author Index. In addition to this, the article 'A Retrospective Look at the Work of Researching the Musics of the Ethnic Minorities' by Yuan Bingchang (publ. in Zhongguo Yinque xue 11, April 1988, p. 92) is translated in full and discussed.

WICHMANN, Elizabeth – Listening to Theatre: The Aural Dimension of Beijing Opera. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991. (For a review, see this issue of Chims, pp.118-124.)


YANG Mu – 'Chinese Music in Australia: Study and


(AS/FK)

DISSERTATIONS AND THESES


CHEN Shi-Hong – 'A Computer-Based Music Notation Instruction Program for Chinese Students.' Ph.D., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1992.


HO Min – 'Stylistic Tendencies in Selected Chinese Art Songs.' M.A., University of Saskatchewan, 1989.


(AS)

CHINESE PUBLICATIONS


HAN Fude, ed. – Minjian yingao (‘Folk songs’). Xinhua: Xinhua Shizhin yanhuachang, 1990, xiv, 462 pp., illus., map.


—— Quanzhen Zhengyuan pu ji (‘Edited scores of orthodox liturgy of Quanzhen Daoism’), transmitted by Min Zhiling, edited by the Wuhan yinyue xueyuan Daojiao yinyue yanjiu shi, Beijing: Zhongguo wenlian chuban gongsi. Both books are available from the Baiyun guan Daoist temple in Beijing and other major Daoist temples. Min Zhiling is a distinguished Daoist master now resident at the Baiyun guan. Also available at the temple are two videos of Daoist ritual, and mostly ‘conservatory-style’ audio tapes. (SJ)

QIAO Jianzhong and Mao Jizeng, ed. – Zhongguo yinyue xue xue zhong shi Yang Yinliu (jilin ji) (‘Yang Yinliu, Great Master of Chinese Musicology — A Commemorative Volume’). Zhongguo minyu yinyue xuehui, Taipei, 1992. Published in Taiwan, this splendid volume consists of commemorative essays for Yang Yinliu (1899-1084), one of the world’s
great musicologists. In addition to essays by Cao Anhe, Yang's lifelong companion, and many of his pupils, the volume contains many wonderful photographs, a full bibliography and chronology. It is a valuable supplement to the 1986 collection of Yang's articles, "Yang Yinlu yin Yue kunwen xuanji" (Shanghai wenyi chubanshe). (SJ)

SHANGHAI yin Yue xueyuan yin Yue yanjiusuo and Dongfang yin Yue xuehui - Tansuohe zhi ge; jilinan yin Yue xuejia Ye Dong jiaoshou (1930-1989) (The Song of the Explorer: in Memory of the Musicologist Professor Ye Dong). Shanghai, 1991.

This volume consists of 20 pages of essays in tribute to Ye Dong, best known for his work on deciphering the Dunhuang pipa scores and other early sources of Chinese notation. There are also 16 pages of photographs. The booklet can be ordered through Mrs. Luo Zhongying, Shanghai Fuxing zhonglu 1350 nong 22 hao 302 shi, 200031 Shanghai, China. Price: RMB 10. (SJ)


INTRODUCTION TO CHINESE MUSIC
Zhongguo minzu yin Yue daguan ("A Magnificent Display of Chinese Music"), edited by Qin Yongcheng and Wei Li, Shenyang Publishing House, 1999, 1000 pp. Preface, table of contents, musical notation (cipher), tables, main reference sources, no index. Price: RMB 20. This is a general and popular introduction to Chinese music, extracted from materials previously published elsewhere. The chapter headings are: A Brief History of Chinese Folk Music; Han Chinese Folk Songs; Quyi; Xiqu; China's Folk Instruments; Minority Folk Music; Religious music; Taiwanese folk music. (WH)

BOOKS ON GUIZHOU MINORITY MUSIC
Last year, five Chinese studies about various folk musical traditions in Guizhou province were published by the Guizhou National Publishing House. One is a study of Buyi minority music, one a general book on minority music in the area and the three others are essays on various folk song repertoires in Guizhou.

Buyizu minjian yin Yue yanjiu wenji ("Anthology of Research on Folk Music of the Buyi Nationality") is written by Yi Ding, a music teacher at a secondary school in Nanzhou in western Guizhou and resident composer of the local song and dance club. Over the past twenty years, Yi has collected extensive materials on the music of the Buyi nationally. The first five chapters of his 165-page 'Anthology' deal with folk songs and musical instruments of the Buyi people. Folk song genres covered are shan ge (mountain songs), langshaoge (literally 'wave-whistle' songs - love songs in dialogue form), iisige (songs about etiquette and custom) and erge or children's songs. Musical instruments covered are the leyou and lelang traditional wind instruments of the Buyi popular in southwestern Guizhou (the leyou is a small wooden shawm comparable to the Chinese suona, and is traditionally used for courting; its bamboo variant is called lelang); furthermore, xiaotong, also known as 'nine-hole diizi', a bamboo flute of the Miao and Han nationalities shaped like the ordinary transverse bamboo flute but with a slightly bigger pipe; suona (Chinese shawm); siixianhu (a four-stringed bowed string instrument of the Zhuang nationality); niuguohu or cowbone hu (a rather precious Buyi instrument with a sound-box made of cow's bone and tuning pegs made of muntjac horn); huulqimgor calabash qin (a bowed string instrument with a gourd as sound-box and with a sweet and mellow sound) and the yueqin (moon-shaped lute). The book also offers an elaborate analytical discussion of folk songs and instrumental music, with 69 music examples. Structural aspects but also the social context of various music traditions are dealt with. The final four chapters of the book focus on Buyi opera, placing them in the wider context of theatre traditions of adjacent minority cultures. Price: 2.95 RMB.

Guizhou shaoshuminzu yin Yue ("Music of the National Minorities of Guizhou Province") was edited by Zhang Zhongdiao and Luo Tinghua of the Culture and Education Section of the National General Affairs Committee of Guizhou Province. This 376-page book is a general and popular introduction to the music and related folk customs of seven nationalities in Guizhou Province: Miao, Dong, Buyi, Shui, Gelao, Tu and Yi. Every group is dealt with in a separate chapter. The reader will find information about the folk songs, story singing, dance, opera, instrumental music and musical instruments of these nationalities. Price: 3.00 RMB.

Gelaozu guge ("Old Songs of the Gelao Nationality") was published by a special editorial group for minority materials under the auspices of the People's Committee of Anshu Region. It is a 211-page anthology of Gelao songs. The Gelao are a minority of some 50,000 people who live in scattered small communities mainly in western Guizhou. They have no written language of their own. The songs in this book are shown in phonetic transcription (with the
help of International phonetic symbols) as well as in Chinese translation. The anthology offers a unique insight into the history, religious beliefs, marriage and funeral rites and other folk customs of the Gelao. It is divided into three sections: Jiishan'ge ('Songs of the Mountain of Sacrifice'), Sangzangge ('Funeral Songs') and Cangtongge. Price: 3.50 RMB.

Guizhou qingge jinghua ('The Cream of Love Songs from Guizhou') is a general anthology of love songs from Guizhou, compiled by Guo Hu. It includes both Han-Chinese and minority songs. 107 pages; price: 1.25 RMB.

Guizhou Juige xuan ('A Selection of Drinking Songs from Guizhou') is a collection of three hundred drinking songs of the Buyi, Dong, Gelao, Han, Miao, Yi and other nationalities from Guizhou province, edited by Dai Nian. 120 pages; price: 0.50 RMB.

All the above-mentioned publications can be obtained from: Guizhou minzu chubanshe, Guizhou sheng zhengfu danyuan, Bajiaoyan, Guiyangshi, Guizhou, People's Republic of China. Prices quoted do not include postage. (WH)

CHILDREN'S SONGS
Zhongguo minjian er tong geju jil ('Anthology of Popular Chinese Children's Songs') is a new anthology of over 200 Chinese children's songs, edited by Zeng Wan, Ai Gun and Jin Hua (a pen name). The 307-page book contains both texts and music of the songs. It includes elaborate notes on dialect words and expressions, as well as on the historical and social context of the collected materials. It contains lullabies, songs for young children and songs for teenagers. The material is primarily grouped by subject matter: there are songs on animals, songs on beautiful scenery, playing songs, working songs, songs of pleasure, enumerating songs, riddle songs, songs on love and friendship, songs on history and customs and dancing songs. The anthology is published by the People's Music Publishing House, 2 Culinwei St., Beijing, P.R. China. Price: 7.40 RMB (postage not included). (WH)

BOOK ON BAMBOO FLUTES
Lin Keren and Chang Dumming are the authors of Zhongguo xiao di ('Chinese horizontal and vertical bamboo flutes'), published by the Nanjing da xue chubanshe, Nanjing, 1993. Lin Keren is assistant professor of the Music Department of Nanjing Normal School, Chang Dumming is a manufacturer of Chinese instruments. Their book consists of three volumes: 1) 'The history of Chinese xiao and di'; 2) 'The construction of Chinese xiao and di' and 3) 'The performance practice of Chinese xiao and di'. Vol. 1 discusses the development of Chinese flutes from prehistoric times up to today. It contains descriptions and comments, and is richly illustrated. It is an objective and comprehensive study, probably the most complete treatise so far on the evolution of Chinese flutes, on its performers and manufacturers. Vol. 2 is a survey of Chang Dumming's lifelong experience making xiao and di. It is full of practical knowledge and worth reading. Vol. 3 is a practical guide for self study of the instruments, including practical exercises. It can serve as teaching material. The three books together have 250 pages, with illustrations and music. Price: 8.50 RMB. For more information, contact: Lin Keren, Music Department, Nanjing Normal University, 122 Ninghai Road, 210024 Nanjing, P.R. China. (WH)

PIANO PIECES FOR CHILDREN
Musical Works (Yin yuan chuangzuo) No. 3, 1992 is a special volume containing scores of all the prize winning works of the journal's recent Competition for Chinese Piano Pieces for Children. Editor in Charge is Yang Jie. The Journal is published by the Chinese Musicians' Association, Editing Office Yinxue chuangzuo, 10 Nongzhuan'guan nanli, 100023 Beijing. (AS)

MUSICIANS

'FLEUR DE PRUNUS' IN PARIS
François Picard (Sorbonne University IV, Paris) is now part of a group together with Wu Suhua (erhu) and Yang Lining (qin, zheng), where he plays xiao and sheng. The group is called 'Fleur de prunus / Melhu'. For further information, contact François Picard, 37 Rue Plat, 75020 Paris, France; tel #33.1.46361845. (FP)

CHINESE MUSIC ENSEMBLE IN PITTSBURGH
A 'Pitt Chinese Music Ensemble' has been formed at the University of Pittsburgh in the Fall of 1992, with funding support from the China Program. The group meets in regular weekly rehearsals. Its inaugural concert, co-sponsored by the Music Department and the Asian Studies Club to celebrate the Lunar New Year, was held in January 1993 on the university campus. Drawing its musicians mainly from graduate students in the Music Department, its current active members include Nimrod Berson (dizi), Nancy Guy (zhonghu), Shek-kam Lee (pipa), Tai-kwan Pak (erhu; director for Fall 1992), Helen Rees (dizi, xiao, sheng), Gillian Rodger (ruan), Nadine Saada (yangqin), and Ying-fai Tsui (erhu, dizi; director for Spring 1993). (Source: ACMR Newsletter Vol. 6, No. 1, Winter 1993)
KONG QINGSHAN & TANG JUNQIAO

Kong Qingshan was born in the northeast province of Jilin in 1942. He became a *dizi* player with the Jilin Pingju Opera Troupe in 1960 and graduated from the Shenyang Conservatory of Music in the early 1970s. He is currently an associate professor of the Conservatory.

For the past decade, Kong has melded Western flute techniques — notably breath control and articulation — with traditional techniques of the *dizi*. In the early 1980s, he began to explore the possibilities of emulating James Galway’s tone in his own playing. At present, he plays and teaches standard pieces from the *dizi* repertoire as well as Western pieces (from Chopin to film music). His interest in Western techniques and his somewhat unorthodox ways of teaching the instrument have led to controversy among some of his more traditionally-biased colleagues, but he is widely respected for his great talent as a musician.

One of his most successful students is Tang Junqiao, a *dizi* player in her late teens, born in the industrial city of Anshan in Liaoning Province. In 1987, she entered the Shenyang Conservatory and began her formal training on the *dizi* under Kong. She gave a solo *dizi* concert before a capacity crowd at the Shenyang Concert Hall in July 1991 which won exceptional praise from local critics. (See a review by Wei Huang in *Xinsheng yuefu*, a journal published by the Shenyang Conservatory, Vol. IX No. 3, 1991, pp. 53–55). Tang Junqiao graduated from the conservatory last year and caught the attention of music teachers from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music who were in Shenyang in early May to recruit new students. Tang is currently being trained as a prospective *dizi* teacher at the Shanghai Conservatory. (PM)

KUNQU IN TAIWAN

There has been a boom in Kunqu activities in Taiwan in the past year. *Kunqu* is an elite genre of Chinese opera. A Kunqu project, led by Zeng Yongyi and Hong Wei Zhu, has been documenting the various Kunqu troupes in mainland China. In addition, several large-scale Kunqu performances have been presented by Hua Wenyi with local groups and by the Shanghai Kun Opera Company in October and November 1992. Several other large-scale mainland China performing groups have also visited Taiwan recently, including the Central Ballet Company and the Song and Dance Troupe of Yun Nan Nationalities of China (Yunnan Gewutuan). (Source: ACMR Newsletter Vol. 6, No. 1, Winter 1993)

CHINESE MUSIC ENSEMBLE IN S. FRANCISCO

Since 1993, the nucleus of the San Francisco Chinese Music Ensemble consists of Liu Weihan (guzheng), leader of the ensemble, Chen Jiebing (erhu), Min Xiaofen (a sister of Min Hufen) (pipa), Zhao Yangqin (yangqin), and Wang Hong (erhu, ruan, xiao, jawu). These musicians are trained professionals, and some of them were educated in China. They give concerts and workshops on Chinese instruments. On special occasions, the group is extended to include up to twelve performers. Their aim is to broaden the interest in Chinese music amongst native and Chinese communities in San Francisco and surroundings. (WH)

CHINESE MUSICIANS IN TAIWAN

Chinese erhu master Min Hufen visited Taiwan from 2 October to 8 November 1992 for a concert tour. Her visit was part of a ‘Concert Series of Famous Mainland Musicians’ organized by the Taiwan Arts Formosa Company Ltd. Min Hufen is one of China’s best known stars of the virtuoso conservatory style of erhu playing. In 1983, she won the first prize in a national erhu competition held during the Shanghai Spring Festival. Since that time, her fame has risen. Her concert tour in Taiwan — in fact Min’s first commercial tour abroad — caused a sensation among Taiwanese audiences. This success was repeated in December, when she travelled to Hong Kong for further concerts (with the Hong Kong Hongguang Chinese Music Ensemble) and for lecturing activities.

Two distinguished yangqin performers and teachers of the Shanghai Conservatory, Hong Shengmao and Guo Mingqing, and dizi player Lu Chunting, together with four younger instrumentalists from Shanghai, toured Taiwan in November, in the same concert series. The so-called ‘Type 81’ yangqin in
Takahiko Izumitani (on the left) with pupils of his school for handmade instruments.

Chromatic tuning, designed by Hong Shengmao and Guo Mingqiong in 1981, drew the attention of many Taiwanese performers and music lovers. This instrument is used by many professional yangqin performers in China ever since its wide-ranging possibilities were demonstrated convincingly in a series of concerts in Beijing and Shanghai in 1984–86. The instrument differs considerably from folk versions of the yangqin, not only in tuning, but also with respect to its general construction and size. In 1987, this concert yangqin received a special 'Award of Technical Accomplishment' from the Chinese Ministry of Culture. (WH)

2ND JIANGNAN SIZHU COMPETITION
The Second International Jiangnan sizhu Competition was held in Shanghai September 11-16, 1992. Participants came from various parts of China, from Singapore, Malaysia and Mauritius. In all, 13 professional and 33 amateur groups (of which 7 children's groups) participated. Prizes were awarded for excellent performances and for original compositions.

The competition, a follow-up of a Jiangnan sizhu festival in Shanghai in 1986, was organized by the Shanghai Musicians' Association and the Shanghai Dunhuang International Cultural Company. A small Seminar on Jiangnan sizhu music was held in conjunction with the competition. (Source: Renmin yinyue 1992 / 10, p.45).

HANDMADE INSTRUMENTS SCHOOL IN JAPAN
A school for handmade instruments of traditional music was established some years ago in the Japanese town of Tosashimizu. It is led by Mr Takahiko Izumitani, who studied classical music at the Conservatory of Basel and ethnomusicology at Kochi University in Japan. With more than 30 pupils, Izumitani designs and builds instruments largely based on combinations of Chinese and Western models. Mr Takahiko has made many trips to China to research the performance and construction techniques of Chinese instruments. Every year, he invites Chinese instrumentalists to visit his school for a certain period to teach his pupils and to give joint performances. In April 1993, the performance group of the school was invited by the Conservatory of Basel, Switzerland, to give performances and demonstrations of their handmade instruments in Europe. For more information, contact: Takahiko Izumitani, 1-10 Kotobukiicho, Tosashimizu shi, Kochi, Japan. Tel: 08808-2-0213. (WH)

COMPOSERS

COMPOSERS MET IN TAIWAN
Chinese composers from various parts of the world met from 31 March to 5 April in Taiwan for concerts and a conference on contemporary music. The meeting was organized by the Taiwanese section of the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM) in co-operation with the Symphony Orches-
tra of Taiwan and the (Taiwan-based) Chinese Society for Contemporary Music. There were concert performances of works by Tan Dun (New York), Chen Qigang (Paris), Zeng Xinkui (Taiwan), Luo Yonghu (Hong Kong), Zuo Zhenguan (Moscow), Chen Moliang (Vienna) and various others. One concert included the premiere of a Piano Concerto by mainland composer Du Mingxin, which was commissioned for this occasion. The conference was attended by some 80 people. Various composers presented full-scale papers about their own works. Among the participants were Huang Anlin, Ye Xiaogang, all the composers mentioned above and many others.

Mainland composers Zhu Jian'er and Luo Zhongrong visited Taiwan recently for concert performances of their works. The complete symphonic works of Zhu Jian'er will be recorded on CD. A CD with his 4th Symphony for dizi and strings is currently under preparation. (CQ)

JULIAN YU
The Australian-based Chinese composer Julian Yu has been awarded the Adolf Spivakovsky Prize for Composition (a prize of $3000). In addition, his work Scintillation II has been selected for performance at the ISCM World Music Days in Mexico, to be held in November of this year. Another work by Julian Yu, Wu Yu for Orchestra, has been awarded the 3rd Annual Vienna Modern Masters Recording Award. The piece will be recorded on CD in a series 'Music from Six Continents' produced by Vienna Modern Masters. (JY)

MUSIC FROM CHINA
Last year's 'Premiere Works II' concert at Merkin Hall in New York, by the ensemble 'Music From China', featured American and world premiers of new and innovative works for traditional Chinese instruments by five Chinese composers and one American composer. The artists in the program were Wang Ning, Fang Xiaomin, Zhou Long, Li Binyang, Wen Loong-hsing and Daniel Patkowsky. 'Music From China' organizes an annual composition competition in this field with cash prizes of US $300 and 200 and performances of the best works by the ensemble. For more information, contact 'Music From China', 170 Park Row, 12D, New York, NY 10038, USA. (CY)

ZHI SHUI LONG AND CHEN YI
Last year, composer Zhou Long (New York) had two commissioned works performed by the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble and the Kronos Quartet with pipa player Wu Man. His quintet for pipa and string quartet 'Soul' will be included in the Kronos Quartet's next European tour, later this summer. Zhou Long has also completed a doctoral dissertation at Columbia University and is currently supervising a series of CDs produced by the New York ensemble 'Music From China'.

Composer Chen Yi (New York) had one of her latest works, the octet 'Sparkle', performed by the New York Music Consort in October 1992. She is currently working on her Second Symphony for the Women's Philharmonic with a commission grant from the Ford Foundation. The work will be premiered next season in San Francisco. Chen Yi's Piano Concerto will be premiered in New York in the same period. (CY)

CHINESE ARTISTS ON MESSIAEN AND CAGE
The Chinese journal 'Music Leaders' (Yinyue leaders), no. 5, 1992, contains appreciative articles in memory of the French composer Olivier Messiaen, who died last year in April. They were written by two Chinese composers who knew Messiaen personally: Chen Qigang and Yang Liqing. The latter, a composer from Shanghai, met him briefly during a visit to France and wrote a book about Messiaen in Chinese - the first Western avant-garde composer's biography to appear in China. Chen Qigang was a personal friend of Messiaen and one of his last students. He lives in France and wrote another brief article about Messiaen in French, 'Témoignages Personnels', in La Lettre du Musicien, Paris, May 1992, p. 26. The front page of the Chinese journal has a photo of Chen Qigang together with his famous teacher. No music written by Messiaen has ever been performed live in Mainland China, presumably because his style is considered too modern by the Chinese Ministry of Culture.

The Chinese journal 'Peoples' Music' (Renmin yinyue), no. 11, 1992, includes a brief article by Chinese composer Tan Dun on another great Western composer who died last year: John Cage. Tan Dun met Cage on various occasions and was a great admirer of his music and ideas. (AS)

THE WORLD OF LU XUN
Inter-Artes in London recently organized a concert 'The World of Lu Xun', featuring new music and music theatre by British and Chinese composers inspired by the work of China's best-known 20th-century author of essays and short stories. Composers included Julia Usher, Ho Wai-on, Tan Dun, Chen Yi and Zhou Long. (Source: Great Britain-China Newsletter.)

QIN DAPING
The article on Mainland China's New Music in Chine 5 (pp. 76-134) misquoted the name of Chinese composer Qin Daping. (He was accidentally called 'Da Pingju' on p. 123.) Qin Daping was
born in 1957 in Beijing and studied piano with Yang Han'guo at the Sichuan Conservatory in Chengdu. With a grant from the Finland-China Friendship Association, he went to Finland in 1984 and continued his studies at the Composition Department of the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki. His teachers were Magnus Lindberg, E. Hämeenmäki, and P. Heininen. He learned to speak some Finnish and earned a living by giving piano lessons. Qin graduated in 1992 with 'Karmiä', a place for sanxian and orchestra. Other works by this composer include a trio, a piano quintet, a work for saxophone and string orchestra and various pieces for tape. (QD)

ASIA PACIFIC FESTIVAL 1992
The Asia Pacific Festival 1992 was held from 27 November to 6 December last year in Wellington and Auckland, New Zealand. The festival featured thirty-one concerts by more than two hundred performers, ranging from Tianjin Opera and Korean P'an-sori to avant-garde concerts. Composers from Thailand, Japan, Taiwan, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia and a host of other countries presented new orchestral and chamber works. Many excellent performances were given by New Zealand performing groups. There was a great range of events, even within the field of contemporary music alone. Improvisation workshops were held by Joseph Celli and Korean composer Jin Hi Kim (whose string quartet 'Linking' was considered one of the highlights of the Festival). There was an East-West jazz fusion concert, and visiting Indonesian composers were riveted by Gareth Farr's Reongan for Javanese gamelan instruments played in dynamic Balinese style. John Young and Gareth Farr organized the 'Sonic Circus', by now an established Wellington tradition. Maximum use was made of the spaces and many levels in the atrium of Victoria University's Student Union Building, where the audience was offered a sequence of strongly energetic and vibrant events. As a percussionist, Gareth Farr gave numerous performances during the Festival, including an impressive account of Japanese composer Minoru Miki's 'Time' for solo marimba. Chinese contributions to the Festival included works by Julian Yu (Melbourne), Qu Xiaoqiong (New York) Lee Tzyy-Sheng (Taiwan) and Joshua Chan (Hong Kong). Odaline de Mendez won the admiration of players, composers and audiences alike when she conducted the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra in a stylistically varied programme. Stylistic variety and cross-cultural synthesis were dominating tendencies in what was considered in retrospect one of the most deafening, exhilarating, impressive and successful festivals that audiences in New Zealand have ever encountered. Multiculturalism was indeed the magic word. Jin Hi Kim's string quartet combined extended Western techniques with textures and gestures of Korean folk music. Jack Body's

'Three Transcriptions' similarly applied extended string techniques to reworkings of Chinese and Bulgarian material. Many Asian visitors found the Polynesian and Polynesian-inspired drumming the most fascinating aspects of the Festival, while the Aboriginal group Ngarindjeri-Narungga Dreaming achieved the only sell-out of the Festival. A Turkish folk music ensemble and a Brazilian Capoeira Group participating in the Festival were actually from Melbourne, Australia. The outright winner of 1992's Asian Composers' League Prize was a young Japanese woman, Yuko Moriya, whose string quartet was hailed as a masterpiece. The Festival was supplemented by a conference, in which cultural synthesis of Asian and Western trends was viewed as fertile soil for future growth of musical art in the Asia-Pacific region. Professor Gao Weilie, a teacher at the Conservatory of Chinese Music in Beijing, predicted a musical renaissance centred in the Asia-Pacific basin over the next 100-200 years. (Source: Music in New Zealand, Autumn 1993, contributions by Helen Bowater and Gillian Whitehead, pp.11-15).

CHOU WEN-CHUNG'S 70TH BIRTHDAY
A special concert in honour of the American-based Chinese composer Chou Wen-chung took place in April 1993 at the Merkin Concert Hall in New York. It was part of various celebrations on the occasion of his 70th birthday. Earlier this year, in January, Chou Wen-chung's Cello Concerto was premiered by the American Composers Orchestra in New York. Chou has been honoured by a John D. Rockefeller 3rd Award, for making a significant contribution to the understanding, practice or study of the visual or performing art of Asia. Only recently, around the time of his retirement from Columbia University, was he able to find time for himself to return to composing music. There are plans to record some of his recent works on CD.

Chou Wen-chung was born in China in June 1923. He has been living in America since 1945. In his three decades as a teacher of composition at Columbia University, Chou Wen-chung has nurtured a few generations of composers. He directed his administrative talent toward making Columbia's composition program one of the most successful around. He also founded the Fritz Reiner Center for Contemporary Music at Columbia for the promotion of new music.

His work on behalf of Varése has included editing and completion of some of Varése's scores. He has made innumerable commitments to other musical causes and organizations. Under his tenure as its president, Composers Recordings, Inc. became revitalized and solvent for the first time. Chou Wen-chung is a founding member of the American Society of University Composers, as well as board member of the American Music Center, the Yaddo Corporation, The International Society of Contem-
porary Music and The Society for Asian Music. As
founder and director of the Center for U.S.-China
Arts Exchange, Chou Wen-chung has been instru-
mental in materializing many far-reaching projects.
To name a few: the Academy Award winning film
‘From Mao to Mozart’ that raised awareness of the
plight of mainland Chinese musicians, the pro-
duction of Arthur Miller’s ‘Death of a Salesman’ in
Beijing, Jacques d’Ambroise’s ‘China Dig’ that brought
together American and Chinese children, ‘The Tra-
dition and the Future of Chinese Music’ Seminar that
brought together Mainland and Taiwanese compo-
sers for the first time, the Pacific Music Festival that
fostered the growth of music in that region, and more
recently, the Yunnan Project that will serve as a
model for the preservation and continuance of re-
gional arts in China. (AS)

VISITING LECTURER IN BEIJING
The distinguished French composer and music
theorist Jean-Bernard Mäche visited the
Central Conservatory of Music, Beijing, in the fall of
1992. He presented a series of lectures on contem-
porary music in France and on his personal views on
relationships between music and linguistics and
music and noise. Mäche stayed in Beijing for two
weeks. (LS)

CONCERTS

GU FENG ENSEMBLE IN HOLLAND, MAY 1993
The ‘Gu Feng Ensemble’ is a group of four Chinese
musicians who play traditional Chinese music in
virtuosic style. The ensemble gave its European
debut concert in Frankfurt (Germany) in September
1991 and has since toured several German cities. It
will perform in Holland in RASA, Utrecht (21 May),
Souterrain Theatre, Amsterdam (22 May) and De
Evenaar Theatre, Rotterdam (23 May). The group
consists of Rao Lan, soprano, Dong Ya, pipa, Guan
Jie, zheng and Lu Lianguo, erhu. (WE)

PEKING OPERA IN HOLLAND, JUNE 1993
The Yingkou Beijing Opera Troupe, founded in
Liaoning Province in northern China in 1956, is a
group of young opera performers. They have given
very successful performances in various youth and
theatre festivals in Europe, the United States and
Japan.

The group will be touring in Ireland and Holland this
summer and can be seen in performances of three
ecorts from Peking Opera plays in the RASA The-
atre in Utrecht, Holland, Thursday 10 June, 20.30
PM. Their performance will be preceded (at 19.30
PM) by an introductory lecture by Marijn Wolfsheer,
a teacher at the Academy of Arts in Amsterdam. She
studied Peking Opera in Shanghai in 1961.

PEKING OPERA IN UK, SUMMER 1993
The Peking Opera Troupe ‘The Little Phoenix’ from
Beijing will give performances in England in June and
July. The group is led by playwright Wu Zuoguang
and opera singer Wang Yuzhen. There will be four
performances in London as part of the London
International Theatre Festival: 15 June to 18 June in
the Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, 7.45 PM, and
19th June at the Heatwave at Serpentine Gallery, 2
PM. There will be an after-show discussion on 17
June. After their London performances, the com-
pany will undertake a tour to Nottingham Playhouse
(21 – 26 June), Manchester Royal; Northern College
of Music (29 June – 3 July) and Norwich Theatre
Royal (13 – 17 July). The tour is sponsored in
London by Cable and Wireless. (THS)

THEATRE FESTIVAL, LONDON, JUNE 1993.
The London International Theatre Festival in June
will host a number of guests and performing groups
from China. The Peking Opera Troupe ‘The Little
Phoenix’ will give a series of performances at the
Queen Elizabeth Hall (see separate announcement
above). The Chengdu Theatre Company presents
the satirical play ‘Ripples Across Stagnant Water’, a
love story set in the streets, shops and opium dens
of turn-of-the-century Chengdu. This play, an adap-
tation of an epic novel by Li Jieren, depicts the period
of stagnation in China just before the 1911 revolu-
tion. The company’s performances (23 to 29 June at
the Riverside Studios, Studio no.1, 7.30 PM, with an
after-show discussion on 25 June) will mark the first
visit ever to Britain of a contemporary piece of
Chinese theatre. The play is directed by Zha Lilan
and is staged by Sichuan’s leading contemporary
theatre company. It enjoyed a huge popular success
in China.

Finally, there will be four performances (30 June to
3 July at ICA) of ‘Red Noise: Bringing the streets of
Beijing to London’, a programme of music, song,
fiction, poetry, film and video offering a radical
perspective on contemporary Chinese urban street
culture. ‘Red Noise’ is a term used by Australian
writer and raconteur Geremie Barmé (who also
presents this programme) to describe the ‘urban
social static’ of 1990’s Beijing street life in his book
‘New Ghosts, Old Dreams’. Against a background of
Chinese MTV, video art and TV commercials 23-
year-old rock singer He Yong performs a programme
of punk, karaoke and rock. (THS)

ORIENTAL EXPRESSIONS, LONDON, JUNE 1993
‘Oriental Expressions’, a festival of performances
and workshops by professional Chinese and Japa-

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nese artists, will be held in London from 7 to 18 June 1993. It includes the following events: a Japanese flower-arranging and tea ceremony (7 June), a Japanese music workshop led by drummer Joji Hirota (14 June), a Peking Opera workshop led by Ione Meyer and Stuart Kingston who studied at a Beijing Opera School in China (16 June), a Chinese Theatre workshop organized by the group Tai Shen (17 June), a Chinese story-telling workshop for children by Mulan Theatre actor David Tse (18 June), a cabaret evening with the Peking Brothers and various other groups (8 June), a Japanese Noh Theatre performance (9 June), two Chinese opera performances (10 and 11 June) and a concert of Japanese kodo drumming and dancing by Joji Hirota and Nicholas Jannii and company (15 June). During the festival, there will be art exhibitions at Marylebone and Paddington Lower Houses. (THS)

LI XIANGTING AND WU MAN, JULY 1993
Two great Chinese musicians are to share a programme in the Asian Music Circuit's summer tour of Britain. Li Xiangting is well known as a master of the qin zither. Wu Man is an outstanding pipa player of the younger generation. Li Xiangting will give a guqin recital in London on the 12th of July 1993 at the South Bank Centre Purcell Room, and Wu Man will give a pipa recital on the 14th of July at the same venue. Both concerts start at 8 pm. Tickets: £5.50, £8.00 and £11.00. Visitors attending both concerts get a 10% discount. (For more information, please contact: Rowan Pease, Asian Music Circuit, Great Fool, Unit F. West Point, 33/34 Warple Way, Acton, London W3 ORQ. Tel: #44-81-7429 9111; fax: 749 3948.) Wu Man is also to perform in London in July with the Kronos Quartet. (SJ)

MINORITY MUSIC, HOLLAND, SUMMER 1993
The China Ethnic Minority Art Group from Guizhou Province will tour Europe this summer with songs, dances and instrumental music of the Yao, Miao, Shui and Buyi minorities. The group was invited by the Paradox Foundation to give concerts in Holland. Their concert schedule is as follows: 2-3 July in Amsterdam (Vondel Park), 29-31 July in Bergen op Zoom, 31 July in Vlissegem, 3-8 August in Oostrum and 9-11 August in Amsterdam. The orchestra of the group includes bamboo flutes, various suona (shawms), lusheung (mouth-organs), giant flutes, moon lutes, bronze drums and other percussion instruments. For more information, contact: Paradox, P.O.Box 155, 2300 AD Leiden, The Netherlands, telephone +31 (71) 219479. (BK)

ERHU CONCERTS IN HONG KONG
In October 1993, the City Council of Hong Kong will organize a special erhu concert 'Kings meet Kings', starring young erhu soloist Jiang Jianhua, China's well-known erhumaster Min Hufen and Hong Kong's leading erhu performer Huang Anyuan. At present, they are viewed as the three most successful representatives of the virtuoso style of erhu playing in East Asia. (WH)

TIBETAN HORN

Dor. Low is Better: Video film about the role of the big horn in Tibetan music, by Robert Boonzaier and Maarten Rens, 1989, 46 min., subtitled in English.

Imagine the sound of long drawn-out base tones on trombones accompanied by soft dry timpani strokes and you get the idea. In 1989, the Dutch anthropologist Rob Boonzaier visited Buddhist lamas in Phiyang, a remote mountain village in Ladakh. He wanted to hear more about the secrets of the dungchen, the big natural horn used in ritual ceremonies to accompany Buddhist chants. In the film, this horn, which produces a very deep and sonorous tone, becomes a revealing symbol of the religious views of the monks. Boonzaier shows how local priests of Phiyang link up their general perceptions of life with the musical sounds of the instruments. He challenges the monks by coming up with two European types of horns, the Dutch midwinter horn and the Austrian alphorn. Can they play it, and what do they think? An excellent point of departure for a film on musical and general aspects of Tibetan religious life that is both entertaining and very instructive. Boonzaier has made a beautiful and visually very attractive 40-minute documentary about an unlikely subject. The lamas are visibly amused by the Western instruments, but the sounds produced do not satisfy them. One monk explains that only very low and long drawn-out tones such as those produced by the dungchen are appreciated in their own culture, because only such sounds can help to create the required spiritual calm. By contrast, Western music is too fast, too high, too transient in nature. Western horns are not suitable for meditation. We do not like sensations here, as you Westerners do,' one of the monks says. They show that they appreciate the lower tones of the Western horns, but as far as they are concerned nothing can match the physical and spiritual powers of dor, the lowest tone produced on a dungchen.

The head of the monastery in Phiyang is asked whether or not he views the higher sounds played on the alphorn as 'bad'. He listens patiently to the music and then replies, smilingly: 'Well, this is good for the meditation of the impermanent. It makes you think of death.'

Boonzaier's style of presentation is not entirely free
of perfunctory gestures. In one sequence, he 'con-
ducts' a group of horn players in an attempt to
demonstrate that the music has a distinct rhythm.
He tries to provoke the monks with overtly rational
remarks sometimes verging on the rude. Some
ethnomusicologists in Holland have criticized
Boonzaier for these methods, as well as for his
'anthropological tourism' and presumed lack of
scholarly seriousness. But this is gravely under-
estimating both his qualities as a researcher and his
 capacities as a documentary cineast. Experts of
Tibetan music may find nothing new in 'Dor - Low is
Better', but this film was not designed for a specialist
audience. Moreover, it offers an original angle for
looking at Tibetan culture, and is far more than just
an excellent introduction to the dungen. To bring
Western horns to India is an excellent way of mutu-
ally confronting different cultures, and the outcome
is fascinating and surprising. Boonzaier may be
slightly priggish or 'didactic' in his conduct towards
the monks, as part of the game, but at least he
spares his Western audiences such an attitude -
which is more than can be said of many other
ethnomusicalological films produced in recent times.
In 'Dor...', the images tell the story. One learns a fair
amount about the traditions of the players, and there
are no voice-overs to tell you what to think.
Western films on Tibetan culture are in a class of
their own. In nine out of ten cases, the public is left
with dazzling images of mountain scenery, impos-
ing monasteries, monks in colourful dress, wor-
shippers in rags, turning their prayer mills, falling
and getting up in the streets by way of pilgrimage...
There is never a lack of ready-made pictures evo-
kling Tibetan 'atmosphere'. Boonzaier has not fallen
into that trap. He shows enough of the Ladakhi
landscape to give it a functional place in his film, but
the main character is the horn. Precisely by limiting
the scope of his film in this way, Boonzaier actually
manages to touch upon certain general aspects of
Tibetan religious life which are otherwise hard to
grasp in images. Through the horns, we learn to
know the people who play them. We learn about
their magnificently self-contained ways but also
about their social paranoia. The lowest tone on the
dungen becomes a musical parallel to one of the
monks' quietly autistic statements: 'Thinking is
useless.' It seems as if the lamas try to keep out the
vast and unmeasurable outside world because it is
frightening and threatening to them. Anyone familiar
with the austere, imposing and lonely Himalayan
scenery can understand that. Within their own
monastery walls, the proportions of spiritual life are
kept as small and manageable as possible. The only
way to escape the disturbing complexities of earthly
life and human society is to listen to the single drone
of nature underneath, the binding and unifying ele-
ment for the many contrary forces in life.
Unfortunately, one of Boonzajer's most interesting experiences is not included in the film. During his stay in Phyang, he demonstrated to the monks a video of Swiss alp horn players. The monks were interested but could not discover anything resembling 'music' in it. They realized it had to have some value for Boonzajer and other Westerners, but for themselves, music was something rather different, something they could not explain. However, there was one sequence in that video showing the horn players tuning their instruments. It was a scene that Boonzajer had originally planned to cut out, because it only showed musicians concentrating on blowing a G sharp. During a full minute, they just stood there, the tone of their instruments slightly unstable in their efforts to find the right level. This sequence had a different impact on the monks. A high delegation of lamas was sent over to Boonzajer to congratulate him: there, you see, this was exactly the kind of music that is important. Westerners could do it after all!

In general, the monks were not quite able to understand why Boonzajer and his colleague Maarten Rens had come all the way from Holland to film the horn, of all instruments the least important one in their ensemble. One began playing the horn as a little boy, and everyone could learn it. Why not take the shanai instead, which was an instrument one was permitted to touch only after five years of general training? But Boonzajer made a perfect choice, and produced an essentially sympathetic film which makes me look forward to his latest project, Moveable brass, a film by Johan van der Keuken together with Boonzajer, about brass ensembles in Nepal, Surinam, Indonesia and Ghana. I hope to report on that film in the next volume of Chime. (FK)

**SONGS OF PASTA'AY (TAIWAN)**

*Songs of Pasta'ay,* by Hu Tai-Li and Daw-Ming Lee, 1989, 70 min., distributed by the National Film Archive, Taiwan (language: Chinese and English).

This film shows a song and dance ritual performed every two years by the Saisait, an aboriginal tribe in central Taiwan. According to legend, the Saisait learned from a group of dwarfs, the Ta'ay, how to grow crops. Unfortunately, the dwarfs also seduced Saisait women. One day the Saisait chased the dwarfs into the river, and many of them drowned. The *Pasta'ay* ritual, which lasts several days and takes on the aspect of a popular festival, is meant to prevent the few surviving dwarfs coming back to the village to take revenge. The songs performed during the ritual are sung in an archaic language that only some 10 members of the Saisait tribe are still able to understand.

The film gives a general impression of the festival, which is a mixture of archaic traditions and tourist shows. Unfortunately, the ritual songs sung in the film remain without translation and much of the music cannot be heard because of constant voice-overs with superficial commentary about local scenery or the 'age-old' history of the rites. Moreover, images and sound in the film do not always seem to match. It is very hard to tell whether the slow singing that can be heard during several fast rhythmic dances really belongs to those dances or not. Parts of the film are flawed by poor editing or inadequate filming (fast zooming, poor focusing, unsteady images). Some of it may be due to unfavourable recording circumstances in the field. An important chance was missed by not interviewing the few old people who still know the traditional lyrics. We learn mainly about the sequence of ritual events and their overall meaning. The final part is fascinating: much of the entire ritual is mocked and parodied on the last evening of the festival, in a telescoped comic version of the events. Laughter is clearly a part of the religious experience.

It is saddening to hear that only a fraction of the Saisait still adhere to the ancient traditions. The vast majority have moved out of the mountain villages to find work in urban areas and have adapted themselves to modern life. The young Saisait who stayed behind are willing to stage parts of the ritual mainly to satisfy the curiosity of foreign tourists: it has become an attractive source of income. (AS)

**MISCELLANEOUS FILMS (CNRS)**

The *Catalogue des Films,* published in 1992 by the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique Audiovisuel, includes entries on the following anthropological films on China, Taiwan and Hong Kong:


3) *Les Disciples du Jardin des Pointes / Pupils of the Pear-orchard,* by Marie-Claire Quiquemelle, 1987, 55 min. French / English, for a general audience. Documentary showing the life and training of students of the 'Academy of the Pear-Orchard', a Chinese opera school in Beijing. The film gives an impression of the repertoire, the training of students and shows glimpses of some of the plays. Students, teachers and some veteran actors are interviewed.

4) *Fleur de scène: Naissance d'une star de l'Opéra*
de Pékin, by Marie-Claire Quiquemelle, 1986, 29 min. French / Chinese, for a general audience. Portrait of a young actress of Peking Opera, Wang Runqing (17), who comes from a family of actors. Brought up with the limited repertoire of model operas, she entered the Beijing Opera school in the period when cultural restrictions were gradually lifted and the traditional repertoire was taken up again. After seven years of intense training she graduated and started her professional career.

5) De la religion au théâtre en Chine, by Jacques Pimpeneau, 1980, 24 min. French, for general and specialized audiences. Presentation of religious ceremonies in Taiwan and Hong Kong, in which performing arts (dance, drama and puppet theatre) play an important role.

6) Les Dieux de la Chine, by Patrice Fava, 1977, 48 min. French, for general and specialized audiences. Traditional Daoist funeral rites filmed in southern Taiwan. These rites also involve music, theatre, puppet theatre, song and acrobatics.

7) Mazu déesse de la mer. Réalité d'une légende, by Patrice Fava, 1986, 35 min. French, for general and specialized audiences. Documentary about the cult of Mazu. Mazu was a fisherman's daughter on Meizhou Island who lived in the 10th century. According to legend, she was endowed with supernatural powers and saved her brothers in a storm. The cult of Mazu is still of major importance in the life of Chinese fishermen today. Many temples are dedicated to Mazu, and grand ceremonies are held annually to commemorate her anniversary. The film was made in Hong Kong and Taiwan. It includes archival material in black and white.

8) Le Chant des harmoniques, by Hugo Zemp and Tran Quang Hai, 1989, 38 min. French / English, for general and specialized audiences. A study of the vocal technique of diphonic (overtone) singing, best known in Central Asia (especially Mongolia). The singers produce a drone serving as basic tone and then superimpose a melody consisting of harmonics selected in the oral cavity. Tran Quang Hai, ethnomusicologist and musician, visualized the physical and acoustic aspects of this singing technique with the help of radiological and spectral images. The film gives an impression of his research. Furthermore, two Mongolian singers are interviewed and filmed during a concert in Paris. These films are all on 16 mm and video format. Videocassettes can be ordered from CNRS Audio-visual, 1, place Aristide Briand, 92195 Meudon Cedex, France (Tel: #33-1-45075686; fax: 45075900). (AS)

CHINESE INSTRUMENTS ON VIDEO
A video film 'Introduction to Chinese Musical Instruments' with accompanying booklet, designed, written and directed by Yang Mu, has recently been produced by the Education Resource Centre Media Services Unit, Univ. of Melbourne, Australia. It is designed for the purpose of teaching basic knowledge about Chinese musical instruments to Western tertiary students. It should also provide useful information for secondary teaching, and informative for scholarly study and research. The film introduces traditional instruments that currently enjoy popularity nationwide in China, and a few regional instruments, namely: 洞, xiao, suona, haidi, dasuona, darguan, shuangguan, sheng, erhu, gaohu, banhu, jinghu, zhonghu, pipa, ruan, liqin, yueqin, sanxian, yangqin, zheng, qin, dawu, lousi and hulusi. Performing techniques of each instrument are demonstrated and explained, followed by a solo piece typical of the instrument. Technical terms are shown in English and pinyin with Chinese subtitles. The final part of the film introduces ensemble music. The booklet provides written explanations of all the instruments and their performing techniques, plus some background information such as classification, history and social function. Almost all of the musicians performing in the film are graduates from China's leading conservatories, with a performing standard at China's national professional level.

Total duration: 140 min. Available in VHS-PAL (for use in Australia, China, and most European countries) for A$70 (or A$60 inside Australia) and VHS-NTSC (for use in the USA and Japan): A$90. Prices include postage (US$1 is approx. A$1.50). To be ordered by sending cheques to: Mr. Norbert Hrouda, Media Services Unit, Institute of Education, University of Melbourne, Grattan Street, Parkville, VIC 3052, Australia. Cheques should be made payable to the University of Melbourne. Cash or money orders are not accepted. (YM)

FILMS SHOWN AT EACS CONFERENCE
Two films about ritual aspects of Chinese theatre were shown at the 5th Congress of the European Association for Chinese Studies held in Paris, 14-17 September 1992. Both films dealt with regional forms of exorcist theatre performed by masked dancers. The dances are aimed at exorcizing evil spirits, honouring the gods and securing rich harvests, and are performed every year during the New Year Festival or in the period preceding rice harvests in summer. Nuo xi in the Pingxiang area (42 min.) was made by Jacques Pimpeneau in February 1992, during Chinese new year in villages around Pingxiang (Jiangxi Province). It includes martial dances but also comic ones, since laughter is believed to have an exorcist value. Dance of the Gods (50 min.) by Marie-Claire Quiquemelle is the result of three journeys in the Anshun region (Guizhou Province) in the period 1990-92. It introduces dbi, a form of mask theatre and includes interviews with priests and extracts of plays and pays attention to the history of this theatre, its repertoire and acting, the symbolism and manufacture of the masks. (BH)
THE MUSIC OF BRIGHT SHENG


Chinese composer Sheng Zhongliang was born in 1957 in Shanghai. He was a student at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. During the Cultural Revolution, he spent eight compulsory years in Tibet, where he ended up as a piano player performing in a provincial band. After coming to New York in 1982 he changed his name to Bright Sheng, to make it more easily pronounceable for Westerners, but perhaps also as a formal mark of distance from his troubled youth in China. He is now composer-in-residence of the Chicago Lyric Opera and a respected artist on the avant-garde stage, in spite of his continued strong affinities with Western romanticism. 'I could never be an extreme avant-gardist', Bright Sheng says.

Like so many Chinese composers of his generation, he tries to combine elements of traditional Chinese and contemporary Western music. He is among the few Chinese composers who stress the importance of studying Western music from a historical angle. He was a student of George Perle and Hugo Weisgall before moving to Columbia University, where Chou Wen-chung and Mario Davidovsky became his teachers. The impact of these 'academic' composers is immediately evident in his great technical skill and ease in handling a large symphony orchestra. Bright Sheng has found ardent supporters of his music in prominent musicians like Peter Serkin, Gerard Schwarz – both of whom co-operated in the production of this CD – and in Leonard Bernstein, whose impact may be more lasting than that of the others because he acted like a father-figure and stimulated the young composer to find a voice of his own.

It was Bernstein who planned to record Bright Sheng's sophisticated orchestral piece H'un ('Lacerations') for Deutsche Grammophon, but he died in 1991, before the project could be carried out. For Bright Sheng, Bernstein's death was a great personal loss, but it was also, very unfortunately, the loss of an opportunity to have his work played by one of the world's most famous conductors. The New York Chamber Symphony under the baton of Gerard Schwarz offer an excellent alternative, though. Their performance on Decca is brilliant, powerful and entirely convincing. H'un (written in 1988) is a dense and dramatic piece, worthwhile if one is not expecting anything outwardly reminiscent of Chinese traditional music. This work, which established Bright Sheng's reputation in America, is strongly rhythmic and percussive in nature. Its syncopated rhythms and skilfully built-up tensions and climactic outbursts may remind some listeners of Bernstein. American critics have also heard echoes of Penderecki's Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima', and of Ligeti, Varése and Bartók.

Bright Sheng's chamber works are different, more lyrical, more recognizably 'Chinese' as far as melodic materials are concerned. Bright's 'Three Chinese Folk Songs' for soprano, viola and piano (1988) are essentially Western art songs, delicate but overtly romantic. They deserve a far better soloist than Lisa Saffer, who lacks the lightness of tone (and accuracy of pitch) needed to do this work justice. (FK)

FAVOURITE OLD ORCHESTRAL 'HITS' AND NEW WORKS FROM SHANGHAI


‘Dagger Society’ Suite. Favourite Chinese Orchestral Works from the 50s and 60s. Music by Shang Yi, Zhao Yi, Ma Ke, Zhu Jian’er, He Bin, Li Huanzhi, and Ma Shenglong, played by the Shanghai Chinese Orchestra and Chorus, conducted by Xia Feiyun. Recorded 1991. 1 CD, total playing time 64'28". Hugo Productions, HRP 741-2.

Mysterious Light
Compositions for Chinese and Western Ensembles

The Shanghai Conservatory Ensemble

Many talented mainland Chinese composers of avant-garde music left China in the mid-1980s to seek new opportunities in Europe or the United States. Those who stayed behind either fell silent or conformed to China's more conservative musical tastes of the late 1980s. Liu Yuan, born in 1959 in Hangzhou, is one composer who demonstrated a growing inclination towards popular folk-inspired arrangements, after having started out as a musical innovator. One of his early works is actually one of his best: Gui yue, for two guqin (Chinese zithers), xiao (vertical bamboo flute) and baritone, written in 1987, combines a Chinese sparsity of lines with elements of Western contemporary music. The piece was recently recorded, together with other modern works of still younger composers from Shanghai on the CD ‘Mysterious Light’, produced on the label ‘Yellow River’. It is played by the ‘Shanghai Conservatory Ensemble’ – actually an ad hoc group of some of the Conservatory’s leading players.

Gui yue refers to a Chinese saying about the essential unity of opposite forces in life and could be explained as ‘all things start as one and end as one’. The music takes some of its cues from Buddhism – like the chanting of the formula ‘amitalba’. It is at times strongly reminiscent of the vocal lines in Tan Dun’s ‘On Taoism’ (1985) or the weird instrumental sonorities of He Xuntian’s ‘Sounds of Nature’ (1985), but typically for Liu Yuan, the overriding atmosphere is not one of energy and power but one of calm and lassitude – the result is partly interesting and partly verges on kitsch. Liu Yuan is a talented craftsman, but the CD’s claim that he is ‘the most important young composer in China today’ is nonsense and must be based on commercial motives – Liu’s works are unknown outside China and his impact on younger composers is virtually zero. His recent works are facile romantic pieces for Chinese orchestra which embedder on the success formula of ‘Chinese melodies plus Western symphonic gestures’ which became popular in China in the 1950s.

This becomes clear from another CD, ‘The Legend of Shadi-Er’. It contains only pieces by Liu Yuan, played by the Shanghai Conservatory Chinese Orchestra, and offers a good example of the new polished virtuoso style of writing for Chinese instruments. The concept of the ‘Chinese Orchestra’ is very much that of a Western symphony orchestra – but in places where a Western orchestra has violins playing a romantic tune, we will hear a group of mellow Chinese fiddles instead, producing the oriental equivalent of such a melody, and where a Western orchestra has a triumphant outburst of brass, we will hear piercing suona and sheng (shawms and mouth-organisms) to produce a corresponding effect in the Chinese ensemble. The Chinese orchestra has gained a certain popularity in the Far East – more so in Hong Kong and Taiwan than in mainland China, but this may change if the mainland economy continues to flourish. It may lead the country’s re-established middle-class citizens to attach more importance to forms of entertainment that combine national culture with a Western-like ambiance.

To Western conventional tastes, the Chinese orchestra may not always be very appealing. Intonation problems of the Chinese instruments frequently result in awkward resonances – the instruments were never made for playing Western harmonies and modulations in key – and romantic gestures in the music are too often rather conspicuously bor-
rowed from 19th century romantic music, resulting in weak imitations rather than original compositions. Liu Yuan's music in this genre is a queer mix of different styles. The beginning of his orchestral suite 'The Legend of Shadi-er' is a slow Dvořák-like introduction on low strings, but its continuation on bamboo flute is more like a Hollywood-inspired sequence of film music portraying 'oriental atmosphere', while its culmination in a counterpoint of two bamboo flutes sounds almost Spanish in nature. A skillfully composed ragbag of musical gestures, but definitely an acquired taste!

The other works on the CD are similar stylistic mixtures where the original sources of inspiration keep shining through. From a structural point of view, Liu Yuan's pieces are chains of related sequences rather than organically developed materials. In this respect, they are close to most genres of instrumental folk music in China. But the overriding impression is that of a kind of 'symphonic salon music' with Chinese flavours – brilliantly orchestrated, but also rather sentimental and facile to my personal taste. It is interesting to compare the music on this CD with other works for Chinese orchestra written by Chinese composers in the 1950s and 1960s. Such music can be heard on the CD 'Dagger Society Suite', for example, which was produced in 1991 under the label Hugo. The 'Dagger Society Suite' and the other pieces on that CD, written by composers like Zhu Jian'er and Ma Ke, stem from a period when China had only limited access to 19th and 20th century Western music and musical techniques, while Chinese music was subjected to all sorts of political restrictions. Although most of these works would probably be judged as 'Hollywood pastiche' by Western listeners with European-oriented tastes for classical music, it is interesting to note that, in retrospect, these pieces turn out to be much closer to tradition and to traditional Chinese folk music than Liu Yuan's compositions. Miniature works like Zhu Jian'er's 'Days of Emancipation' and Li Huanzhi's 'Spring Festive Overture' have retained a freshness and directness of approach that is hard to find in works written for Chinese orchestra in the 1980s. It is no exaggeration to say that substantial compositional practice in writing and arranging for Chinese orchestra has been developed in China over the past forty years. Some elements have turned into conventions – in slow introductory passages on lower strings one invariably hears Chinese guitars (zhongguo) rumbling along, for example, and in excited passages there will always be vivid tunes for the fiddle section doubled on bamboo flutes. What Liu Yuan adds is his much broader experience in functional harmony, in counterpoint and in modern instrumentation. He also adds the sound possibilities of a synthesizer and – in my view – an overdose of shoe polish. His soft-boiled arrangement of the well-known erhu piece 'Reflections of the Moon on Erquan' for xiao, guqin, and erhu could hardly have been written in the revolutionary 1960s, if only for its candlelight atmosphere which almost seems to have erotic overtones. The optimistic and bragging mood of the 'Dagger Society Suite' – music written in the heyday of Chinese totalitarianism – sounds almost innocent by comparison...

In my view, it is rare to find attractive new works for Chinese instruments on the Chinese mainland at present. Developments in this field may be more promising in Hong Kong and in Taiwan, where the Chinese orchestra has become a flourishing institute and a focal point of urban musical culture. Whether the Chinese orchestra will ever become more than a musical curiosity for Western listeners is still an open question. Those who are interested in the genre will usually have to resort to sound recordings to get an impression.

Now let me return to the CD 'Mysterious Light', which illuminates a rather different side of modern Chinese instrumental music. It shows, if nothing else, that some young composers on the mainland continue to write works in avant-garde style (partly for Western instruments), albeit with less convincing results than the generation of Tan Dun and He Xuntian. Xu Dong Fei's 'Mysterious Light', for violin, bassoon, piano and percussion – the piece from which the CD takes its name – depends on Western atonalism but has nothing new to say in it. An Chengbi's 'Meditation' (Minglxue) for a septet of flute, clarinet, strings, harp and percussion is far more original and vital and holds a promise for this composer's future. An Chengbi (actually: Soong Pier-Ang) is a student of Korean descent who was born in Heilongjiang in 1965. His music combines serialist influences with the quietude and meditative character of much Korean traditional music. There is a slight touch of Messiaen in his works. 'Verse' (Sandiao) for violin
and piano, also written by An Chengbi, is less attractive, notwithstanding a superb performance by one of Shanghai’s leading champions of the violin, He Xuan. Qin Wen-chen, another student originally from northern China (born in 1960 in Inner Mongolia) contributes what is perhaps the boldest and most convincing piece of the CD. Written in 1990, his ‘2.1-2’ for two cellos, piano and two percussion players is original both in setting and musical expression. The piece is strongly percussive and alternately close to Bartók’s Sonata for two pianos and percussion and to Chinese traditional percussion music. Qin Wenchen shows that there is still hope for a true avant-garde movement within China, in spite of current limitations imposed on young composers, especially at the music conservatories — where everything past the stage of twelve-tone music is eyed with great apprehension. The more academically accepted (and more boring) direction in contemporary Chinese music is represented by Li Wenping’s song ‘Inconstancy’ for soprano and chamber ensemble, an atonal piece in a spineless early 20th-century Western style that expresses neither the ‘burning fire’ nor the ‘icy cold’ that the composer wants us to hear.

It is a curious fact that this CD emerged from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, actually a stronghold of musical conservatism. It is one of the very few CDs of contemporary music to be produced in mainland China over the past two years. But then — it may not have been formally issued in Shanghai. The recordings were made in the sound studio of the Conservatory, but they were allegedly made for private purposes (as is the case, too, with the other CD under the same label, ‘The Legend of Shadi-er’). The musicians who co-operated in these recordings received no payment and — as I found out — were largely unaware that a CD of their performances had been produced for sale in the West. The record label ‘Yellow River’ is apparently manufactured in Germany. The sound engineer in Shanghai, Wu Tianchi, may be one of the few people in China to actually profit from these projects. As long as authors and performers’ rights are not properly protected in the People’s Republic, situations like these can occur — they are in fact very much a sad reality in the recording industry in China, at least where recordings of traditional and ‘serious’ music are concerned. (FK)

SICHUAN OPERA


Lovers of Chinese Opera in France were able this spring to enjoy performances of the Third Company of the Sichuan Opera of Chengdu, when it toured France with a staging of ‘The White Snake’, a traditional story about a white and a blue snake spirit who descend to earth in human form to arrange a liaison between the white snake and a young scholar. Their love affair and the attempts by a powerful Buddhist monk to separate the two lovers are the subject of numerous Chinese opera plays in which singing, acting, dancing and stylized combat are equally important elements. Opera freaks who missed the Sichuan opera company’s performances in France can now enjoy their particular version of ‘The White Snake’ on CD, but of course, the visual dimension of the opera is sadly missing here.

François Picard wrote a sympathetic introduction in which he refers to the Chinese theatre as the intersection of a great many different arts — literature, music and dance being paramount — and he points at the Brechtian qualities of Chinese opera: its refusal of realism and the fact that its dramatic interest does not arise from the plot, which is familiar to the spectators, but from the performance skills of the actors and their abilities to portray the emotions particular to the story.

This version of ‘The White Snake’ is sung in Sichuanese. The local dialect with its typical speech inflections is one of the characteristic elements of Sichuanese opera, which has developed over the past three centuries from such diverse elements as boatmen songs, popular balladry and various local theatre genres. It is well-known for its attractive tunes, wide-ranging vocal colours, prominent per-
cussion accompaniment and southern sense of humour. In the orchestra, we hear – along with a massive battery of drums, gongs and cymbals some of which are specific to Sichuan Opera – two transverse bamboo flutes and two suona (shawms, which function either as plaintive oboes or as martial trumpets). The music is skilfully composed by Wang Wenxun (born 1956) on the basis of the repertoire’s existing traditional melodies and rhythmic formulas. He applies the vocal and instrumental forces – including a chorus that comments on the action and serves as the ‘soul and eyes’ of the performance – with great restraint and with a delicate sense of musical and dramatic contrast. The inclusion of a chorus is yet another typical element of Sichuan Opera.

Traditionally, most opera plays are anonymous and exist only as part of an oral tradition or in handwritten copies in the possession of individual actors. The oldest known version of a Sichuan Opera based on ‘The White Snake’ dates back only to 1830, although the story itself can be traced to a much earlier period. It was performed without a written libretto and lasted seven hours – the performance frequently ran to two or three days. In 1959, the Chengdu Sichuan Opera Company produced a first libretto which curtailed the story to three hours and which removed certain objectionable attitudes with respect to sex and feudal social relationships. The current, recorded version of ‘The White Snake’ is based on a libretto by playwright Xu Fen (born 1933) which remains quite similar to the traditional play, except for an important shift in thematic emphasis. (The leading character assumes the proportions of a modern, heroic, independent woman fighting for her love.) Xu Fen had had a passion for the story since childhood and wrote her own version of it ‘for fun’ in 1980, highlighting an element of the plot that is specific to the Sichuanese version: the blue snake is a man who has fallen in love with the white snake. Although he knows that she will not return his love, he offers her unflinching friendship and even helps her to win the love of the young scholar. Xu’s libretto is marked by a strong emotional sensitivity, especially with respect to the main female character, but also by a taste for spectacular stage effects. ‘The White Snake’ is a rather demanding story because its leading actors are required to display both vocal skills and elaborate combat skills on the stage. The opera fuses ‘civil’ and ‘martial’ elements to an unusual extent. The Third Company of the Sichuan Opera of Chengdu staged Xu Fen’s initial version with great difficulty. It was revised in 1985 and is performed on CD in this revised version, with actors and singers who are fully capable of mastering their difficult parts.

The recording was made under rehearsal conditions, i.e. without the distracting noise of an audience. True enough, for the actors, this meant that they had to work in a static studio situation, and for the listeners – in this case – that they would be able to hear on the CD the echo of bustles in the wings, fights and falls in an empty studio. The great advantage is that the sound of the performance itself is crystal clear. One can enjoy to the full the marvellous vocal qualities of the main singers Chen Qiaoru, Liuping, Sun Yongbo, Zhu Jianguo and Sun Puxie. The recording is supplemented by a performance of the story-singer Xie Huiren (born 1947), who sings the final part of ‘The White Snake’ in his own version, impersonating the various roles by changing the sound of his voice. He accompanies himself on the long bamboo drum zhuqin, which he plays directly with his fingers.

A commendable recording. The 2-CD set is accompanied by a 66-page booklet with six full-colour illustrations, a commentary in French and English and the full text of the opera libretto in Chinese characters and in French translation. (FK)

PIANO MUSIC BY TCHEREPNIN


Alexander Tcherepnin (1899–1977) was a Russian-born composer and pianist who left his native country in 1921 and settled in Paris, from where he launched an international career as a pianist-composer. In 1934–37 his travels in the Far East brought him into contact with Chinese and Japanese music and musicians. Tcherepnin was an unabashed romantic who embroidered on the romantic styles of Rachmaninoff and Scriabin and combined them
with Prokofievian grotesqueness and machine-like precision in his own works. Less prolific and less adventurous than Prokofiev, Tcherepnin was still a considerable craftsman and a respectable artist full of 'poetry and bravura' – as Virgil Thomson characterized him. He was very productive in almost every medium: he wrote four symphonies, six piano concertos, three operas, twelve ballets and a large body of piano and chamber music.

Tcherepnin termed the years 1933 to 1941 his 'folklore period', when much of his work was inspired by Russian and Oriental folk themes. During part of this period, he also taught young Chinese and Japanese composers and urged them to take an interest in their own native traditions. In Tokyo, he founded a publishing house (Collection Tcherepnin) to promote the work of his pupils. In Shanghai he met the young pianist Lee Hsien Ming (Li Xianmin) whom he eventually married. In 1934, he organized a competition for piano works in Chinese style in Shanghai which was won by He Luting with his celebrated little salon piece Mutong duandii ('The Cowherd's Flute'). Tcherepnin himself offered an interesting example of what could be done with Chinese tunes in his Five Concert Etudes for piano op.52, which were composed during 1934-36 in Paris, Shanghai, Myanoshita (Japan) and New York. Some of them are based on Chinese tunes or imitations of instruments like guqin and pipa, while others use material of Tcherepnin's own invention. They sound very familiar to anyone who is in touch with the romantic Chinese piano repertoire of the 1940s to 60s. Tcherepnin's harmonizations are straightforward and close to the pentatonic material. They include incidental reminiscences of Debussy, but cannot stand any serious comparison with the French master's piano etudes of two decades earlier. Some of Tcherepnin's etudes, like 'Shadow Play' and 'Punch and Judy', could have been written by Chinese composers like He Luting or Ding Shander.

Tcherepnin, who settled in America after the Second World War, never lost sight of romanticism, although he was a passionate lover of experiments; he devised a nine-tone scale which became known as the 'Tcherepnin scale' and invented his own system of polyphonic rhythms. From the 1920s onwards, he flirted with neo-classicism and dissonant counterpoint. This CD offers a broad and unique impression of his stylistic wanderings, from the early 'Sonatine Romantique' (1918) to the late and unpublished pieces from 'Opivochki' (1975-1977). A string quartet by Tcherepnin was recently recorded by the New World Quartet in the series Unknown String Quartets, published by Vox (2nd volume, 2 CDs, no.11-57752; it also includes works by Surinach, Hindemith, Bloch, Stravinsky, Rozsa and Korngold). In the late 1950s, Willi Reich wrote a substantial biography of Tcherepnin (Bonn, 1959, revised 1970). (FK)

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC FROM HONG KONG

Orchestral Compositions by Hong Kong Contemporary Composers. Works by Richard Tsang, Daniel Law, Law Wing-fai, Chan Wing-wah, Doming Lam and Chen Ning-chi. The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Yip Wing-sie. 1 CD, total playing time 72'17". Recorded October 1987, Hong Kong. HK Records 8.242119.

Chamber Music by Hong Kong Contemporary Composers. Works for Chinese and for Western instruments by Tim Wilson, Kwan Nai-chung, Daniel Law, Law Wing-fai, Lam Man-yee and Clarence Mak. Various performers. 1 CD, total playing time 60'17". Recorded 1988 in Hong Kong. HK 8.242120.

Contemporary Hong Kong Music. A Collection of Piano Works by Doming Lam, Shi Kum Por, Chen Ning-chi, Fu Yum Chi, David Gwilt, Richard Tsang and Chan Wing Wah. Performed by Nancy Loo, Vivian Choi and Tam Ka-Kit. 1 CD, total playing time 76'37". Recorded 1990 in Hong Kong. HK Records 8.242142.

In Western academic culture, 'contemporary music' will either call to mind the avant-garde works of composers like Ligeti, Boulez, Carter, Cage, Crumb or conjure up images of progressive rock or jazz musicians. In both cases the notion essentially refers to music that is somehow technically and stylistically innovative, if not downright provocative. In Hong Kong, 'contemporary music' is hardly such an ideologically loaded term. It simply refers to (academic) music written in current times, without raising expectations with regards to its style or the composers' position in society. This is the impression one gets when listening to three CDs of 'con-
temporary' music that have been released in Hong Kong over the past few years.
Some of the works recorded here are clearly inspired by Western avant-gardes, others are overtly romantic, following 19th century European conventions. For an uninformd Western listener, it is baffling to find quasi-experimental works for prepared piano by David Gwilt and Chang Wing-wah next to Chinese Tchaikovsky-flavoured little salon pieces by Shi Kum Por and Fu Yum Chi, all on one and the same CD. Part of the explanation must perhaps be sought in the importance attached to social hierarchy in the artistic world of Hong Kong, where older composers are venerated and honoured and always take pride of place among their colleagues in concerts and festivals. Moreover, Chinese audiences in Hong Kong do not draw a sharp line between conservative and progressive composers because they do not experience a stylistically mixed program as a collision of different musical worlds: Shi Kum Por's heroic Symphonies - following conventions from the days of Beethoven - and Clarence Mak's experiments in electronic sound and atonal melody both present fairly 'new' traditions to Hong Kong, with a time distance measured in months rather than in centuries.

From an international point of view, even the music of most of the younger composers in Hong Kong can hardly be called 'new' or 'progressive'. Naturally, these composers write for their own audiences in the first place, and develop their own artistic standards and practices. Local success is all-important for them, although some may complain about the lack of international attention and about the influence this may have on local sponsorship. Within Hong Kong, avant-garde composers have to fight hard against serious financial limitations and conservative cultural attitudes. In the light of local conditions, they have achieved a great deal. Hong Kong composers played a significant role in the establishing of the Asian Composers' League (1973). They hosted international festivals including the ISCM World Music Days in 1988, set up their own Hong Kong Composers’ Guild in 1986 and founded groups like the Hong Kong Sinfonietta and the 'Ensemble New Music'. Radio-producer, conductor and composer Richard Tsang and some of his colleagues played a crucial role in winning over new audiences - not to speak of local musicians - to a broad range of new trends in music. The Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra commissioned many local composers to write new works. But in spite of all these respectable and hopeful activities, composers from Hong Kong are rarely heard on the international concert stage; few of their works are ever performed abroad, and not a single composer from Hong Kong can boast of an international reputation comparable to that of Toru Takemitsu, Isang Yun or Tan Dun.

One of the most successful Hong Kong artists on the international stage is actually still Doming Lam, an older generation artist who studied composition in Toronto and California in the late 1950s and who introduced moderately modern sounds à la Stravinsky and Bartók in Hong Kong in the 1960s, at a time when 19th century tonal romanticism still prevailed on the local music scene. Since Doming Lam began to write his music - now almost four decades ago - many younger artists have emerged in his surroundings, some of whom follow far more 'progressive' trends, but few seem to match Doming Lam in terms of artistic versatility and expressive power.

In spite of an impressive cosmopolitan outlook and a booming economy, Hong Kong is in many ways an isolated society, squeezed in unhappily between the cultural paranoia and political pressures of Communist China and the overbearing and unin-
interested attitude of British colonialism. The surrounding countries, from Taiwan to India, all share with Hong Kong the problems of a colonial past and of rapid social transformations which have changed the face of their cultures and artistic traditions almost overnight. The young and extremely vulnerable avant-garde circuit is only one aspect of those changes.

The situation at present can perhaps best be summarized as a cultural development at a great many different levels and speeds, with very different degrees of inclination towards cosmopolitan or Western artistic standards. The main problem for composers in Hong Kong may well be that they are too much focused on finding their own voice, so much so that they fail to communicate with cultural developments abroad. Not that I think they should accept Western standards as their own, or that 'internationalism' is in itself an absolute requirement for any artist. But under the circumstances, it may be hard to escape in the near future, in a world that continues to grow smaller every day and that forms new cultural alliances all the time. There will always be tensions between local and international standards of artistic excellence. Such tensions may even increase as a consequence of growing exposure to cultural impulses from abroad. But at the same time, there will also be an increasing area of international consensus when it comes to artistic values, and cultural survival in the future may actually depend on that, certainly for those who have already 'internationalized' their art to some extent.

Hong Kong may be expected to play a leading role in Asian economic supremacy in the 21st century, but culturally speaking, I wonder whether it is ready for such a position. Notwithstanding a number of important cultural festivals and other excellent international initiatives, the country is basically as inwardly directed as the People's Republic. Hong Kong pays surprisingly little attention to world music – except for Chinese music, but even the interest in Chinese native traditions is in many ways limited. As in all great urban centres, local authorities in Hong Kong spend far too little money on culture – be it native or foreign – because it is viewed as a luxury, not as an essential part of social education and a guarantee for future social stability. In my opinion, composers of new music in Hong Kong deserve far more generous financial support for their creative efforts, but this should basically be part of a wider program in which cultural openness towards both Western and non-Western music traditions is promoted. Contemporary music is still a potentially powerful window to a more broad-minded cultural attitude. It brings in a whole world of new sounds, and is also a potential export possibility for new native sounds.

For the time being, composers in Hong Kong are still striving to win more recognition even within their own circles. The three CDs mentioned here do not testify of an exciting boom of great talent, but some of the works recorded are certainly worthwhile, and many of the best works written in Hong Kong may not be included in this present selection.

Perhaps the most interesting of the three CDs is the one with chamber works, because it demonstrates most clearly the individual qualities (and limitations) of the composers involved. Timothy Wilson (a native American, but living in Hong Kong since 1974) wrote a charming and attractive 'modernistic' piece for Chinese traditional instruments, 'Autumn Landscape', which demonstrates that a Western mind can sometimes master Chinese idioms just as skillfully as a Chinese one can handle Western idioms. In this respect, Daniel Law's 'Variations from Themes on Malacandra' for flute, bassoon and piano, a funny and unpretentious chamber piece in a Western neoclassical vein makes for an interesting comparison. Law Wing Fai's and Lam Man-Yee's works on this CD are more ambitious but not necessarily more convincing. Clarence Mak's 'Death Be Not Proud' for mezzo-soprano, flute and tape is an expressive setting of John Donne's beautiful sonnet, creating a maximum of effect with relatively simple means. The CD with orchestral pieces combines various strands of neoromanticism with occasional excursions into more advanced idioms. Richard Tsang, Daniel Law, Chan Wing-Wah, Law Wing-Fai and Chen Ning-chi are skillful orchestrators, though their works sound to me mostly like Western film music of the 1960s and 70s. The mood sways between Lawrence of Arabia and Planet of the Apes, with very little to capture a more demanding ear. Doming Lam's 'Thanksgiving to Joe-kwan, the Kitchen God', has a more intimate and more personal atmosphere. It also seems more traditionally 'Chinese' in spirit, thanks mainly to the prominent role of percussion and the bold and unashamed preference for rough and noisy passages. It is actually 'program music' from beginning to end: a kind of miniature Chinese opera without vocal parts. The quietly emerging sound of a Chinese mouth-organ in a silent passage in the heart of the piece is an interesting trouvaille.

The CD with piano pieces is disappointing in various ways. Doming Lam treats the piano as a pipa or zheng to convey a series of traditional Chinese tunes, but fails to convince the listener that pipa or zheng would have been less suited to realize his intentions. The piano wins nothing from it, and the endless tremolos and arpeggios become irritating in the end. Shi Kum Por and Fu Yum Chi write for piano as if nothing has changed in the world since the days of Alkan and Gottschalk. Is it craftsmanship without ambition or ambition without historical awareness? The same question can be asked of Chen Ning-chi, though he aims at something beyond the scope of
little miniatures or salon music in his 'Cherishing Thoughts of the Red Cliff'. David Gwilt (born in Scotland but active as a composer in Hong Kong since 1970) and Chan Wing-wah are represented with more ‘progressive’ piano works. Their cautious forays into the piano’s interior create sonic effects that may be new for Hong Kong, but Richard Tsang’s ‘Images of Bells’ – while more conventional in technique and at times surprisingly simple in form – opens the door to a more interesting world of aural imagination. Some parts of it remind me of the spirit of guqin music. (FK)

GE GANRU FOR PREPARED PIANO


Ge Ganru (born 1954 in Shanghai, currently a resident of New Jersey, USA) is essentially a percussive composer, who evokes rhythms and sonorities as close as possible to the spirit of either Chinese guqin or traditional percussion music. Some of his most remarkable works were written in close co-operation with the pianist Margaret Leng Tan from Singapore, who specializes in contemporary music, particularly in music for prepared piano. Ge Ganru’s Guyue (‘Ancient Music’) is a suite of four piano solo pieces, written in 1986, which are conscious imitations of Chinese instruments (gong, pipa, guqin and drum). Ge Ganru superbly brings out the inner qualities of these instruments, embroidering on the expanded pianistic techniques of composers like John Cage and George Crumb. Ge Ganru made his own discoveries inside the piano and wrote an attractive suite that shares moments of classical grandeur with gestures as intimate and mystical as a hardly audible slide on a guqin string.

On the CD ‘Sonic Encounters’, Ge Ganru’s music can be compared with the achievements of composers who partly acted as his source of inspiration. Works like Cage’s ‘Primitive’ (1942) raise comparisons with Indonesian gamelan, but there are still other links with Asian sounds and Asian musical aesthetics in the pieces played on this CD, such as Alan Hovhaness’ preoccupation with the Indian classical raga in ‘Jhala’ (1952) or Somei Satoh’s fusion of 19th century romanticism with Japanese modal sensibilities in ‘Cosmic Womb’ (1975). A CD of considerable interest. (FK)

CHINESE FOLK MUSIC

The Chen Danac Chinese Ensemble


The Chen Danac Chinese Ensemble appears to be an offspring of the London Chinese Orchestra. Chen Danac is the son of a leading Buddhist of the White Cloud Temple in Shanghai, and himself a respected researcher of Daoist and Buddhist music. He had edited and produced important series of recordings of Chinese religious music and written substantial essays on the subject before coming to Europe in 1988. He first lived in France but moved to Great Britain in 1990. In the West Chen Danac has gradually shifted his activities from scholarly research to the playing and teaching of Chinese music, no doubt because it earns him a living. Chen, a graduate of the Shanghai Conservatory, is an accomplished erhu performer in the currently popular 'virtuoso' style, which borrows extensively from Western violin music and violin playing techniques. All the same,
one can only regret the loss of an excellent scholar in a field which is explored by too few genuinely competent researchers. By contrast, there are numerous conservatory-trained Chinese fiddle-players who play like Chen Daacn does on this CD. There are literally hundreds of [far cheaper] tapes and CDs available from Chinese companies with exactly the same kind of repertoire which we can hear on this recording, 'Purple Bamboo Melody', 'Horse Race', 'Bumper Harvest', 'Autumn Moon on the Han Palace' and all the other old-timers of popular instrumental music are included. There is nothing wrong with the technical capacities of the players. In fact, they display the sort of technical perfection which makes you sigh with relief when you finally come across a passage where there are some intonational problems or some rough edges. Personally, I prefer genuine Chinese folk music, but there is probably an audience for this type of conservatory style performances in the West, too. (FK)

NANGUAN BALLADS


Nanguan is a tradition of ballad singing in vernacular language found in Daoist temples in some areas of southeast China. The performers belong to an elite of wealthy peasantry or merchant classes who practise their art as a kind of lay ministry, partly within a liturgical framework. Their music is not religious in nature, however. The majority of the Nanguan ballads deal with love, and performance practice is viewed as something resembling a court tradition. In 1982, Kristofer Schipper, a respected scholar of Daoist traditions, produced a commercial recording of Nanguan ballads sung by Tsai Hsiao-Yüeh on the label Ocora. It sold over 15,000 copies – which is an unusually high number for traditional music. There were good reasons to continue the project with this excellent singer. In September, a 2-CD set with another 34 ballads were published, complete with Chinese texts, French and English translations and a commentary by Kristofer Schipper and François Picard. Several more volumes are scheduled to appear later. We hope to publish an extensive review of these recordings in the next volume of CHIME. (FK)

ZHENG MUSIC – A DISCOVERY

Huixian (Glistening Strings*). Traditional and newly composed guzheng music from China and Japan, performed by Jiang Xiaoying. 1 CD, total playing time 57"29". Recorded in Chiba, Japan, April 1989. Zen Records VICG-8019, produced 1991. (Victor Musical Industries Inc. Tokyo, Japan.)

This is one of the finest records of guzheng music published over the past few years. Jiang Xiaoying is a very gifted zither player from Beijing who began her musical education at a very early age. She was taught by her mother before enrolling at the Beijing Central Conservatory in the early 1980s. She visited the United States in 1986 and later continued her studies and concert activities in Japan. Jiang performed on the soundtrack of Bernardino Bertolucci's film 'The Last Emperor' and has taken part in concerts in Japan and in New York with Japanese composer Ryuichi Sakamoto. This CD contains a mixture of traditional and new pieces for guzheng which demonstrate Jiang Xiaoqiong's versatility in both Chinese classical music and contemporary genres as well as her unusual artistic integrity.

Her rendering of the Melhia sannong stays in line with the elegance and economic sparsity of lines that characterize the better-known traditional version of that piece for guqin. Not only here, but in all the items recorded, Jiang's playing is remarkably free of overtly sentimental gestures and superficial virtuoso displays which have spoiled so much of the Chinese zheng performance traditions in recent years. Sakamoto's remark in the accompanying booklet that 'Chinese music takes as its point of departure an almost acrobatic degree of technical proficiency' clearly refers to the contemporary Chinese conservatory style of playing, which emerged as a consequence of contacts with the West. Perfection in music means an entirely different thing in traditional Chinese culture, depending also on the specific genre or style of music concerned. There is no doubt about Jiang Xiaoqiong's conservatory back-
roads of Wangfujing in Beijing. In Europe, you can buy a set by contacting Jiang Anxi (London), telephone #44(0)81.3264072.

This is an important series, including e.g. sections of the Buddhist t'ang yankou ritual and various ancient Instrumental suites. It is part of a general recorded anthology of Buddhist and other traditional music, called the 'Audio and Video Encyclopedia of China', and produced by the Shanghai Audio and Video Company. The editor is Tian Qing of the Music Research Institute, Beijing.

Two splendid further releases in this series are: T'ianning si changsong (Vocal liturgy of the T'ianning si Buddhist temple, Changzhou), 3 tapes, YAF 12-14; and: Chongqing Luohan si yankou [The t'ang yankou ritual of the Luohan si Buddhist temple in Chongqing] 4 tapes, YAF 15-18. The T'ianning si is the major centre for vocal liturgy in China. Previous releases include Buddhist music from Tianjin (2 tapes) and Chaozhou (4 tapes). (SJ)

MISCELLANEOUS COMMERCIAL RECORDINGS

Guogong yinyue ('Music from the Old Palace'). Set of two tapes issued by the Folk Art Company of Foshan (Guangdong). It contains thirty-two pieces performed by the local 'Orchestra of the Ancient Chinese Court'. The tapes were published by the People's Music Publishing House. Price: 15 RMB.

Guangdong yinyue jingxuan ('A Choice of Cantonese Music'). Set of two tapes of Instrumental arrangements of traditional Cantonese music and new compositions in Cantonese style, performed by two respected musicians: Lu Jin and Yu Qiwei. It includes representative works by two older masters of Cantonese music, He Liutang and Lu Wenlong, as well as works by professors Lu Zhongren and Huang Jinfu and by popular composer Qiao Fei. Published by the Taipingyang yingyin gongsii (Pacific Ocean Film Music Company) from Guangzhou, and produced by the Ao sheng yinxian gongsii (Cantonese Sound Audio-Visual Company). Price: 15 RMB.

Lu Xiaoqie Yangju duzou zhuangli ('Special series of fiddle music played by Lu Xiaoqie'). A series of 30 cassettes with tunes from various local opera genres performed by Lu Xiaoqie on the two-stringed fiddle. Lu graduated from the Jiangsu Opera School in 1965, and works at the Yangzhou Opera Troupe of Jiangsu Province as main fiddle performer, composer and teacher.

Lu has become known for his mastery of many different local opera styles. This series gives an overview of his skills, grouping together variants of the same qupipan different playing styles. The series is produced by the Zhongguo yinyuejia yinxian chubanshe. (WH)

Jiang Xiaoqing is an artist with consummate skills and a very delicate sense of Chinese traditional music. She is open to innovations and ready to explore new possibilities on her instrument, but only if they correspond in a natural way with its traditional character – a quality not always observed in conservatory-trained performers of Chinese instruments. (FK)

Buddhist Music Tapes

A series of 5 audio-tapes of the Buddhist ritual music of Wuai Shan should now be available from the Waiven Shudian record shop just west of the cross-
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London, 9 – 11 September, 1994

2nd International CHIME Conference
organized by the European Foundation for Chinese Music Research.

A two-day conference with concerts,
films, video & live demonstrations.
Theme:

East Asian Voices
living folk traditions in eastern Asia

Place: School of Oriental & African Studies (SOAS) London

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• Voices addressing the Gods
• Voices addressing Mortals

The conference is open to scholars in the field of music, anthropology and East Asian languages (notably Chinese, Japanese and Korean) and to others with a scholarly interest in the vocal folk music, living folk-mythology, epics and vocal rituals of China, Japan, Korea and adjacent areas.

There will be special emphasis on minority cultures, and special attention will be paid to interdisciplinary research, cross-cultural studies and research with the help of audiovisual materials (film, video and sound recordings).

The programme committee consists of: Dr. David Hughes (Ethnomusicology Department SOAS), Dr. Keith Howard (Korean Studies Department, SOAS), Frank Kouwenhoven (CHIME Foundation, Holland) and Stephen Jones (CHIME Foundation, London). Send your proposals for contributions to:

CHIME, P.O.Box 11092, 2301 EB Leiden, The Netherlands, Europe.
Phone/Fax (31) 71 - 133.123.
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GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

1. The CHIME Journal welcomes for consideration scholarly articles in English addressing theoretical and practical (performance) aspects of traditional, folk and popular music of China and adjacent countries, from historical, analytic and critical points of view. Contributions will be judged not only for quality of contents, but also for originality and pioneer spirit.

2. Authors are requested to submit two copies of their article and of all related materials. This should include brief biographical data on the author and an abstract of no more than 150 words, indicating major conclusions and general (musicological, anthropological) relevance of the topic or study discussed. All materials must be submitted on A4 paper, used on one side only, double-spaced throughout, with ample margins.

3. Tables, maps, musical transcriptions and other illustrative materials should have captions and should be presented on separate sheets. Indicate exactly the location of each illustration or example in the main text. The CHIME Journal encourages the submission of suitable photographs. Photocopies of photographs are acceptable for first review, but high-quality prints must accompany the final manuscript.

4. Authors employing an Apple Macintosh word-processor are invited to supply a disk copy of their contribution, in Microsoft Word, in addition to the printouts. We prefer ‘clean’ versions of articles without elaborate pre-programmed lay-out instructions.

5. Full details of references cited should be given in footnotes. If necessary, add a bibliography at the end of the article, arranged alphabetically by author. Chinese glossaries are appreciated.

6. Manuscripts must be in English and observe British conventions of usage and spelling. Only manuscripts that have not been published in English elsewhere are considered for publication. We cannot consider articles that are currently submitted for possible publication elsewhere. The editors reserve the right to edit contributions before publication.

7. Manuscripts are read by members of the editorial board and, if necessary, by outside referees. The review process is normally completed within four months. Manuscripts and disks will be returned on request.

8. Authors with a writing knowledge of Chinese are kindly requested to suggest a Chinese translation for the title of their article (for our page of contents in Chinese). Western authors should also give us a Chinese translation of their name if they have one.

9. Authors of articles published will receive three copies of the journal free of charge.
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CHIME is a foundation for the promotion of Chinese music research. It was founded early in 1990 by European music scholars from four different countries. Its major function is to create a European network of scholars of Chinese music who meet regularly to discuss their work in progress. CHIME takes an interest in Han Chinese music, but also in other native music traditions within the current geographical borders of China, and even in musical cultures of areas bordering China, if their traditions are closely related to those inside China and allow comparative study.

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Support for research
CHIME is financed mainly by private funds and by the contributions of subscribers to the Journal of the foundation. Donations by organizations or by private persons are welcomed. The foundation in turn can provide limited support for research projects on Chinese music carried out within Europe or by European based researchers in China. Priority is given to projects which are the result of some form of co-operation between various academic disciplines, such as musicology, sinology and anthropology.

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