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CHINA AND THE WEST

MUSIC, REPRESENTATION, AND RECEPTION

萬國圖小引

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西海文儒略敬題



HON-LUN YANG AND MICHAEL SAFFLE, EDITORS

China and the West



Wanguo Quantu [A Map of the Myriad Countries of the World] was made in the 1620s by Guilio Aleni, whose Chinese name 艾儒略 appears in the last column of the text (first on the left) above the Jesuit symbol IHS. Aleni's map was based on Matteo Ricci's earlier map of 1602.

China and the West

MUSIC, REPRESENTATION,
AND RECEPTION

Edited by Hon-Lun Yang
and
Michael Saffle

University of Michigan Press
Ann Arbor

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Published in the United States of America by the
University of Michigan Press
Manufactured in the United States of America
⊗ Printed on acid-free paper

2020 2019 2018 2017 4 3 2 1

A CIP catalog record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Yang, Hon-Lun, editor. | Saffle, Michael, 1946– editor.

Title: China and the West : music, representation, and reception / edited by Hon-Lun Yang and Michael Saffle.

Description: Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press, 2017. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2016045491 | ISBN 9780472130313 (hardcover : alk. paper) | ISBN 9780472122714 (e-book)

Subjects: LCSH: Music—Chinese influences. | Music—China—Western influences. | Exoticism in music. | Orientalism in music.

Classification: LCC ML193 .C45 2017 | DDC 780.951—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2016045491>

For Cho, Zoe, Reese, and mom with love

—H·L·Y

*For QI Zhenjun 齐振军, ZHAO Li 赵黎,
ZHAO Yan 赵岩, and ZHOU Xiaoping 周小平,
all of them new members of my family,
as I am a new member of theirs*

—MS

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Preface

The present volume had its origin in a four-day conference held in Hong Kong, a city often regarded as an East-West melting pot. Entitled “East Meets West: Sino-Western Musical Relations/Intersections/Receptions/Representations,” the conference took place at Hong Kong Baptist University from 16 to 19 April 2009 and was made possible by support provided by that university, its Department of Music, and the Hong Kong Arts Development Council. Both the conference and this, the volume that it inspired, testify to the efficacy of cross-cultural and interdisciplinary research. The conference itself brought together musicologists, ethnomusicologists, and music theorists from Austria, Belgium, Canada, Hong Kong, Mainland China, the Netherlands, and the United States. These participants sought to explore issues pertinent to East-West musical encounters of many kinds, especially those involving China.

The phrase *cultural encounters* often refers to actual contacts between individuals or groups of people of different origins, ethnicities, or nations. In the present volume, the term *encounter* refers as well to forms of musical representation, appropriation, and discourse. Encounters may involve products, not merely exchanges of ideas. The goal of this volume is a holistic approach to the study of Chinese-Western musical relationships, whatever their character or outcome. Inevitably, such an approach must be informed by notions of exoticism, orientalism, globalization, transculturation, and hybridity, but our contributors do not let these notions ignore a host of heterogenic/polyphonic cross-cultural musical activities across centuries of exchange. In the introductory essay, Hon-Lun Yang addresses these and other closely related issues in terms of existing theoretical approaches to the Chinese-Western musical “problem.”

Part 1 is devoted to actual encounters between Chinese and European individuals and to the artifacts, instruments, institutions, and compositions that resulted from these encounters. Part 2 examines theatricalized and mediated encounters involving performances of imagined “exotics” by cultural

insiders as well as outsiders, and for Chinese as well as Western audiences. Part 3 is devoted to musical encounters as manifested in musical languages, sonorities, and subject matters of “intercultural” compositions by composers from East and West. Part 4 is devoted to reception studies and considers ways in which differences are articulated in musical discourse by different actors serving different purposes, whether self-promotion, marketing, or modes of national—which sometimes means propagandistic—expression.

Part 1 begins with David Francis Urrows’s study of the pipe organ in China. Urrows opens a window into Sino-Western musical exchanges of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. In addition to facilitating worship, organs functioned as mechanisms of cultural diplomacy and were presented as gifts to several Chinese emperors, to demonstrate what Urrows calls the “curious and wonderful invention from the West.” In his conclusion, Urrows notes that China’s positive and open-minded reception of this Western instrument challenges the myth of an isolationist China intent on rejecting Western culture and technology.

Just as the pipe organ was an early icon of Western technology and engineering, the symphony orchestra served as a symbol of Western imperial power for both resident and expatriate audiences. Hon-Lun Yang’s discussion of the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra (SMO), China’s first professional orchestra, offers insights into another phase of Sino-Western interaction. Established in 1881 as a municipal band serving British interests in Shanghai, the SMO took on a multitude of new meanings and eventually became a metropolitan organization of which Shanghai was and still is proud. As such, the orchestra played an important role in the twentieth-century transculturation of Chinese music.

Cornelia Szabó-Knotik explores the uncharted territory of Austrian-Chinese musical relations. Her essay considers “Chinese” aspects of a nineteenth-century Viennese amusement park, Prince Sou-Chong as a character in an Austrian operetta, Austria’s reception of Chinese pianist Lang Lang, and the exploitation of the “gifted body” in terms of the Sino-Austrian television movie *Mozart in China*. Szabó-Knotik raises a number of issues pertinent to the nature of cultural encounters, from notions of orientalism and chinoiserie that are associated with the performing arts to recent mediated encounters between East and West. Her discussion of *Mozart in China* unpacks film as a form of nationalist self-representation that, as she puts it, “covertly reasserts colonialist prejudices in favor of Western cultural superiority,” revealing the “seemingly banal conclusion” that orientalist attitudes

remain powerful within the twenty-first century's "world of technologically sophisticated unawareness."

Part 2 considers "staged" encounters that exploited as well as repositioned Westernized images of a more or less realistically portrayed China. Michael Saffle deals with some two dozen Chinese-themed operettas and musical comedies presented during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries on London and New York stages. Works considered include Cole Porter's *Anything Goes* and the still-familiar *Chu Chin Chow* as well as *The Pearl of Peking*, *A Trip to Chinatown*, and other "lost" productions. Drawing on Bellman's argument about both the shortcomings of recent musicological discussions "untethered" from the music they purport to engage, and the "pre-emptive disavowal of transcultural musics that don't pass ideological litmus tests," Saffle pays attention primarily to the ways in which Chinese musical tropes—almost entirely Western products that nevertheless incorporated a few concessions to the traditional sources they purported to imitate—help today's scholars understand a repertory now almost entirely forgotten.

James Deaville considers a work more familiar to contemporary enthusiasts of musical comedy, Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Flower Drum Song*, as well as that show's various iterations in print, on stage, and in film. Chinese American immigrant author Chin Yang Lee's 1957 novel about San Francisco's Chinatown became the basis of a successful Broadway show and a well-known Hollywood movie, only to return to Broadway in 2002 as a less-than-successful "revisical." By examining textual and dramaturgical aspects of Lee's original story and its several re-presentations, Deaville casts light on different forms of stereotypical Chinese Americanness and the "Chinatown experience," drawing attention to the complex identity negotiations that, in this case, extended across entire generations and modes of musical-dramatic expression.

Mary Ingraham examines *Iron Road*, a postmodern, politically conscious opera cowritten by Chinese Canadian composer CHAN Ka Nin and Canadian librettist Mark Brownell. As Ingraham points out, *Iron Road* is not merely an illustration of intercultural encounters—many of them highly unpleasant—between Canadian and Chinese communities of a century ago. Instead, the opera also deals with the construction of the trans-Canadian railroad and the lives of the Chinese immigrants who helped build it, and Ingraham's discussion of its character and contents casts light on present-day Canadian interculturality, through "the immediacy and mediating properties of both Chinese cultural traditions and a Western operatic framework engaged for the work."

Part 3 concerns intercultural compositions by both Chinese and Western composers. Nancy Yunhwa Rao's essay deals with well-known contemporary Chinese composers—TAN Dun, CHEN Yi, ZHOU Long, CHEN Qigang, and Bright Sheng—and some of their cross-cultural compositions. Rao points out that what characterizes these individuals in terms of Chinese-Western musical relations is fourfold in nature: the composers themselves number among the success stories of the open-door economic policy of the People's Republic of China; they make good use of Western musical influences; their works reflect a hybridized approach to contemporary cross-cultural composition; and their compositions have been enthusiastically received in the West. Rao also argues that the cultural syntheses produced by these individuals are rooted in *yangbanxi*, the "model works" (especially the "model operas") popularized during China's Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Her arguments, which contradict the opinions of critics eager to valorize Western influences over Eastern ones, revisit the East-West dichotomy in terms of recent Chinese culture and its often surprising musical evolution.

John Winzenburg deals with sinification in terms of timbral mixtures in Chinese-Western fusion works, especially concertos that feature hybrid instrumental sonorities. Beginning with Western notions of timbre, Winzenburg argues that the addition of new—that is, Chinese—instrumental sounds to the Western symphony orchestra exemplifies a cultural power struggle between opposing views of cultural identity and nationhood. Winzenburg also explains that new timbral possibilities provide Chinese as well as Western composers with opportunities to challenge traditional timbral and compositional boundaries—challenges apparent in and contributing to the proliferation, during the past few decades, of fusion/hybrid works such as GAO Weijie's *Dreams of Meeting* for Chinese bamboo flute, Western flute, and orchestra, and WANG Jianmin's *First Erhu Rhapsody* for Chinese two-stringed fiddle and orchestra.

Emile Wennekes examines Dutch composers' intercultural musical efforts within the context of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Sino-Dutch cultural exchanges. By comparing the musical/cultural combinations of "familiar" and "strange" elements in such contemporary compositions as *Hier°*, *Hôtel de Pékin: Dreams for a Dragon Queen*, and *Monkey Subdues the White-Bone Demon*, Wennekes unpacks reception issues central to all cross-cultural musical borrowings and appropriations. As Wennekes him-

self points out, the works in question were intended for Eastern as well as Western audiences, and they were created with both Eastern and Western performers in mind. His conclusions challenge binary notions of exoticism and orientalism, because the Dutch composers he examines have zealously sought to transcend existing cultural boundaries.

Part 4 opens with Eric Hung's intertextual and intercultural reading of the Shanghai Quartet's *Chinasong* CD, especially JIANG Yiwen's arrangements of Chinese folk songs foregrounded in that recording. Hung sheds light on Jiang's modes of self-representation, including music, liner notes, and reviews that, deliberately or accidentally, help consolidate a narrative of Chinese Cultural Revolution traumas previously introduced through first-person memoirs of abuse, especially those published in the United States. For Hung, the ensemble's *Chinasong* project represents a "musical memoir of exile" for American music lovers; for Chinese audiences, it opens "a space that allows Cultural Revolution survivors to discuss their personal experiences and thereby to overcome their personal traumas."

Harm Langenkamp returns to the notion of a Chinese-Western dichotomy through an examination of ways in which the Silk Road has been imagined within the People's Republic of China as well as by its sociopolitical other, the West. After analyzing both contemporary Chinese policies toward the *muqam* and the 2002 Smithsonian Folklife Festival, which featured the Silk Road as one of its themes, Langenkamp argues that both China and the United States use Silk Road imagery and music on behalf of what Fredrick Jameson would call a "symbolic enactment" of "collective unity." In reality, however, the Silk Road remains an example of hegemonic political propaganda, exploited by both Chinese and Western powers, rather than an example of successful multicultural cooperation.

Finally, Frederic Lau evaluates the orientalism embedded in the conception, reception, negotiation, contestation, and representation of cultural differences both inside and outside recent musical activities and artifacts. After reviewing certain aspects of Sino-Western relations, Lau scrutinizes several of the motives behind the quest for "Chineseness"—motives reflected through the showcasing of Chinese musical elements in certain quasi-"exotic" compositions, the use of such extramusical "arguments" as program notes, and critical and audience-driven forms of reception—as well as pressures imposed by global marketing. For Lau, "attention to multiple interdependencies between history, praxis, human agency, production, consump-

tion, and networks of ideological constructions is a must if we are to make sense of musical and cultural production in the twenty-first century and the Sino-Western relationship.”

Following a postscript by Michael Saffle, the volume concludes with a bibliography of principal primary and secondary sources. Online sources and sources from popular newspapers and magazines, cited in authors’ notes, are not included in the bibliography. Throughout the volume, Chinese names are generally presented last name first according to the Chinese practice unless those names are well established in the West or are names associated with publications in English. In such a case, the names are presented according to the Western practice. First occurrences of Chinese names in each chapter are presented surname first in capitalization followed by the given name (e.g., YANG Hon-Lun). In the bibliography, all names—Chinese and Western—are cited in Western order (e.g., “Yang, Hon-Lun”).

For support toward completion of this volume, the editors thank Hong Kong Baptist University, including its Faculty of Arts and Department of Music as well as the conference grant that supported part of the funding of the conference; Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, especially its College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences; the Hong Kong Arts Development Council; and the University of Michigan Press. They also thank HO Wai-Chung, who helped organize the 2009 conference that contributed so much to the pages that follow, and Amanda Liu, who prepared the volume’s bibliography. Thanks as well to our editors Ellen Bauerle, Susan Cronin, and Kevin Rennells. Without their help this volume would never have appeared in print!

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Michael Saffle, Virginia Tech

Music, China, and the West

A Musical-Theoretical Introduction

Hon-Lun Yang

The appropriateness of such phrases as *East-West*, *East meets West*, and even *China and the West* is often challenged. Their use in academic discourse or in the names of institutions and organizations is predicated on a hypothetical dichotomy based on cultural as well as geographical differences.¹ This theoretical construct has long been regarded as binary (i.e., simplistic) and problematic. What is “East” or even China and what is “West” depends largely on the person defining these words, on the purpose(s) for the definitions, and especially on when the distinctions themselves (e.g., national and regional boundaries) were made. Equally questionable is the inherent stereotyping of cultures and people associated with such terms.² Positing an unqualified China-West dichotomy suggests that power relationships and exchanges are equal on both sides of the hyphen or conjunction, which is often far from the truth. A case in point is China’s complex musical interactions with the West during the past century as well as today, which has inspired the theme of this volume: China’s encounters with Western music and, to a lesser extent, vice versa.

After discussing this “oriental-occidental” issue, the present essay is devoted to providing necessary contexts for a better understanding of various forms of musical exchange between China and the West and to examining different theoretical frameworks that have informed previous studies in intercultural and cross-cultural encounters, including exoticism, orientalism, globalization, transculturation, and hybridization. My coeditor and I consider it timely to examine Sino-Western musical encounters from different periods in history, at different occasions of contacts, and in different musical formats. The present volume not only fills the gap in the existing literature

but also promotes cross-cultural understanding in a world in which distance is increasingly compressed through technological transformations. This essay not only provides a theoretical introduction to the rest of the volume but also accounts, to some extent, for its contents.

A SYNOPSIS OF CHINA'S MUSICAL EXCHANGES WITH THE WEST

Chinese definitions of “the West” have shifted over time. Before the Ming dynasty (1368–1644 CE), the term *West* referred to anything west of China’s boundaries. After ZHENG He’s seven voyages of 1405–33 CE, however, this notion was expanded to include regions as distant as India and Arabia. Only during the Qing dynasty (1644–1911 CE) did “the West” come to include Europe and the Americas.³

Musical exchanges between China and the West—whether defined in terms of present-day India, the Middle East, or Europe and North America—have a long history. The Tang dynasty (618–907) was said to be a period marked by metropolitan culture, during which Chinese art and music was supposedly touched by many foreign elements.⁴ One significant phase of East-West exchange took place during the sixteenth century, as a result of European missionaries settling in southern China to spread Christianity.⁵ In the eighteenth century, Western music and musical practices were introduced to the Chinese imperial court through missionaries who served as government officials.⁶ After trade or treaty ports were established on behalf of Western nations—one result of Britain’s victory over China at the end of the First Opium War and of China’s military defeats by other Western nations during the decades that followed—Western music gradually began to enter Chinese society overall.⁷ One example involves military bands and small orchestral ensembles, which emerged in major cities, such as Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin, during the early twentieth century.⁸

After the onset in China of the New Culture Movement in 1919, Western music became commonplace in Chinese cities, especially among the cultural elite.⁹ The subsequent return of Chinese intellectuals from studying abroad, the founding of Western music programs at various universities in Beijing and Shanghai, and the establishment of the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai in 1927 contributed to a large-scale musical Westernization, regarded by Chinese intellectuals—then as well as now—as routes

to modernity.¹⁰ Since the 1930s, Western music, also known as “new music,” has coexisted in competition with traditional Chinese music.

In 1949, the establishment of the People’s Republic of China (hereafter the PRC) opened a new page in China’s musical development, with an array of government-initiated and politically motivated activities and genres. The emergence of a global economy also facilitated the practice of Western music within the PRC, particularly after the end of the Cultural Revolution (1966–76) and the introduction of open-door policies during the early 1980s. The soundscape of present-day China is multifarious; traditional and/or folk music coexists with various types of popular music (local-dialect pop, Chinese or Mandopop, and all types of Western popular music), as well as Western classical music. Millions of Chinese children are currently learning to play Western instruments.

EXISTING STUDIES ON SINO-WESTERN MUSICAL INTERCHANGES

Compared to other areas of Sino-Western studies,¹¹ music has lagged behind in scholarly pursuits, particularly in English language discourses. Such a phenomenon is perhaps a result of both musicological interest in Western practices and ethnomusicological quests for cultural authenticity and tradition in Chinese music.¹² In fact, most of the leading studies on Western music in China have been written by sinologists rather than musicologists or ethnomusicologists.¹³ (Ethno)musicologists’ previous general lack of interest in Sino-Western musical encounters and interchanges is another example of an ingrained East-West dichotomy. When Chinese and Western music cultures are perceived as “different,” both “Eastern” and “Western” genres perceived as “pure” are privileged, an attitude that, inevitably, is reflected in what music scholars study and discuss in their literature.¹⁴ After all, knowledge is closely tied to power. Discourse (research and publication), itself indicative of what is considered important, reinforces the knowledge that builds its own belief system,¹⁵ which reinforces the Chinese-Western divide and overlooks the hybrid nature of contemporary soundscapes, be they Chinese or foreign.

Interests have been increasing in Sino-Western musical interchanges within the West, especially interchanges pertaining to Chinese American or Asian American musical interactions within Canada and the United States.

Notions of diaspora, orientalism, exoticism, imperialism, postcolonialism, and multiculturalism have been employed to cast light on issues pertinent to Chinese American music. Recently, scholars have published books and articles with subjects ranging from the traditions of Chinese music in Chinatowns¹⁶ to the role of Chinese culture in American avant-garde music¹⁷ and American society,¹⁸ the stereotypical/orientalist portrayal and representation of Chineseness on stage and screen,¹⁹ and the perception and reception of Chinese American musicians' performances.²⁰

Two monographs devoted to intercultural music studies possess special relevance for the present volume. The interdisciplinary study *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music* (2004) takes a holistic view of East-West musical relations in its exploration of both Asian-influenced Western composers and Western-influenced Asian composers as agents of cultural exchange.²¹ Issues of intercultural dialogue through music are the focus of *West Meets East: Musik im Interkulturellen Dialog*.²²

In addition to these monographs, several Chinese composers of contemporary music have gained the attention of a number of musicologists and theorists, paving the way for portions of the present volume.²³ A number of recent publications have been devoted to various aspects of contemporary Chinese music, testifying to increasing interest on the part of Western scholars.²⁴ Thus far, however, the present volume is the only one devoted to Sino-Western musical encounters.

There is no denying a Chinese-Western divide in the encounters discussed in this volume. It is foregrounded in sights, sounds, and composition conceptions as well as popular and critical reception. But the notion of such a divide can also be contested. The organ and symphony orchestra, brought to China and discussed in the essays by Urrows and myself, were welcomed by local Chinese. Both have become parts of China's musical culture, which showcases cultural synergy rather than opposition. The portrayal and representation of Chinese themes on the Western stage have long evinced orientalism and stereotyping, but they can also be understood as celebrating multiculturalism; Canadian composer CHAN Ka Nin's opera *Iron Road*, discussed by Ingraham, is a case in point. The hybrid sonorities of Western orchestras showcasing Chinese instrumentation, as discussed in Winzenburg's essay, are not only examples of musical-cultural mixing; for many Chinese, then as well as now, they are icons of national glory, one of many ways of asserting national identity and recognition in a world of unequal political, economic, and cultural Chinese-Western relations.

EXISTING THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS FOR
INTERCULTURAL AND CROSS-CULTURAL STUDIES

The notion of Western music as a “universal language,” especially in regard to its impact on the musical practices of other cultures, has inspired recent works of scholarship devoted to issues associated with the weakening of cultural boundaries in the face of globalization.²⁵ As Bruno Nettl pointed out two decades ago, the world’s musical cultures are converging as a result of the “intensive diffusion of elements derived from European society—its technology, economic and political organizations.”²⁶ After examining the impact of Western music on traditional musical cultures around the world, Nettl concluded that the process might bring musical diversity and enrichment to local cultures, thereby anticipating what has come to be termed “globalization.”

Yet intercultural contacts predated globalization by decades and even centuries. One form of such contact involves the idea of exoticism: a fascination with the unfamiliar that was manifested in literature and art as well as music. Western musical exoticism is generally understood as “the borrowing or use of musical melodies that evoke distant locales or alien frames of reference.”²⁷ As a theoretical framework for discussing intercultural musical influences, especially focusing on musical compositions, exoticism has inspired a critical literature of its own.²⁸ The breath and complexities of musical exoticism have received attention from Ralph Locke, who has applied the notion of “full context”—an otherness communicated not only stylistically but also programmatically—as a way of identifying musical exoticism.²⁹

Recently, discussions of exoticism have entered the study of popular music and musical discourse, as well as studies of the appropriation of Western music by non-Western musical cultures. Philip Hayward, for example, has examined the presence of exotic themes in so-called world music as well as in the works of some American pop singers from the 1950s and 1960s.³⁰ Both the distant past and geographical distance are frequently referenced by pop groups as ways of engaging with present-day audiences. The English Australian rock band Dead Can Dance, for example, employs medievalism, whereas the Chinese fusion group 12 Girls Band alludes to China’s ancient past through its nomenclature and visual allusions in music videos.³¹

In concert reviews and other venues of musical reception and study, exoticism is sometimes invoked to identify (i.e., essentialize) characteristic traits of particular types of local, regional, or ethnic music. A case in point

involves discussions of Brazilian music in the *New York Times*.³² Exoticism is not associated exclusively with Western notions of the unfamiliar. Today, belly dancing in Taiwan, although originally an imported art, has been taken over by the Taiwanese as a form of physical exercise and has thereby lost its original exotic connotations.³³

Exoticism has also long been linked with colonialism and imperialism, and its manifestations in Western music almost inevitably reflect the patronizing attitudes of conquerors toward the conquered. Stereotypical representations of "the Orient" were identified in Edward Said's seminal monograph *Orientalism*.³⁴ In fact, as a critical construct, orientalism provides another framework for studying musical contacts closely tied to exoticism.³⁵ As a postcolonial critique, it has been employed in studies ranging in subject matter from, for example, Mozart's appropriation of the Turkish style³⁶ to Russian musical nationalism,³⁷ musical practices of the British Empire,³⁸ and the music of Asian immigrant communities in California.³⁹

Insights provided through discussions of orientalism and postcolonial theory have empowered scholars to be critical of Western musical practices. Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh, for example, have examined intricate musical relationships between the West and other cultures in terms of borrowings, representations, and appropriations.⁴⁰ Timothy Taylor has taken a step further, to unpack Western musical domination in terms of imperialism, colonialism, and globalization, as well as the ideologies these activities have produced.⁴¹

But the use of orientalism and postcolonial theory as critical frameworks has been confronted with criticism. As Jonathan Bellman has suggested, postcolonial critics often treat all musical references to other peoples or places with suspicion.⁴² Because postcolonial theory focuses attention on unequal power relations and hegemonic exploitation as results of political/economic/social systems, Bellman questions the validity of its application to all intercultural relationships under the auspices of globalization.⁴³ Is it possible for intercultural music to exist outside hegemonies of any and every kind? For the present author, postcolonial theory is problematic because it is itself hegemonic, insofar as it concentrates on its own tradition and excludes the voices of others.

This takes us to another theoretical construct: globalization itself. One of the most important and perhaps overused modes of intercultural and cross-cultural research, globalization implies worldwide interdependencies that render distances and cultural differences irrelevant, a process often assumed to take place everywhere in economic, political, and cultural circum-

stances⁴⁴ and marked by “increased trade and transnational economic activity, faster and denser communication networks, increased tensions between (and within) cultural groups due to intensified mutual exposures.”⁴⁵ The advent of such technological innovations as phonograph recordings, cassettes, CDs, VCRs, DVDs, MP3, MP4, and YouTube posts is considered crucial for the globalizing processes that began during the early twentieth century.⁴⁶ At the same time, Richard Wetzel reminds us that the movement of music from one place to another has enjoyed a very long history prior to the advent of globalization.⁴⁷

One of the direct consequences of globalization is the worldwide market for what is known as “world music.”⁴⁸ Be it “authentic” or “hybrid,” the production and consumption of this commodified product largely depend on notions of difference and otherness, themselves central to any form of exoticism.⁴⁹ In *Global Pop: World Music, World Market*, Timothy Taylor examines the intricacies between pop music in the West and the so-called world music and addresses issues of authenticity by examining first-world artists’ appropriation of third-world materials to reveal the exoticism embedded in globalization.⁵⁰ What Western consumers want, according to Taylor, is not genuine foreign music but a hybrid product almost, but not quite, the same as the music they already know.⁵¹ World music, in other words, is a fabricated genre that feeds the West’s imagination of its others. Increasingly, too, it is sold in third-world markets around the globe.⁵²

In *Music and Globalization*, editor Bob White points out that music is itself an important source of information about globalization, because musical practices demonstrate how people engage with one another cross-culturally.⁵³ The intercultural flow of music is involved with global capital, local economies, international relations, cultural diplomacy, national identities, cultural politics, representations of peoples, commodification, cultural hegemonies, imperialism, hybridizations, and consumer cosmopolitanism. The increasing dissemination of popular music, for example, is sometimes seen simply as the onslaught of American culture, a form of cultural imperialism that scholars have criticized and that the governments of certain countries are trying to ward off.⁵⁴

At the same time, different forms of popular music are proliferating in non-Western countries, as documented in a number of cross-cultural studies that relate popular music to issues of national identity and resistance.⁵⁵ The impact of such transnational soundscapes on indigenous music culture is itself evolving in the face of local and global markets controlled by popular music industries, themselves both local and global. Studies of issues per-

tinent to capitalism and Western cultural values and their relationship to local cultures, peoples, and industries often draw attention to tensions between global and local forces that are moving some countries toward cosmopolitanism and cultural heteroglossia.⁵⁶ Brazil is one such country: providing one of the world's six largest musical markets, it has made immeasurable contributions to modern urban popular music, creating styles and genres that have served as inspirations for popular music of other locations.⁵⁷

While exoticism and globalization represent frameworks for discussing musical contacts cross-culturally, transculturation and cultural hybridity serve as frameworks that help us analyze the products resulting from cultural contacts. Transculturation, itself a concept invented by Fernando Ortiz, represents a process that "necessarily involves the loss or uprooting of a previous culture" and then "the consequent creation of new cultural phenomena. . . . [T]he result of every union of cultures is similar to that of the reproductive process between individuals: the offspring always has something of both parents but is always different from each of them."⁵⁸ New cultures, like those that have emerged in Cuba as Ortiz points out in his seminal work *Cuban Counterpoint* and China as the chapters in this volume present, have undergone transformations through cultural exchanges, mutations, and cross-pollinations due to colonialism and/or globalization.

Hybridity theory is a form of postcolonial discourse that resists notions of colonialism and imperialism, instead providing a multilayered framework for students of cultural practices. As such, it valorizes hybridized cultural forms and emphasizes the mutuality of contacts between colonizer and colonized.⁵⁹ As a theoretical framework, hybridity has been applied to the study of such postcolonial musical forms as Latino popular music and Chinese popular music from Hong Kong (also known as Cantopop).⁶⁰ As a manifestation of cultural globalization, hybridity informs the study of a number of musical genres, including tango and flamenco, as well as fusion works that combine instruments of different cultural practices.⁶¹ It is also often used as a marketing strategy in the promotion of world music, linking industry products to exoticism as well as globalization.⁶²

CONCLUSIONS

The theoretical frameworks discussed in this essay are pertinent to the present volume and to any study of Sino-Western and intercultural musical

encounters and interchanges. Exoticism and orientalism informed cultural contacts between China and Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which led to the artistic style known as *chinoiserie* as well as to Chinese-themed compositions and their use of such Chinese musical features as pentatonicism, as addressed by Szabó-Knotik and Saffle.⁶³ In fact, the use of Chinese elements in Western compositions is scarcely limited to music of the past; it also appears in recent works by Western librettists and composers genuinely interested in Chinese culture, including the Dutch librettist Friso Haverkamp's various "Chinese" opera projects, discussed by Wennekes.

The foreign powers that forced China to open her doors, together with the lopsided power relations that followed during the "century of humiliation" (ca. 1840–1949), left a deep scar on the Chinese psyche. As a result, Chinese intellectuals at the turn of the twentieth century felt compelled to rethink and reshape China's musical path. Perceived as backward, Chinese music was "reformed" along Western lines, as part of China's quest for modernity and nationhood. The results produced a self-initiated transculturation that not only incorporated Western music into the nation's soundscape but also used it as a model of reform that resulted in many musical changes in indigenous traditions. Such transculturation is also closely tied to globalization. After all, the impact of increasingly globalized markets has reshaped China's music as well as that of the West. Not only is popular music a part of China's contemporary soundscape, but Western classical music has proliferated to the extent that China is now seen as its twenty-first-century hub. Inevitably, Chinese composers' compositional choices, their ways of projecting national identity by means of appropriating the "exotic" in their own culture, exemplify the impact of globalization, producing nationally flavored works that appeal to a global audience, feeding the imaginations of those consumers with sounds traditionally associated with an exotic Orient. In the essays by Hung, Lau, and Rao, the works of Chinese composers/performers residing in the West are examined in terms of these and other late-capitalist lenses. The roles played by contemporary politics in cross-cultural musical interactions, intersections, and imaginations are aptly dealt with in Langenkamp's study of the Silk Road project.

Today, cultural exchange is taking place throughout the world and at an unprecedented pace. China's influence on the West is increasing, and so is the West's influence on China. These realities carry implications for everyone interested in the history of Chinese-Western musical interactions. A

new generation of Chinese performers and composers is capturing worldwide attention, and Chinese composers' compositions are foregrounding a complex synergy of Chinese and Western musical elements. At the same time, a growing number of Western composers are aspiring to intercultural subjects, methods, and matters in their compositions. These shifting trends account for the timeliness of the present volume, which takes China's musical and cultural encounters with Canada, Europe, and the United States as its focus. Musical encounters help us understand ways in which peoples from different parts of the world interact, ways in which knowledge and artifacts are transported from one place to another, and ways in which creativity has made our world a more interesting place to inhabit. This volume's contributors have demonstrated how cross-cultural musical encounters serve as agents in power negotiation in various contexts, whether their encounters with their own cultures and those of others are personal, institutional, or mediated insofar as individual actors, artists, promoters, producers, and consumers are concerned.

Notes

1. Books and articles making use of the "East-West" construct abound. See, for example, Karen Kuo, *East Is West and West Is East: Gender, Culture, and Interwar Encounters between Asia and America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2013); *The Gaze of the West and Framings of the East*, ed. Shanta Nair-Venugopal (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); *West Meets East: Musik im Interkulturellen Dialog*, ed. Alenka Barber-Kersovan, Harald Huber, and Alfred Smudits (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2011).

2. See, for example, Cynthia Mills, introduction to *East-West Interchanges in American Art: A Long and Tumultuous Relationship*, ed. Cynthia Mills, Lee Glazer, and Amelia A. Goerlitz (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2012), 14.

3. See *Zheng He xia xiyang yanjiu wenxuan (1905–2005)* [A Collection of Research Papers on Zheng He's Sail to the West (1905–2005)], comp. the Committee to Celebrate the 600th Anniversary of Zheng He's Voyage to the West (Beijing: Haiyang chubanshe, 2005), 73–74.

4. See "The Exoticism in Tang (618–907)," Silkroad Foundation, <http://www.silk-road.com/artl/tang.shtml> (accessed 12 May 2015).

5. The first Jesuit to reach China was Francis Xavier; he landed on a small Chinese island in 1552 but was not allowed onto the mainland. Other Jesuits settled in what is known today as Macau; see ZHANG Hailin, *Jindai zhongwai wenhua jiaoliu shi* [A Modern History of Cultural Exchanges between China and Other

Countries] (Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 2003), 15. Zhang's history is based on a Chinese translation of Matteo Ricci's Latin autobiographical account. See *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Mathew Ricci, 1583–1610*, trans. Louis J. Gallagher (New York: Random House, 1953).

6. Matteo Ricci was appointed an imperial official in charge of astronomy; his successors included Adam Schall and Ferdinand Verbiest. Later, Philip Grimaldi and Thomas Pereira served Emperor Kangxi's court. In addition to music, these missionaries introduced China to Western notions of astronomy and the calendar, mathematics, physics and engineering, geography and map making, medicine, weaponry, philosophy and logic, architecture, and painting. See Zhang, *Jindai zhongwai wenhua jiaoliu shi*, 27–34.

7. The First Opium War took place during 1839–42 CE. The Treaty of Nanjing, signed in 1842 between Britain and China, began China's "treaty century," during which "China was placed against her will in a weaker position, open to the inroads of Western commerce and its attendant culture" (John K. Fairbank and Merle Goldman, *China: A New History*, 2nd ed. [Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006], 201).

8. Chinese ethnomusicologist HAN Guohuang has published a number of articles in Chinese on these early Western ensembles. See, for example, "Zhongguo de diyige xiyang guanxianyuedui: Beijing Kede yuedui" [China's First Western Orchestra: Hart's Band in Beijing], *Yinyue Yanjiu* [Music Research] 57, no. 2 (1990): 43–53; "Shanghai gongbujue yuedui yanjiu" [A Preliminary Study of the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra], *Yishuxue* [Study of the Arts] 14, no. 9 (1995): 143–205.

9. See, for example, my contribution to part 1 of the present volume, as well as Robert Bickers, "The Greatest Cultural Asset East of Suez: The History and Politics of the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra and Public Band, 1881–1946," in *Ershi shiji de Zhongguo yu shijie* [China and the World in the Twentieth Century], vol. 2, ed. Chi-Hsiung Chang (Taipei: Institute of History, Academia Sinica, 2001), 835–37.

10. See Hon-Lun Yang, "The Shanghai Conservatory, Chinese Musical Life, and the Russian Diaspora: 1927–1949," *Twentieth-Century China* 37, no. 1 (2012): 73–95.

11. English-language publications abound in Sino-Western studies. See, for instance, *China and Its Others: Knowledge Transfer through Translation, 1829–2010*, ed. James St. André and Hsiao-yen Peng (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2012); Niles D. Preman, *From East and West: Rethinking Christian Mission* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice, 2004); Marco Szeto, *East Merges West: A Portfolio of Paintings* (Hong Kong: Forward, 1998); *Friendship East and West: Philosophical Perspectives*, ed. Olivero Leaman (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1996); May Loo, *East-West Healing: Integrating Chinese and Western Medicines for Optimal Health* (New York: Wiley, 2001); *Literary Relations East and West: Selected Essays*, ed. Jean Toyama and Nobuko Ochner

(Honolulu: College of Languages, Linguistics, and Literature, University of Hawaii at Manoa, 1990).

12. Ethnomusicologists specializing in Chinese music have made significant contributions to its study. See, for example, Nancy Guys, *Peking Opera and Politics in Taiwan* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006); Frederick Lau, *Music in China: Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Helen Rees, *Echoes of History: Naxi Music in Modern China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Jonathan P. J. Stock, *Musical Creativity in Twentieth-Century China: Abing, His Music, and Its Changing Meanings* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 1996); Stock, *Huju: Traditional Opera in Modern Shanghai* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Alan R. Thrasher, *Chinese Musical Instruments* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Thrasher, *Sizhu Instrumental Music of South China: Ethos, Theory, and Practice* (Leiden: Brill, 2008); Lawrence Witzleben, *Silk and Bamboo Music in Shanghai: The Jiangnan Sizhu Instrumental Ensemble Tradition* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1995); Bell Yung, *Celestial Airs of Antiquity: Music of the Seven-String Zither of China* (Madison, WI: A-R Editions, 1997).

13. See, for example, Richard Curt Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China: Middle-Class Ambitions and the Struggle over Western Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Barbara Mittler, *Dangerous Tunes: The Politics of Music in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China since 1949* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997); Sheila Melvin and *Jindong Cai, *Rhapsody in Red: How Western Classical Music Became Chinese* (New York: Algora, 2004); Andrew F. Jones, *Like a Knife: Ideology and Genre in Contemporary Chinese Popular Music* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992); Jones, *Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in the Chinese Jazz Age* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001); Nimrod Baranovitch, *China's New Voices: Popular Music, Ethnicity, Gender, and Politics, 1978–1997* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003); Marc Moskowitz, *Cries of Joy, Songs of Sorrow: Chinese Pop Music and Its Cultural Connotations* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 2010).

14. The book *Lives in Chinese Music*, edited by Helen Rees (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), exemplifies the Western musicological purists' stance toward Chinese music. Of seven Chinese scholars and performers represented in Rees's volume, none is a practitioner of Western music.

15. At least one dominant ideology and value system is embedded in the cultural products of an individual nation or people; see Roland Barthes, "Change the Object Itself," in *Image—Music—Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (Glasgow: William Collins Sons, 1977). For a discussion about the relationship of knowledge and power, see Michel Foucault, *L'archéologie du savoir* (1969), trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith as *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London: Tavistock, 1972).

16. See, for example, Su Zheng, *Claiming Diaspora: Music, Transnationalism, and*

Cultural Politics in Asian/Chinese America (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Nancy Y. W. Rao, "The Public Face of Chinatown: Actresses, Actors, Playwrights, and Audiences of Chinatown Theaters in San Francisco during the 1920s," *Journal of the Society for American Music* 5, no. 2 (2011): 235–70; Rao, "Songs of the Exclusion Era: New York Chinatown's Opera Theaters in the 1920s," *American Music* 20, no. 4 (2002): 393–444; Mina Yang, "Orientalism and the Music of Asian Immigrant Communities in California, 1924–1945," *American Music* 19, no. 4 (2001): 385–416.

17. See Nancy Y. W. Rao, "The Color of Music Heritage: Chinese America in American Ultra-Modern Music," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 12, no. 1 (2009): 83–119, 134.

18. See Joseph Lam, "Encountering Chinese-American Music and Culture in Cincinnati, 28–31 March 1996," *Current Musicology* 60–61, no. 4 (1996): 175–80.

19. See Krystyn R. Moon, *Yellowface: Creating the Chinese in American Popular Music and Performance, 1850s–1920s* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2005); Mina Yang, "Moulin Rouge! and the Undoing of Opera," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 20, no. 3 (2008): 269–82.

20. See Mina Yang, "East Meets West in the Concert Hall: Asians and Classical Music in the Century of Imperialism, Post-Colonialism, and Multiculturalism," *American Music* 38, no. 1 (2007): 1–30.

21. See especially Frederick Lau, "Fusion or Fission: The Paradox and Politics of Contemporary Chinese Avant-Garde Music," in *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, ed. Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 22–49.

22. See especially Christian Utz's chapter in *West Meets East* (147–80), which explores China's contemporary music scene.

23. See Frank Kouwenhoven, "Mainland China's New Music, 1: Out of the Desert," *Chime* 2 (1990): 58–93; Kouwenhoven, "Mainland China's New Music, 2: Madly Singing in the Mountains," *Chime* 3 (1991): 42–134; Kouwenhoven, "Mainland China's New Music, 3: The Age of Pluralism," *Chime* 5 (1992): 76–113.

24. The Chinese-language literature on contemporary Chinese composers is too vast to summarize. For English-language discussions of these composers and their works, see Nancy Y. W. Rao, "Hearing Pentatonicism through Serialism: Integrating Different Traditions in Chinese Contemporary Music," *Perspectives of New Music* 40, no. 2 (2002): 190–234; Hon-Lun Yang, "Angry Young Old Man: Wang Xilin's Symphonic Odyssey," *Chime* 16–17 (2005): 34–56. For more examples of studies on contemporary Chinese music, see "China and the West: The Birth of a New Music," special issue, *Contemporary Music Review* 26, nos. 5–6 (2007), including the following studies: Peter Chang, "Bright Sheng's Music: An Expression of Cross-Cultural Experience—Illustrated through the Motivic, Contrapuntal, and Tonal Treatment of the Chinese Folk Song the Stream Flows," 619–33; CHOU Wen-chung, "Whiter Chinese Composers?," 493–99; Yayoi U. Everett, "Calligraphy

and Musical Gestures in the Late Works of Chou Wen-chung," 569–84; Edward Green, "The Impact of Buddhist Thought on the Music of Zhou Long: A Consideration of Dhyana," 547–67; Lei Liang, "Colliding Resonances: The Music of Xiaoyong Chen," 529–45; Frederick Lau, "Context, Agency, and Chineseness: The Music of Law Wing Fai," 585–603; Nancy Y. W. Rao, "The Tradition of *Luogu Dianzi* (Percussion Classics) and Its Signification in Contemporary Music," 511–27; Samson Young, "Reconsidering Cultural Politics in the Analysis of Contemporary Chinese Music: The Case of Ghost Opera," 605–18. For Green's editorial "China and the West: The Birth of a New Music," see 493–99.

25. Globalization is otherwise defined as "the expansion of commercial networks, the blurring of cultural and national boundaries, and the compression of space and time" (Bob W. White, "Introduction: Rethinking Globalization through Music," in *Music and Globalization: Critical Encounters*, ed. Bob W. White [Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2012], 4).

26. Bruno Nettl, *The Western Impact on World Music: Change, Adaptation, and Survival* (New York: Schirmer, 1985), 3.

27. *The Exotic in Western Music*, ed. Jonathan Bellman (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998), ix.

28. Early Western studies of musical exoticism include D. C. Parker, "Exoticism in Music in Retrospect," *Musical Quarterly* 3, no. 1 (1917): 134–61; Mosco Carnè, "The Exotic Element in Puccini," *Musical Quarterly* 22 (1930): 45–67; Bence Szabolcsi, "Exoticisms in Mozart," *Music and Letters* 37 (1956): 323–32; Miriam K. Whaples, "Exoticism in Dramatic Music: 1660–1800" (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1958); Alexander L. Ringer, "On the Question of 'Exoticism' in 19th Century Music," *Studia Musicologica* 7 (1965): 115–23; Michael Saffle, "'Exotic' Harmony in 'La fanciulla del West' and 'Turandot,'" in *Esotismo e colore locale nell'opera di Puccini: Atti del I° Convegno Internazionale sull'opera di Puccini a Torre del Lago 1983*, ed. Jürgen Maehder (Pisa: Giardini, 1985), 119–30.

29. See Ralph P. Locke, *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Critics of Locke's position include Sindhu-mathi Revuluri, who reviewed *Musical Exoticism* in the *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 64, no. 1 (2011): 253–61.

30. See *Widening the Horizon: Exoticism in Post-War Popular Music*, ed. Philip Hayward (London: John Libbey, 1999).

31. See Kirsten Yri, "Medievalism and Exoticism in the Music of Dead Can Dance," *Current Musicology* 85, no. 1 (2008): 53–72, 174; Hon-Lun Yang and Michael Saffle, "The 12 Girls Band: Traditions, Gender, Globalization, and (Inter)national Identity," *Asian Music* 4, no. 2 (2010): 88–112.

32. See Mary C. Beltran, "Exoticism and Cultural Excess: Representations of Brazilian Music in the *New York Times*," *Latino Studies* 9, nos. 2–3 (2011): 263–82.

33. See Yu-Chi Chang, "Localized Exoticism: Developments and Features of

Belly Dance in Taiwan," *Physical Culture and Sport: Studies and Research* 54, no. 1 (2012): 13–25.

34. Said's *Orientalism* was originally published in 1978 (New York: Routledge). The most recent of many editions was published in 2003 by Penguin Books.

35. For some scholars, the Turkish style of eighteenth-century Vienna or the nineteenth century's *style hongrois* are quintessential stylistic markers of exoticism. See Derek B. Scott, "Orientalism and Musical Style," *Musical Quarterly* 82, no. 2 (1998): 309–35.

36. See Matthew Head, *Orientalism, Masquerade, and Mozart's Turkish Music* (London: Royal Music Association, 2000).

37. See Richard Taruskin, "Russian Musical Orientalism: A Postscript," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 6, no. 1 (1994): 81–84.

38. See Keith Howard, "Music and Orientalism in the British Empire, 1780s–1940s: Portrayal of the East," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London* 71, no. 3 (2008): 609–12.

39. See Yang, "Orientalism and the Music of Asian Immigrant Communities."

40. See *Western Music and Its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music*, ed. Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

41. See Timothy Taylor, *Beyond Exoticism: Western Music and the World* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).

42. Jonathan D. Bellman, "Musical Voyages and Their Baggage: Orientalism in Music and Critical Musicology," *Musical Quarterly* 94, no. 3 (2011): 434. Bellman addresses studies such as John Richardson's *Singing Archaeology: Philip Glass's "Akhmaten"* (London: Wesleyan University Press, 1999). See also Matthew Head, "Musicology on Safari: Orientalism and the Spectre of Postcolonial Theory," *Music Analysis* 22, nos. 1–2 (2003): 211–30.

43. Bellman, "Musical Voyages," 434.

44. See Malcolm Waters, *Globalization* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

45. Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Globalization: The Key Concepts* (New York: Berg, 2007), 4.

46. See Mark Katz, *Capturing Sound: How Technology Has Changed Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010). Katz's volume remains a seminal work on the global impact of recording technology. See also Andrew F. Jones, *Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in the Chinese Jazz Age* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), examining ways in which sound media facilitated the transmission of popular music to China in the 1930s.

47. See Richard Wetzell, *The Globalization of Music in History* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

48. For the origin of "world music" as a commercial category, see White's introduction to *Music and Globalization*, 2–5.

49. See Thomas Burkhalter, *Local Music Scenes and Globalization: Transnational Platforms in Beirut* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 13.

50. Embeddedness is a sociological concept associated with the various constraints posed on the world's economy. Recently, the deployment of musical exoticism has been closely tied into the global market. See Timothy Taylor, *Global Pop: World Music and World Market* (New York: Routledge, 1997), esp. chaps. 1–2.

51. Taylor, "World Music Today," in *Music and Globalization*, 178.

52. The terms *first world* and *third world* came into existence when there was also a "second world," namely, the Soviet Union and its satellites. Today, *first world* is employed primarily to identify wealthier political entities such as the United States, Japan, the European Union, and so on, while *third world* is used to identify such poorer entities as Africa, Central Asia, and much of South America. Increasingly, these terms seem flawed.

53. White, introduction to *Music and Globalization*, 2.

54. Timothy Taylor raises this issue in "World Music Today," in *Music and Globalization*, 180.

55. The transnational presence of hip-hop is discussed in a good number of studies. Recent monographs include *The Vinyl Ain't Final: Hip-Hop and the Globalization of Black Popular Culture*, ed. Dipannita Basu and Sidney J. Lemelle (London: Pluto, 2006); *The Languages of Global Hip-Hop*, ed. Marina Terkourafi (London: Continuum, 2010); Christopher Dennis, *Afro-Colombian Hip-Hop: Globalization, Transcultural Music, and Ethnic Identities* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2012). For the global presence of heavy metal, see *Metal Rules the Globe: Heavy Metal Music around the World*, ed. Jeremy Wallach, Harris M. Berger, and Paul D. Greene (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013). For the presence of popular music in Asia, see *Refashioning Pop Music in Asia: Cosmopolitan Flows, Political Tempos, and Aesthetic Industries*, ed. Allen Chun, Ned Rossiter, and Brian Shoesmith (New York: Routledge, 2004).

56. See, for example, the following studies in *Refashioning Pop Music in Asia*: Michael Hayes, "Capitalism and Cultural Relativity: The Thai Pop Industry, Capitalism, and Western Cultural Values"; Allen Chun, "World Music, Cultural Heteroglossia, and Indigenous Capital: Overlapping Frequencies in the Emergence of Cosmopolitanism in Taiwan"; Krishna Sen and David Hill, "Global Industry, National Politics: Popular Music in 'New Order' Indonesia."

57. See, for instance, *Brazilian Popular Music and Globalization*, ed. Charles A. Perrone and Christopher Dunn (New York: Routledge, 2002).

58. Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar* (1947), trans. Harriet de Onis (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995), 102–3.

59. Homi Bhabha, Stuart Hall, and Paul Gilroy—among a number of others—are known for their contributions to the hybridity theory. See *Performing Hybridity*, ed. May Joseph and Jennifer N. Fink (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press,

1999), which is devoted to notions of hybridity in terms of identity and performance.

60. See, for example, Deborah P. Hernandez, *Oye Como Va! Hybridity and Identity in Latino Popular Music* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2010); Jonathan Ritter, "Chocolate, Coconut, and Honey: Race, Music, and the Politics of Hybridity in the Ecuadorian Black Pacific," *Popular Music and Society* 34, no. 5 (2011): 571–92; Matthew Chew, "Hybridity, Empowerment, and Subversiveness in Cantopop Electronic Dance Music," *Visual Anthropology* 24, no. 1 (2011): 139–51; Yiu-Wai Chu and Eve Leung, "Remapping Hong Kong Popular Music: Covers, Localization, and the Waning Hybridity of Cantopop," *Popular Music* 19, no. 2 (2000): 181–99.

61. See, for example, *Songs of the Minotaur: Hybridity and Popular Music in the Era of Globalization*, ed. Gerhard Steingress (Hamburg: LIT Verlag Munster, 2002). John Winzenburg has examined intrinsically hybrid fusion genres in nature; see, for example, Winzenburg, "Heteroglossia and Traditional Vocal Genres in Chinese-Western Fusion Concertos," *Perspectives of New Music* 51, no. 2 (2013): 101–40.

62. See the discussion in Timothy Taylor, *Beyond Exoticism*, chap. 5 ("Some Versions of Difference: Discourses of Hybridity in Transnational Musics").

63. To date, scholars have done little with musical chinoiserie despite the existence of such works as the "Chinese Dance" from Piotr Ilych Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*, Giacomo Puccini's opera *Turandot*, and Gustav Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*.

PART I

*Chinese-Western Historical Encounters
and Musical Exchanges*

The Pipe Organ of the Baroque Era in China

David Francis Urrows

The strange and compelling history of the pipe organ in China does not fully begin in China: it begins on the South China coast in the enclave of Macau. Under Portuguese administration from 1556 to 1999, Macau continues to exude an almost mythological charm as one of the great crossroads of East and West. At the end of the sixteenth century, that tiny city-state had prospered as an entrepôt for the Portuguese trade with Japan, principally the exchange of silk and silver. Austin Coates explains, “Macau’s golden epoch, resting on the Japan trade, lasted from the settlement’s foundation . . . to the end of the Japan trade and the fall of Malacca, in 1641. In 1600, when Portuguese Asia, strangely independent of Portugal and as much an Asian trading organization as a European one, was fatally threatened by the Dutch, Macau was at its zenith.”¹ Into this setting—and this story—comes, first of all, one of the great figures of missionary history, the Jesuit Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), who can be said to have brought the pipe organ to China.

THE FIRST PIPE ORGAN IN CHINA: RICCI’S POSITIVE

Leaving aside the question of what music making might have taken place in earlier Jesuit missions in China, such as Ricci’s Zhaoqing mission (1583–89),² the history of Chinese-Western interchange in which the pipe organ figures begins with the manufacture of a positive organ in Macau ca. 1599/1600. After the failure of their first attempt to get into Beijing in 1598, Ricci and his colleague Lazzaro Cattaneo (1560–1640) returned to Nanjing. Ricci arrived on 6 February 1599, Cattaneo about a month later. In May, Ricci founded a mission in Nanjing. With subsequent plans in the offing for a second attempt to enter Beijing and gain an audience with the

Wanli emperor, Cattaneo was dispatched to Macau on 20 June 1599, with instruction to have further gifts for the emperor made. Among these was a positive organ.

Although Cattaneo arrived in Macau at the end of August 1599, the organ was never received by the emperor, evidently due to delays in construction, transport, and the river journey of over one thousand kilometers to Nanjing. The only source of information about this instrument is a brief comment by the rector of the Jesuit College in Macau (St. Paul's), Manoel Diaz Sr. (1560–1639): “An organ was also made for the King [*sic*], but it arrived late and had to be left at Nanjing.”³ Cattaneo left Macau in mid-October 1599, much too early for even a small organ to be ready. Traveling up the “ambassadors’ route”⁴ of immemorial usage, he arrived at Nanchang in the third week of December and spent the Christmas and (Western) New Year season there, before leaving by early February 1600. Cattaneo arrived back in Nanjing on 1 March, and we can safely surmise that the organ had evidently not arrived at Nanchang by the time he had left a month or so earlier, or he would surely have brought it with him.⁵

No source gives further details regarding the instrument. But in late 1600 or early 1601, the Ming dynasty official WANG Linheng (王臨亨; 1548–1601) described a pipe organ that was probably similar to the one Cattaneo commissioned.

The foreigners in Macau are good craftsmen, and they have constructed well-made objects such as the organ and the carillon. They made a case with hundreds of pipes inside (or with hundreds of “strings”). It is operated by a machine: when one person blows the bellows, then all the pipes will sound. When one person plays the machine, then all the tones will sound. The music is well moderated and can be heard from afar. The carillon is made of copper; it rings at noon and then it rings every two hours, twelve times in a day.⁶

This is the earliest description of a Western pipe organ by a Chinese writer. It must be kept in mind that Wang was writing for a Chinese readership about a curio he had encountered in the strange world of Macau. He mentions the pipes (“hundreds” need not be taken literally; he means, colloquially, “lots”) and then immediately makes an analogy with “strings.” Wang was not referring here to the tracker mechanism (as later writers will, when describing the “strings,” or “threads,” in a pipe organ). Instead, he wanted to

make clear that the pipes are the sounding part of the instrument, just as strings are the sounding part of the great majority of Chinese instruments.

The mechanical nature of the organ was uppermost in Wang's mind: it is an instrument that is made to sound by a "machine" and requires two people to operate. This is the signal difference between uninterrupted personal, tactile contact with indigenous Chinese instruments and the curious and wonderful invention from the West. Moreover, Wang described this organ's music as "well moderated," that is, neither too loud nor too soft, neither too fast nor too slow. I read this as a compliment as well as a description. The carrying power of the instrument, a recurring theme in Chinese accounts, is Wang's final point of information.

Where did Wang see this pipe organ in Macau, and what was its relationship, if any, to Ricci's and Cattaneo's commission for the emperor? To the first question, evidence firmly rules out the most obvious location, the Church of Madre de Deus, popularly called St. Paul's. This church was under a massive rebuilding program between late 1600 and 1603, due to a catastrophic fire in November 1600 that, as Macau historian César Guillén Nuñez reports, had done such damage as to leave "only its cracked *taipa* walls standing."⁷ That the organ was located in one of the other churches in Macau at this time is possible but, according to Nuñez, unlikely, as they were small chapels, some at a considerable distance from the principal area of Portuguese settlement. Perhaps Wang saw this organ in situ in a workshop, in a private home, or in a building of the College of St. Paul.

As to the second question, Cattaneo, along with his colleague Diego de Pantoja (1571–1618), had returned to Nanjing in March 1600 without the organ, but they did bring with them a *manicordio*. (The whole of Ricci's entourage left Nanjing on 18/19 May 1600, with the *manicordio* listed in the manifest.) Cattaneo's commission shows that someone in Macau had the skills to build an organ; it seems that after one was finished, another was built for local use and was the instrument seen by Wang later in 1600 or early 1601. Just how late Ricci's positive left Macau and arrived in Nanjing is not known for certain and would help answer this question definitively. Diaz's formulation "arrivorno tardi" suggests that the delay was due to transport, not manufacture. The most likely explanation is that Ricci's positive arrived in Nanjing at the end of 1600 with the Jesuit João de Rocha (ca. 1565–1623). Shorthanded after Ricci's departure in May 1600, de Rocha left Nanchang sometime later in the year to join the new mission in Nanjing.⁸ The Chinese writer GU Qiyuan (顧起元; 1565–1628) mentions, in his *Kezuo zhui yu*,

that de Rocha came to Nanjing at the end of 1600, bringing “instruments and pictures similar to those [brought by] Ricci.”⁹ If, in the end, de Rocha was charged with bringing the positive up from Nanchang to Nanjing on this trip, Wang Linheng certainly saw a different, though similar, instrument in Macau. This is the likeliest scenario, given the scattered evidence at hand.

We can only infer something about the size of Ricci’s positive. Wang’s description suggests the larger of two positive types (the term *positive* comes from the Latin *ponere*, “to place”), a 4’ scale instrument that stood on the floor, as opposed to the smaller 2’ scale type that could be placed on a table and removed when not needed. Both types had at least two bellows. In the Renaissance and Early Baroque periods, the positive was an instrument much used for domestic music making as well as accompanying singing and instruments. It was a favorite instrument of the bourgeois class upward and was played by both men and women. Even the larger positives could be moved, though this usually required two to four men lifting the instrument on poles. An instrument of 4’ scale, therefore, would have presented massive logistic problems in transporting from Macau to Nanjing and thence to Beijing via ship to Shandong Province and the Grand Canal. It is possible then, that Ricci’s positive was actually a somewhat smaller freestanding positive, based on 2’ scale.¹⁰ Even with a shorter keyboard of around three octaves, such an instrument would still have seemed to have “hundreds” of pipes, though this need not be taken literally. In the end, a 4’ scale positive is more likely, and the delay in getting it to Nanjing (the far more difficult of the two legs of the journey) may simply have been a case of the instrument becoming the victim of its own virtues. The pipes were almost certainly all made of wood in the Italian tradition of the *organo di legno*. I have uncovered no mention of metal organ pipes in China until (perhaps) 1670.

In truth, Ricci’s positive might have been constructed as little more than a toy, an amusement. It was, after all, intended not for actual use as a pipe organ within a liturgical context but, rather, as a gift, a sample of technology, an instrument in the scientific, rather than the musical, sense, although music within the Jesuit educational tradition of the time cannot be divorced from science. When music was specified in the curricula of the Jesuit colleges of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it usually meant music in the old quadrivium sense—acoustics—and, as such, as a branch of mathematics. But music in the Jesuit tradition grew incrementally, and by the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Jesuit-run German College in Rome was acknowledged as the center of the best liturgical music in the city, an astound-

ing thought when one considers the Jesuits' reputation in this area—*Jesuita non cantat*.¹¹ Even this was an exaggeration, as Jesuit seminarians received training in at least three types of singing: plainchant, cantus firmus (recitation on tones), and figured chants (simple forms of polyphony). In the Far East, however, let alone in Rome, singing, keyboard skills, and other instrumental playing seem to have been regular accomplishments of seminarians and clergy, especially as music was quickly recognized in the mission field as an excellent and subtle medium of diplomacy.¹²

Though intended as a nonliturgical instrument and a sample of Western ingenuity, the positive organ seems to have remained in Nanjing for the use of the mission and thus to have served, for a time, as a liturgical instrument. In 1616–18, the foreign missionaries in China became subject to a general persecution instigated at both national and local levels. In Nanjing in April 1617, the vice minister of rites in Nanjing, SHEN Que (沈權), had all the foreign Jesuits arrested and sealed their residence. A detailed inventory was made of their possessions, with the intention of having the Jesuits sell these objects to pay for their upkeep in prison and for the costs of their eventual deportation to Guangzhou and Macau. In the inventory compiled around 25 April 1617, Shen's staff listed in the Jesuit residence one "wind *qin*" (風琴; i.e., organ) and one "foreign *qin*" (番琴; i.e., harpsichord).¹³ If these instruments were sold, it seems likely that they would have gone to persons of means. In an ironic twist, the first pipe organ in China may eventually have become the property of a mandarin or other wealthy citizen, who unknowingly took a very early step in cross-cultural interchange by allowing the foreign "wind *qin*" into his home and his musical and intellectual life.

AFTER RICCI: THE JESUIT PIPE ORGAN BUILDERS OF CHINA

Within a decade of the Macau positive, we find a pipe organ in China being built and used specifically for and in a Western liturgical context. The significant moment was the funeral of Matteo Ricci, held at Zhalan in the western suburbs of Beijing on All Saints' Day (1 November) 1611.¹⁴ Renovations to the compound at Zhalan, which had been converted by the Jesuits from the home of a disgraced mandarin, began in October 1610 and were completed by October 1611. A smallish room at the back of the complex was set aside as a domestic chapel. We can hypothesize that the organ was built for this

space during the same months, and because the room was not particularly large, a positive organ with a single manual and two or three ranks, containing perhaps between 90 and 150 wooden pipes, would have been acceptable musically. In any event, Ricci's funeral Mass "was celebrated in the highest possible style, with organ and other musical instruments."¹⁵

It is not known whether the instrument at Zhalan was imported from Europe or perhaps from Goa or Manila, where organ building activity had started several decades earlier. Requests for Western paintings, books, clocks, religious and devotional objects, toys, watches, and other items fill the Jesuit correspondence of these years, and small organs were sent to India and Japan around this date. I think, however, that had the organ been imported, it would have figured large in these letters. A *claviorganum* arrived in Macau in 1620, but I have only verified the importation of a pipe organ into China in 1671; it was a positive brought to Beijing by Jesuits Claudio Grimaldi (1638–1712) and Christian Wolfgang Herdrich (1625–84) and presented to the Kangxi emperor in 1672. With the possible exception of Giulio Aleni's earlier organ (mentioned below), there are no further reports until those of a Philippine-manufactured organ in Guangzhou (Canton) in 1678¹⁶ and of an organ brought to Beijing by Cardinal Mezzabarba during his mission in 1720. The construction of the first Zhalan organ represented a considerable feat of ingenuity, as none of the missionaries in Beijing at the time is known to have had specific skills in organ building.

In parallel with the emerging Chinese descriptions of pipe organs, the Jesuits began to offer information about these instruments in their early East-West writings. Giulio Aleni (1582–1649) seems to have published the first account of a Western pipe organ in Chinese, in his *Chifang wai chi* (職方外紀) of 1623, and then further described the instrument in his *Xifang ta wen* (西方答問) of 1637.

Of the numerous [Western] musical instruments, there are two kinds of keyboard instruments [the harpsichord and organ]. [One of] the instruments uses steel wire for the strings, of which there are about fifty. When it is played, the hands press down not on the strings but on a lever [mechanism], which then operates automatically, creating the sounds. As for the organ, a small one has several tens of pipes [a portative]; a medium one, several hundred [positives and small church organs]; a large one, several thousand. Each pipe produces its own tone. It is played in about the same way as a harpsichord, but there are keyboards at several

levels, which can be played separately or together. The sounds of wind and rain, birds and animals, can be imitated to perfection. Its sounds especially beautiful when used to accompany singing. This kind of music is mostly used at church services.¹⁷

This description provided a source for many later writers, such as Ferdinand Verbiest, who copied it almost wholesale in his *Notes on the Western Territories* of 1669.

The very need for such a technical and aesthetic précis suggests that organ building (or importation) had been going on in the years between the Zhalan organ of 1611 and Aleni's book of 1637. Aleni may even have had a pipe organ at the mission at Sanshan, in Fujian Province. On 8 May 1631, a "western qin" (*xiqin*, 西琴) was displayed and played for a group of Chinese visitors by Aleni's colleague Andrzej Rudamina (1596–1631). After the performance, a Catholic convert, the scholar LI Jiubao, declared that "it was quite amazing and made us raise a cheer in admiration."¹⁸ The origin of this instrument, perhaps a pipe organ, is unknown; Macau remains a likely source, followed perhaps by Manila or Goa. The lack of information about organs at midcentury may be explained by several periods of persecution and repression in the mid-1600s. Between 1618 and 1625, the nonnative Jesuits were exiled from Beijing and other missions and sent to Guangzhou and Macau. After a brief hiatus (the period during which Aleni published the first edition of his book and seems to have acquired his pipe organ), the 1640s to 1660s—during which the Qing dynasty was established—were years of strife, imprisonment, and disorder in China. The Catholic missions, particularly those of the Jesuits, were sharply divided as to their support for the tottering but highly cultured Ming and for the invading Manchu Qing, who represented a completely unknown—and potentially more hostile—quantity. Not until 1669 did the Kangxi emperor fully rehabilitate the Jesuits.

Between Kangxi's accession in 1661, his rescript of 22 March 1662 granting the Jesuits freedom of worship, and the Jesuits' resurgence (after several years of bitter persecution at the hands of Kangxi's regents) at the end of the 1660s, organs may indeed have been built in or imported into China, but little evidence for them has surfaced. Although it is clear that the organ Wang Linheng described seeing in Macau in 1600 or 1601 was not in the Church of Madre de Deus (St. Paul's), there were organs in this famous building in the later seventeenth century. In 1670, an instrument located

in the 1603 church was described by Guangdong literary master QU Dajun (屈大均; 1630–96).

There is an organ in the church, which is stored in a leather [*sic*] case. Inside are many pipes lined up like teeth, with a bellows outside; when air is blown in, sounds come out from the case. The music [played] is fast and complex, especially when all the stops are drawn [lit., “if all eight tones sound”]. It is suitable for accompanying the liturgy, making good music.¹⁹

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, two Chinese writers described organs in St. Paul’s. The first, WANG Shizhen (王士禛; 1634–1711), remarked around 1701,

In the church [of St. Paul’s], there is an organ; all sorts of different timbres are produced through [its] metal pipes. The machine is stored in a wooden case; the pipes are connected with strings [trackers] and wheels [rollers]. One person operates the machine, and is able to play all of the tones.²⁰

Slightly later, LIANG Di (梁迪; dates unknown) described an organ in the church, probably similar to, if not the same as, the one described by Wang Shizhen. “The western organ is like a *sheng* [笙],” Liang wrote,

which has two wings on either side, like the [wings of the] phoenix. The pipes are made of metal [bronze] and are lined up in order from long to short. A wooden case is used instead of a gourd; the bellows are made from leather, which is compressed and released to circulate the wind. The reeds [pipes] sound when the air moves [through them]; striking the keys [lit., “toothpicks”] causes the sound to come crashing down. [While] music is being played in St. Paul’s, the sound can be heard at a very great distance [lit., “from a hundred *li*”].²¹

From Liang’s description, made in 1709, it seems that the organ in question had three pipe towers, two of which symmetrically flanked the center, though this is not enough to make possible an educated guess at the size of the instrument. In 1743, the Jesuit José Montanha (1708–64) visited Macau and mentioned two organs in the church. The choir gallery, he said, was

“very spacious, with three wide windows and two pipe organs, one large and the other small.”²² It is intriguing not that there were two organs in the church—it was, after all, one of the Jesuit mission’s greatest architectural achievements, a veritable showpiece of the Baroque in China—but that this arrangement reflected a much older continental European tradition of a large gallery organ complemented by a “chair” organ that was not attached mechanically to the larger division. Where these organs came from is not known. But contemporary activity in Manila is suggestive: we know not only that organs were being built there from the 1580s but even the names of some of the builders. Despite the existence of an official embargo between the Spanish-controlled Philippines and Portuguese Macau (from ca. 1580–1660, with interruptions), there was a gray market for all manner of semiofficial trade at the time.²³

THE PIPE ORGANS OF TOMÁS PEREIRA

By the third quarter of the seventeenth century, Macau and the south of China were no longer the major or only focus of missionary activity. The establishment in Beijing of the Zhalan residence in 1610, the Nantang (South Cathedral) in 1650,²⁴ and the Dongtang (East Cathedral) in Beijing in 1655 had led the Jesuits directly into contact with the emperor, and the Jesuits’ successful insinuation into government boards and palace domestic life had made them like auxiliary mandarins at court. The first organ reported in Beijing at this time is the instrument presented on 20 February 1672 to the Kangxi emperor by Grimaldi and Herdtrich.²⁵ This instrument seems to have been a two-rank positive and may have been made in Macau, Manila, or even in Goa, with the possible involvement of Tomás Pereira (1646–1708), who reached Beijing in January 1673.²⁶ Little is known about Pereira’s preparation for organ building, other than that he was exposed to many fine organs of the sixteenth century in Portugal during his youth and may have acquired some skills during his five years in Goa. On arriving in Beijing, Pereira worked with Ferdinand Verbiest (1623–88), Grimaldi, and Pereira’s fellow countryman Gabriel de Magalhães (1610–77). Indeed, according to Noël Golvers, Pereira “inherited” de Magalhães’s workshop and tools.²⁷

One source for information on Pereira’s pipe organs is Verbiest’s *Astronomia Europaea*, published in 1687. Chapters 25–26 of that work deal with music and horology, a sequence of topics highly relevant and explained by the

fact that several of the pipe organs built in seventeenth-century Beijing were attached to automatic mechanisms.²⁸ Chapter 25 discusses Pereira's work in detail, as he built a variety of organs, carillons, and other devices with self-playing mechanisms during his years in China. Pereira completed four pipe organs altogether, between 1679 and 1683. In 1678–79, he built a two-rank positive, slightly larger than the instrument of 1671 given to Kangxi. Grimaldi wrote that Pereira's organ had "two ranks, that is, one of open pipes, and one of stopped pipes, with a total number of ninety pipes."²⁹ This suggests a small positive with a keyboard of approximately four octaves and with a short octave in the bass. Such an instrument would have been similar in range to the harpsichords and spinets sent to Beijing over the years.

The two-rank organ for Kangxi was a practice piece for Pereira. In 1679–80, he began to build a larger instrument for the Nantang. That organ was installed in a chamber in the church's southeast tower. Grimaldi described it as follows:

Also in this year [of 1679] the same Father Tomás Pereira was very active in building an elegant organ for our church in Beijing. It contains four ranks, the first is a rank of open pipes, the next rank is stopped, the third is a vox humana, and the fourth imitates the sounds of animals and birds. The total number of pipes is two hundred, equivalent to the majority of organs in European regions [or "whose greatest length is equal to more than the European measurement of two *orgya*"].³⁰

This suggests a single-manual instrument of about four octaves, in the Italian tradition. Verbiest was the first to mention the automatic mechanism, in the *Astronomia Europaea*.

As the European organ that we had given to the Emperor was very small and imperfect, Father Tomás Pereira is now [1679] working on another one that has yet to receive its finishing touches, and that I hope will shortly be installed in our church in Beijing. I believe that in all the East the like will not be found [to this organ], as it will play European as well as Chinese music [tunes] all by itself, thanks to an ingenious mechanism and drum-barrel.³¹

Pereira's own descriptions of the organ have received much less attention than Grimaldi's. Pereira's comments in two letters from 1680 and 1681, con-

firm the four ranks and two of the stops, though not the automatic playing mechanism.

At that [same] time [1679] I had the opportunity to make another organ for our church, the largest pipe of which is two *braças* long with proportionally correct diameter, with four stops, among which, when played, one sounds like human voices [*vozes humanas*], and another imitates animal sounds.³²

For this reason the same Father built another organ with four stops, the longest pipe of which is over two *varas* in length.³³

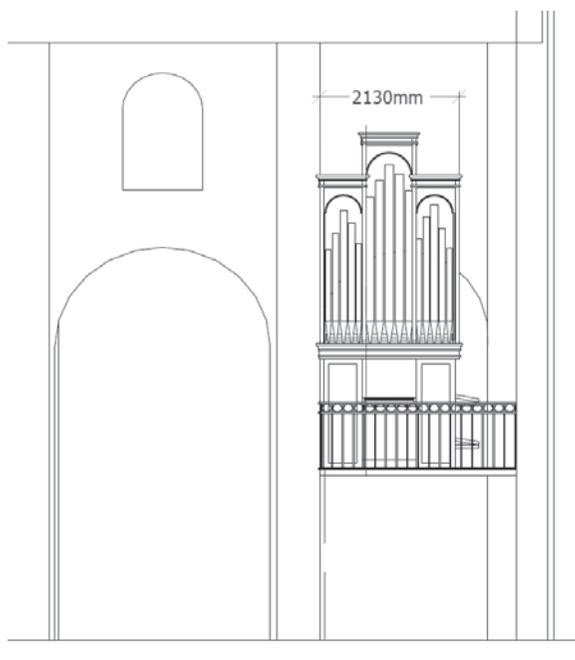
In a letter of 1681, Verbiest further mentioned that the pipes of at least one rank were made of tin (“*ex tubis stanneis*”), which indicates that more sophisticated organ building was now possible. He then described the effect of this organ on the local population.

From the very first, this organ, to which all eyes and ears were opened, drew a large crowd of people. For the first sixteen days our church and the good-sized courtyard outside were both filled at all hours, as newcomers continually took the places of those who left, not like the waves of the sea, but with pushing and shoving, as those who were standing had nowhere to which to move.³⁴

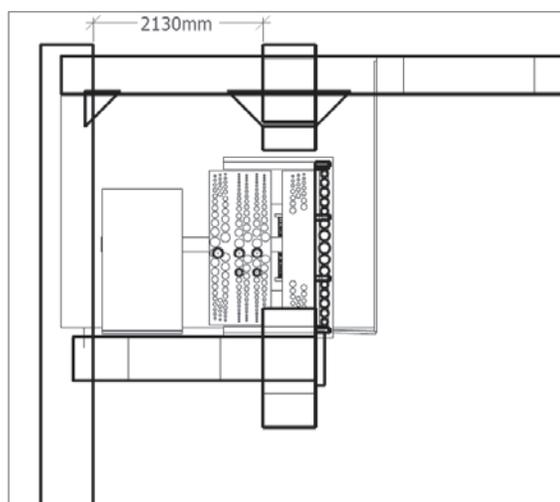
Pereira then built two other organs on commission from Kangxi, which were really mechanical instruments consisting of a type of carillon with an organ division. In 1677, he had already built a large clock carillon for the southwest tower of the Nantang; and in 1679, he had made a *sphaera musica* (a kind of music box with moving figures) for the emperor. The first of his organ carillons was completed in 1682 and consisted of a barrel-driven pipe organ connected to a raised carillon trap made from a traditional Chinese multiple-gong instrument, the *yunluo*. His second organ carillon, completed in time for the Chinese New Year celebrations of 1683, consisted of a bell carillon of considerable height attached to an automatically playing organ division. All this activity led Pereira, in 1682, to reflect on his mission,

I'm well aware that, on first glance, the Portuguese will be very surprised to see a priest of the [Jesuit] Mission amid this pile of tubes. But I hope

PEK1680, four-rank pipe organ, Nantang, Beijing, built by Tomás Pereira



PEK1680, overhead view of soundboard and bellows



that the Lord, to whose greater glory they will sing, and for whose ends they have been tuned, will lift me and many others up to enjoy Him among them, the final and proper end of all our aims.³⁵

Pereira's offhand comments provide us with several possible frames through which we can critically view the building (and, later, importation) of pipe organs in China. First, of course, is the purely musical dimension. But the musical resources were a rather minor issue, as the priests did not need pipe organs: rather, the organ ostentated many features of the West and Christianity that the missionaries were eager to promote, and it helped territorialize a space for Western religion in China. They needed, above all, what has been called a "door opener" for their unique approach to evangelization, which was provided by instruments such as the pipe organ. The second frame shifts slightly to consider the novelty value of complex Western musical instruments such as the organ, as well as the harpsichord and musical clocks. Quite apart from their musical operation, they became preferred gifts and forms of tribute. This modality, established by the 1680s, long outlived Pereira. At the very end of the eighteenth century, it was still being practiced by Vincentian organ builder Charles Paris (1738–1804) in his two organs for the Qianlong emperor. A third frame of reference is that of the global technological movement: this frame draws the pipe organ into the streams of what has been called *histoire croisée*, the intermingling of the particular with the general in the history of cultural exchange. Any one of these frames will outline specific impulses and reasons for the promotion of the pipe organ in China in the Baroque era, each dimension an overlapping image that bleeds into the adjacent one.

In May 1684, the Kangxi emperor made an unprecedented visit to the Nantang and inspected the organ and the clock carillon there.³⁶ Three years later, in 1687, Grimaldi, probably assisted by Pereira, built a hydraulic organ that operated in conjunction with a windmill and a fountain in one of the courtyards of the Imperial Palace in Beijing. In 1688, a Spanish Jesuit, Manuel Rodrigues (1659–1703), arrived in Beijing, where he served as an organist and musician until his death. The Chinese poet YOU Tong (尤侗; 1618–1704) was moved by all this activity to include Pereira's clock carillon and organ in his poem "Europe."

Beautiful chimes from the open cathedral,
Organ and bells high and low resound;

Roses in bloom past the gates of the city,
To the honor of Ricci, wine (was) poured on the ground.³⁷

Where did Pereira (born in the organ-rich area of Braga, Portugal)—let alone Verbiest, Grimaldi, and the missionaries who were less well trained musically—get their skills in organ building, and where did they get their ideas? In economically depressed Portugal, the seventeenth century was apparently a very fallow time for this craft. Although Portugal had become independent of the Spanish crown in 1640, life in that nation during Pereira's youth was unpromising and austere: he would have known only organs of the previous century or earlier. Verbiest was experienced in astronomy, mechanics, and engineering. Grimaldi had similar interests and skills and was probably better acquainted with music in addition to his scientific pursuits. De Magalhães had a background in clock making (relevant for the large number of chiming clocks and automata that were produced for the imperial court and sometimes connected with musical devices). It was a highly professional and skilled mini-society: if these men had never previously built a musical instrument, they certainly had the resources, intellectually and technically, to do so when they were in China, aided, as they were, by experienced craftsmen provided by the emperor.

A further impetus came from an important book on music, copies of which were circulating in China in the 1660s and 1670s. In 1656–57, twenty-four copies of the *Musurgia Universalis*, written by Athanasius Kircher (1601–80) and published in 1650 in Rome, had been sent from Lisbon to the Jesuit missions in Asia.³⁸ A good part of Kircher's book is given over to mechanical musical instruments, for which there was a craze throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A clock carillon, similar to the one built by Pereira and described by Verbiest in his *Astronomia*, is shown in Kircher's book, as well as a number of plates of an "exploded" pipe organ, complete with details of birdsong stops. At least three of the twenty-four copies of the book wound up in China.³⁹ One was a gift to Gabriel de Magalhães, whose copy was inscribed "O Padre Manoel de Magalhães offerece estes dous Tomos ao Padre Gabriel de Magalhães." A second copy reached the mission in Hangzhou in 1661. A third copy contains "Ms. marginal notes." The acquisition of the *Musurgia* was probably a spur to activity among Jesuits in Beijing. There is evidence to link Kircher and his book with some of the China mission Jesuits; he had former students, friends, and correspondents among them, particularly Prospero Intorcetta (1625–96) and Johannes

Grüber (1623–80). Verbiest had studied at the Jesuit Collegium Romanum in 1652–53 and became “devoted” to Kircher.⁴⁰ Verbiest even began to translate parts of the *Musurgia* in Beijing in the mid-1680s.

Even so, the instruments constructed in China continued to be relatively small. In certain respects, positive organs were interchangeable with harpsichords and clavichords, because much of the keyboard repertory could be played on any of them. These instruments were similar to each other in range, and even organs were not necessarily that much louder. The organ then lacked the single-minded associations with church and liturgical music that it has today, a point that helps us better understand why people of the late Renaissance and Baroque eras (musically speaking) considered pipe organs to be appropriate gifts for a Chinese monarch. Nevertheless, the value of their iconic as well as their sonorous powers was undoubtedly utilized as a vector of missionary and diplomatic activity. After all, the pipe organ was one of the most complex mechanical devices to be found in Western culture prior to the beginning of the Industrial Revolution.

AFTER PEREIRA

Tomás Pereira died in 1708, after having been heavily involved, between about 1704 and the time of his death, with the rebuilding of the Nantang, its clock carillon, and a two-manual organ. He did not live to see the organ completed, along with the new church, in 1711, nor did his colleague Leopold Liebstein (1667–1711), who assisted with the rebuilding of the organ. A description of the rebuilt organ was made in 1712 by a Korean diplomatic visitor to Beijing named Kim Changop (김창업/金昌業; 1658–1721).⁴¹

Barely had the peals of bells [from Pereira’s clock carillon, built in 1677] died down when suddenly the sound of a gust of wind emerged from the inside of the arch by the [south]east door. It sounded like many wheels moving together. Then music was played; it was [like] the sound of string and wind instruments. I did not know where it was coming from. The official who interpreted said that it was Chinese music. After a long while, it stopped, and then another melody was played. This was like the one I heard while paying obeisance and offering congratulations to the emperor. [The interpreter] indicated, “This is Manchurian music.” It stopped after a considerably long time, and then yet another piece with a

fast beat was played, and the interpreter pointed out, "This is Mongolian music." The music then stopped completely, and the six ranks [of pipes] shut [down] automatically on their own.⁴²

Upon Grimaldi's death in 1712, these musical activities were carried on by a new group of missionaries. Foremost among these was the Vincentian Teodorico Pedrini (1671–1746), who arrived in Beijing in 1711 as an apostolic Missionary of the Propaganda Fide; other important figures included the Jesuits Karel Slaviček (1678–1735), Florian Bahr (1706–71), and Johann Walter (1708–59).⁴³ While Pedrini was not, as he is often described, a professional musician, he was very gifted and well educated in all aspects of music. Carrying on Pereira's work, Pedrini taught Western music to three of Kangxi's sons and continued to introduce Western music theory to China.⁴⁴ He composed the only surviving works in the European Baroque style in China, twelve trio sonatas in a Corellian vein, the manuscript of which (written under the anagrammatic pseudonym "Nepridi") survives in the National Library in Beijing.⁴⁵ Pedrini oversaw local craftsmen's construction of several harpsichords and organs in Beijing, among them a mechanical organ (with a barrel mechanism similar to that in Pereira's instruments) in 1713 and a large positive in 1719, both for the emperor.⁴⁶ The latter instrument had

four stops, which is sufficient for any church you like in Beijing, but is even more beautiful than those of Europe, as all the facade pipes are decorated with gold flowers on black lacquer, and it is movable [*portatif*, not portative], to the extent that it was removed from my house to the Chang Chun Yuan [暢春園] palace. . . . It is very large; it stands eight *ci* [ca. 2.5 meters] high, [and] there was no way I could move it myself.⁴⁷

Shortly after this, in December 1720, the papal legate Carlo Mezzabarba (1685–1741) arrived in China with a small positive organ made by the celebrated Roman organ builder Ennio Filippo Testa (1665–1726).⁴⁸ The high cost of Testa's positive (300 *scudi*) would seem to be due to ornate decoration; it must have been a gift for a very high-ranking individual. Although small, these organs often were powerful; they could also be used to teach plainsong or for *alternatim* singing. The major difference between the locally manufactured seventeenth-century organs of China and Testa's organ would have been the elegance and professional finish of the latter. Perhaps after Pereira's death in 1708 (twenty years prior to Florian Bahr's arrival in

1739, the first time a professional organ builder reached Beijing), the whole idea of locally built organs was becoming tiresome. A similar instrument was sent as a gift from the queen of Portugal (Maria Anna, 1683–1754) to the Dongtang mission in 1736. Preparing to leave Lisbon for Goa in April 1736, Augustin von Hallerstein (1703–74), the Jesuit director of the Chinese astronomy bureau from 1746 to 1774, noted,

Her Majesty the Queen, our Most Gracious Lady, in addition to other signs of inclination, gave the order, in her royal generosity, that 250 cruzados be given as travel expenses to every one of us going on the long journey. To the mission of St. Joseph in Peking [the Dongtang] she sent a positive, or small hand organ made of silver (except for the legs), with a clock in a glass ball on top of it. It pleased Her Majesty to skillfully play one piece of music after another on this [instrument] in our presence.⁴⁹

Pedrini may have repaired the Nantang organ prior to 1721, when, caught up in the Rites Controversy, he was jailed and later put under house arrest for two years.⁵⁰ In any event, that organ had been enlarged significantly by the time of Pedrini's death in 1746. On 30 September 1730, Beijing suffered a major earthquake, which certainly required rebuilding the organ, though its rebuild was delayed until after the arrival of Florian Bahr in 1739. In 1742–43, Bahr rebuilt the organ, placing it centrally in the gallery, in the traditional Baroque style. In 1759, the organ and carillon attracted the poet ZHAO Yi (趙翼; 1727–1814). In his essay "The Western Telescope and Musical Instruments," Zhao described being introduced to the organ by Hallerstein. "This organ," wrote Zhao,

is in the upper part of the building and is placed on top of a wooden case. A man with a beard sits there and plays the [organ]. You hear the sounds of all musical instruments, of *sheng*, *xiao* [an end-blown flute], *heng* [a stone chime], *di* [a traverse flute], *zhong* [bells], *gu* [a drum], *nao* [hand bells], *zhuo* [a small bell, used in the army for signaling]. Tens of lead pipes are suspended from the case. The foot of [each of] the [facade] pipes is several inches from the ground. Two wooden panels [i.e., slider and table] are bored with holes, which match up with the pipe holes [i.e., top board]. At the southeastern corner, a man is pumping the bellows for air to pass through the pipes. Each pipe is connected by a copper thread [pull-down wire] to a string [tracker] inside the instrument. If

these strings [trackers] are pulled, then the instrument produces sounds of different pitches. The lead pipes are of different sizes and qualities of timbre. Thus, when someone plays the organ, and all the pipes are sounding, you can hear the sounds of all musical instruments . . . solemn, stirring, powerful. . . . It is truly astonishing. There is also a bell [clock carillon] which sounds all by itself. It rings automatically at times, along with the sounds of the organ and various instruments. . . . The “harp” sounds like a cold spring; the “*pipa*” sounds like snowflakes floating through the air. . . . When I go up to the [organ] loft, I am astonished to see [that] only one old man⁵¹ is sitting there and playing. It seems as though a hundred people are making music. . . . The bellows breathes, [rising and falling] like the morning and evening tide. . . . This, too, is wonderful. . . . There are so many intelligent people in the world, and we should broaden our horizons. . . . Knowledge is not limited to the Confucian school. I lingered and enjoyed so much as to forget to go home. I was not aware that it was already eight in the evening and the city gate would be closed. Arriving back home, I have to record what I have heard and seen today, and write it down [while reclining] on my pillow.⁵²

Regrettably, this organ rebuilt by Pereira, Liebstein, and Bahr was lost sixteen years later, in the fire that gutted the Nantang on 13/14 February 1775.⁵³ This event effectively closed, actually as well as symbolically, the era of organs of the Baroque in China. Over the course of the eighteenth century, the Rites Controversy progressively undid the success of the seventeenth-century Catholic missions (they saw a decline from 300,000 converts in 1700 to 150,000 in 1793).⁵⁴ Finally, the Jesuit order was suppressed in 1773 by the papal brief *Dominus ac Redemptor* of Clement XIV. Word of this did not reach Beijing until August 1774, however, and the brief was not promulgated in China until 15 November 1775. It was left to other missionary orders to carry the pipe organ into the far more complex and destructive history of Chinese-Western relations in the nineteenth century.

THE BAROQUE PIPE ORGAN IN CHINA IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In looking for something that might match the oblique descriptions of and comments about these seventeenth- and eighteenth-century organs in Chi-

na, one is drawn ineluctably not to the organs of the Early Baroque but back to those of cinquecento Italy. There may be several reasons for this, but in the case of Ricci's positive, Ricci and Cattaneo's Italian origins justify this hypothesis, as do the technical and aesthetic difficulties they must have encountered. The Iberian-Portuguese traditions in organ building never seem to have made themselves felt in China, despite the political influence of Portugal on the China mission (the *padroado*), as well as the reliance on Macau as a staging point.⁵⁵

Ricci and his successors probably kept in mind the small and medium-sized organs built in Italy through the course of the sixteenth century, especially those of the renowned Antegnati family—Bartolomeo, Graziadio, and Costanzo. Typically, these instruments had one manual, occasionally with an octave of pull-down pedals, although the 1601 Macau positive and the 1611 Zhalan instrument surely did not have this contraption. A pair of bellows (or two pairs for larger instruments) provided very light wind pressure for principal stops of a small scale, with one or two flutes added in the larger examples. If we eliminate the provision for the pull-down pedal division (though Pereira's 1680 instrument may have had something like this), we wind up with an organ of three or four ranks, for which there are variety of possible specifications:

Ricci/MAC1600⁵⁶

Principale 4' (possibly, in the case of Ricci's positive, a stopped rank)

Ottava 2' (possibly also stopped)

And possibly:

Duodecima 2 2/3' or Flauto in ottava 4'

Quintadecima 2' or Regal 8'

With a keyboard of, say, forty-nine keys, a simple instrument would have contained between 150 and 200 pipes. The Macau positives of 1600/1601 had to have been on the small side, but they were at least "processional" organs in size and perhaps larger. We can be somewhat more certain with the specifications of Pereira's 1680 organ for the Nantang:

Pereira/PEK1680

Principale 8', (with 16' extension?)

Ottava 8' (or Flauto (4', or possibly 8', stopped))

Voce Umana 8' (two ranks undulating, or perhaps a reed)
 [3] "Birdsong" stops: *Usignoli, Uccellieri, Grillo*, etc.

In the rebuilding of the Nantang organ in the eighteenth century (by Liebstein in 1711 and by Bahr in 1743), the stoplist was naturally expanded.

A "typical" Baroque-era organ in China would have been a single-manual tracker instrument, blown by a pair of *Spanbalg* bellows producing very light wind pressure, containing on average of two hundred pipes, with a four-octave keyboard. Such an instrument was, in some respects, fifty to one hundred years behind the technical and aesthetic norms for European organs of the day, yet it was serviceable enough. Some of these instruments were later enlarged: if they were not destroyed by fire or other menaces, they were frequently "recycled." That none of them survived is a great pity; but what we know about them is already enough to show that the Baroque era in China offered ample opportunities for people from a wide spectrum of social classes to be exposed to the "King of Instruments."

At their most positive, literati such as You Tong and Zhao Yi were generous and open-minded about these Western novelties. They interpreted them, naturally, from a position of Chinese-cultural centrality: the imagery of classical Chinese poetry and prose was brought into play, and the organ was explained with reference to normative ideas about Chinese musical instruments, to which a Chinese readership would have been able to relate. The pipe organ is understood as a kind of *sheng*; it has the winged appearance of a phoenix (*feng*);⁵⁷ the timbres of the different ranks are described with reference to indigenous instruments (*pipa, qin, gu, zhong*). The physical separation of the sound-producing parts of the instrument (the pipes) from the performer's fingers is a recurrent theme; other themes that recur are the instrument's volume and its tonal force, particularly as they are under the control of a single performer (or two, if you count the *calcant*). Far from rejecting the pipe organ or taking a confrontational approach or tone, most of the writers in this age of mutual admiration were receptive to it. Even though its oddity limited its potential usefulness to the Chinese, as Zhao Yi wrote.

[While] it might not be able to play the traditional songs of China,⁵⁸ it is still [an instrument] of very good quality. This instrument, originating outside of China, is [itself] amazing and intelligent. Despite the long

history of civilization in China, we still have not developed such an instrument.⁵⁹

The open-mindedness revealed here has larger ramifications, beyond the enquiries of historical musicology. It is part of a larger topic on which scholars such as Johanna Waley-Cohen and Julia Lovell have written, the reception of Western science and practical technology in China from the time of Ricci onward.⁶⁰ During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this reception was aided by the Jesuits' liberal "cross-cultural communication" approach⁶¹ and by the presence of the missionaries during the long reign of Kangxi (1661–1722), a period described as one of "Qing multiculturalism."⁶² Partially owing to anti-Jesuit origins, a myth of Chinese "indifference" to things Western, particularly Western technology, began to circulate in the late seventeenth century, took hold in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and is still sometimes encountered today. But comments such as those of You Tong, Zhao Yi, Liang Di, and others cited here are part and parcel of the body of evidence that any perceived "indifference" had its origins in issues of political control, such as those that led the Qianlong emperor to declare to Lord Macartney in 1793, "We have never valued ingenious articles, nor do we have the slightest need of your country's manufactures."⁶³ Qianlong had two positive organs built and installed in the imperial palace, as well as establishing an eighteen-piece Western-style chamber orchestra, trained by the Jesuits. That is part of another chapter of the story of the pipe organ in China.

Notes

Parts of this chapter have appeared, in a different form, in: "Highly Applauded as Novelties Are': Science, Politics, and the Pipe Organs of Tomás Pereira, s.j.," in *History of the Catholic Church in China: From Its beginning to the Scheut Fathers and 20th Century. Unveiling some less known sources, sounds and pictures* (Leuven: Ferdinand Verbiest Institute, 2015), 99–124; and "The Wind Qin: Hearing and Reading Chinese Reactions to the Pipe Organ," in *Reshaping the Boundaries: The Christian Intersection of China and the West in the Modern Era*, ed. SONG Gang (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2016), 48–58.

1. Austin Coates, *A Macao Narrative* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1978), 31.

2. Lucia Galliano has proposed that Ricci and his confreres celebrated mass in

Zhaoqing with “instrumenti musici”; see Galliano, “Matteo Ricci e la musica,” in *Padre Matteo Ricci: L’Europa alla corte dei Ming*, ed. F. Mignini (Milan: Mazzotta, 2003), 57–69. See also *Fonti Ricciani: Documenti originali concenenti Matteo Ricci e la storia delle prime Relazioni tra l’Europa e la Cina*, ed. Pasquale M. D’Elia, 3 vols. (Rome: La Libreria dello Stato, 1942), 1:259, N310 (hereafter cited as *FR*; the designation “N” identifies statements culled from various primary sources); the chapel is mentioned much earlier, at 1:192–93, N245. While unknown “instruments” were brought to Zhaoqing, the organ was generally cited separately (i.e., they are mentions of “organ and musical instruments”) at this date, as a reflection of its role as a continuo and solo (rather than a melodic) instrument. See Thomas Culley, *A Study of the Musicians Connected with the German College in Rome during the Seventeenth Century and of Their Activities in Northern Europe* (Rome: Jesuit Historical Institute, 1970), esp. 161.

3. *FR*, 2:91, N565. As discussed later, Diaz’s phrase “restorno in Nanchino” points to the fact that the organ was subsequently used by the mission in Nanjing. See Ian Woodfield, “The Keyboard Recital in Oriental Diplomacy, 1520–1620,” *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 115, no. 1 (1990): 36.

4. The route, running roughly northeast along waterways where possible, led from Guangzhou, through Shaoguan and Nanchang, up the Yangzi River, to Nanjing.

5. Dates of Cattaneo’s peregrinations have been gleaned from *FR*.

6. Wang Linheng, *Yue jian pian* [Book of the South], (1601), in *Yuanming shiliao biji congkan* [Series of Historical Sources and Writings in Yuan Ming Period], ed. Yidian Ling (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), 92. Unless otherwise noted, this and all subsequent translations in this essay are my own.

7. César Guillén Nuñez, *Macao’s Church of St. Paul: A Glimmer of the Baroque in China* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009), 88–89.

8. *FR*, 2:100, N574. “Father João de Rocha was ordered up from Jiangxi [Province] to remain there with Father Cattaneo.”

9. Gu Qiyuan, *Kezuo zhui yu* (1617), in *Shanghai gu ji chu ban she* (Shanghai, 1995). The passage is quoted in English by Adrian Dudink, “The Inventory of the Jesuit House at Nanjing Made Up during the Persecution of 1616–1617,” in *Western Humanistic Culture Present to China by Jesuit Missionaries (XVII–XVIII Centuries)*, ed. F. Masini (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1996), 128.

10. In her article “Matteo Ricci e la musica,” Galliano includes a photograph of a modern Italian reconstruction of a three-rank, sixteenth-century positive with wooden (cypress) pipes (Gedackt 4’, Gedackt 2’ (bass stopped/treble open) and Regal (Rankett) 8’; all ranks divided), built between 1983 and 1985 by Andrea Restelli. Measuring 87 x 48 x 88 cm, with a range of three-and-a-half octaves (C/E-c’’, forty-five notes, with a short octave in the bass), Restelli’s organ is probably somewhat smaller than the instrument made in Macau for Ricci. In a personal e-mail com-

munication (18 September 2010), Restelli told me that the instrument has no connection to Ricci or the China mission.

11. See Culley, *Study of the Musicians Connected with the German College*, 15 and passim, for much more on this topic. See also David Francis Urrows, "The Music of Matteo Ricci's Funeral: History, Context, Meaning," *Chinese Cross Currents* 9, no. 2 (2012): 104–15.

12. Culley remarked, "[By 1611] the initial [negative] attitude of the Society towards music never prevailed with any great degree of security. . . . After 1600, they [the Jesuit superiors] seem to have realized that the granting of an important role to music in churches and colleges was simply unavoidable" (*Study of the Musicians Connected with the German College*, 106).

13. See Dudink, "Inventory of the Jesuit House at Nanjing." The inventory is contained in the *Nangong shudu* of 1620.

14. For more detail on the topic of Ricci's funeral and this organ, see Urrows, "Music of Matteo Ricci's Funeral."

15. *FR*, 2:626, N998. Note, again, the separation of "organo" from "musicis instrumentis." See also Alvarez Semedo, *Histoire universelle de la Chine* (Rome, 1643), 295f.; Henri Bernard, *Aux origines du cimetière de Chala* (Tianjin: Hautes Études, 1934), 39; *Departed, yet present: Zhalan, the Oldest Christian Cemetery in Beijing*, ed. E. J. Malatesta and GAO Zhiyu (San Francisco: Ricci Institute, University of San Francisco, 1995).

16. This organ was described by Francisco Péris de la Concepción (d. 1701), a Franciscan priest from Valencia who worked in the Philippines, China, and Macau. In a letter of 4 March 1678, the priest mentions playing the organ for a mandarin in Canton, in whose house he appears to have worked. See D. R. M. Irving, *Colonial Counterpoint: Music in Early Modern Manila* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 60.

17. Aleni's Chinese text is reproduced in John L. Mish, "Creating an Image of Europe for China: Aleni's *Hsi-fang Ta-wen*," *Monumenta Serica* 23 (1964): 1–87 (see p. 42 for Mish's translation).

18. I was alerted to this instrument by GONG Hong-yu, who noted it in "Missionaries, Reformers, and the beginnings of Western Music in Late Imperial China (1839–1911)" (PhD diss., University of Auckland, New Zealand, 2006), 42. Gong's source is *Koudao richao* [Diary of Oral Admonitions], cited in Fang Hao, *Zhong Xi jiaotongshi* (Taipei, 1953), 5:6. It is unclear if this *xiqin* was really an organ or a harpsichord. The editor of the English translation of the *Koudao richao* calls it a "clavichord" (Li Jiubao, *Koudao richao: Li Jiubao's "Diary of Oral Admonitions"; A Late Ming Christian Journal*, ed. and trans. E. Zürcher [Brescia: Fondazione civiltà Bresciana, 2007], 263). Rudamina was the first Lithuanian to enter China. He arrived in Macau in 1627 and died of tuberculosis in Foochow (Fuzhou) four years later.

19. QU Dajun, *Guangdong xinyu* [News from Guangdong], in TAO Yabing, *Zhong xi yin yue jiao liu shi gao* [History of Musical Exchange between China and the West] (Beijing: Encyclopedia of China Publishing House, 1994), 106. The eight tones (八音) are the classical Chinese formulation for all the timbral and instrumental types in Chinese music. By analogy, Qu undoubtedly meant here the *organo pleno*. From the comment “lined up like [a mouthful of] teeth,” it is possible to extract a suggestion that the facade pipes were made of metal. Wooden pipes do not come to the characteristic V-shaped point found at the foot of metal pipes.

20. Wang Shizhen, “Chibei outan” [North Pond Casual Talks] (1701), in *Wenyu-ange siku quanshu* [Complete Library of the Four Branches of Literature] (Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 2002), chap. 12.

21. Liang Di, [description of an organ in the Church of Madre de Deus, Macau], in TAO Yabing, *Ming qing jian de zhong xi yin yue jiao liu* (Beijing: Oriental Press, 2001), 111–13. Note the interesting “deconstruction” of the organ into the constituent parts of the *sheng*.

22. Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Lisbon, Portugal, fol. 84v, cited in Nuñez, *Macao’s Church of St. Paul*, 106. Montanha’s massive sixty-one-volume collection of rescripts of seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century documents is in the Library of the Ajuda Palace in Lisbon, collected as *Jesuítas na Ásia*.

23. Not only was there a national rivalry, but the mission in Macau was Jesuit, and there was little love lost between that organization and the Dominican and Franciscan missions in Manila. For more on Philippine keyboard instruments at this time, see Irving, *Colonial Counterpoint*, esp. 54–56.

24. Ricci built a small chapel on this site in 1605, followed by a larger building in 1610. At that time, the Nantang (南堂) was called the “Xitang” (西堂), not to be confused with the later Xitang founded by Pedrini in 1723.

25. In chapter 25 of *Astronomia Europaea*, ed. Noël Golvers (Nettetal: Steyler Verlag, 1993; hereafter cited as Golvers/Verbiest, *AE*), Ferdinand Verbiest describes going with Pereira and Grimaldi to see the emperor in 1676 and playing on the “organum, & clavicymbalum Europæum, quod olim obtulimus.”

26. In my article “‘Highly Applauded as Novelties Are’: Science, Politics, and the Pipe Organs of Tomás Pereira, s.j.” in *History of the Catholic Church in China: From Its beginning to the Scheut Fathers and 20th century. Unveiling some less known sources, sounds and pictures* (Leuven: Ferdinand Verbiest Institute, 2015), 99–124, I discuss Pereira’s organ-building activity and offer reasons why I believe he had something to do with this instrument and why it may have been made in Goa. For another recent article on this topic, see João Paulo Janeiro, “The Organist and Organ Builder Tomás Pereira: Some New Data on His Activity,” in *In the Light and Shadow of an Emperor: Tomás Pereira, SJ (1645–1708), the Kangxi Emperor, and the Jesuit Mission in China*, ed. Artur K. Wardega and António Vasconselos de Saldanha (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2012), 546–67.

27. Noël Golvers, “F. Verbiest, G. Magalhães, T. Pereyra, and the Others: The Jesuit Xitang College in Peking (1670–1688) as an Extra-ordinary Professional Milieu,” in *Tomás Pereira (1646–1708): Life, Work, and World*, ed. L. F. Barreto (Lisbon: Centro Científico e Cultural de Macau, 2010), 277–98.

28. From Greco-Roman antiquity, organs have been associated with clockworks and other automata. For more on this topic, see Paola Dessì, “Organi, orologi e automi musicali: Oggetti sonori per il potere,” *Acta Musicologica* 82, no. 1 (2010): 21–47.

29. Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Jap. Sin. 116, fol. 168r (hereafter cited as ARSI JS), cited in Golvers/Verbiest, *AE*, 316. Pereira somewhat confusingly called it an organ “with two ranks of pipes, *hoc est* two organs joined in one” [ARSI JS 199-I, fol. 42, cited in *Tomás Pereira: Obras*, ed. L. F. Barreto et al., 2 vols. (Lisbon: Centro Científico e Cultural de Macau, 2011)].

30. ARSI JS 117, fol. 168r, cited in Golvers/Verbiest, *AE*, 316. The alternate translation has been suggested by Janeiro. The total number of pipes (two hundred) suggests that the *vozes humanas* was an Italian-style undulating two-rank stop and not a reed.

31. Golvers/Verbiest, *AE*, 439 (91). The present translation is based, with some adjustments, on that by Golvers.

32. Tomás Pereira to Antão Gonçalves, 20 March 1680, ARSI JS 199-I, fols. 34r, 35v, 36r, cited in Pereira, *Pereira: Obras*, 1:84. With my colleague Tereza Sena of Macau Polytechnic Institute, I have compared this edition with photographic copies in the Jesuit Archives in Vanves, France. Our transcription varies in some minor details from the 2011 *Obras*.

33. Tomás Pereira to Francisco Lopes, 30 August 1681, ARSI-JS 199-I, fol. 42, cited in *Pereira: Obras* 1: 88–90. In my forthcoming article “Highly Applauded, as Novelties Are,” I discuss the contradictory pipe lengths given here.

34. Ferdinand Verbiest, letter of 1681, quoted in Golvers/Verbiest, *AE*, 321.

35. *Ibid.* See also Joel Canhão, “Um músico português do século XVII na corte de Pequim: O Padre Tomás Pereira,” *Revista de Cultura* (Macau) 4 (1988): 27–39.

36. The record of his 11 May visit comes from a marginal note in Verbiest’s copy of Argoli’s *Ephemerides*, cited in Golvers/Verbiest, *AE*, 320.

37. This is the second half of You’s poem “The West Cathedral: A Foreign Eclogue” (often called “Europe”), which appears in Tao, *Zhong xi yin yue jiao liu shi gao*, 73. You’s phrase “past the gates of the city” (literally, “outside the Fuchengmen gate”) refers to the Zhalan compound (the site of Ricci’s tomb), which lay in what was then a western suburb of Beijing.

38. At a 1652 Jesuit conclave in Rome, each of the over three hundred delegates was given a personal copy of the *Musurgia*. The influential book and its plates could have been very useful to anyone attempting to build either a pipe organ or a carillon “from scratch.”

39. These three copies were part of the Beitang Library. They are now in the National Library in Beijing. There has regrettably been almost no access to these books (at least to Western scholars) since 1949. As of February 2010, the entire collection has been packed up, awaiting years of “renovations” to the library. See H. Verhaeren, *Catalogue de la Bibliothèque du Pé-t'ang* (Beijing: Imprimerie des Lazaristes, 1949), 564–65.

40. Noël Golvers, *Ferdinand Verbiest, S.J., and the Chinese Heaven* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003), 21.

41. Kim Changop's account is known today only through its citation in a record of a visit to Beijing in 1780 by Pak (Park) Chi Won (박지원; 1737–1805), in Pak's *Yŏrhailgi* [Jehol Diary]. By the time of Pak's visit, the Nantang of Pereira's day had burned down (on 13/14 February 1775), and, as Pak noted to his great disappointment, the organ had been destroyed. It is possible that Kim saw the organ at an “ecumenical service” held on 22 April 1712 in honor of the emperor's birthday.

42. Pak Chi Won, *Yŏrhailgi* [Jehol Diary], Database of Korean Classics, http://db.itkc.or.kr/index.jsp?bizName=KO&url=/itkcd/text/nodeViewIframe.jsp?bizName=KO&seojiId=kc_ko_h010&gunchalId=av011&muncheId=08&finId=172&NodeId=&setid=671233&Pos=0&TotalCount=1&searchUrl=ok (accessed 15 November 2012).

43. While the Moravian-born Slaviček repaired clocks and organs, played the harpsichord and the guitar, and was deeply interested in both Western and Chinese music, he does not seem to have built any organs himself. See Karel Slaviček, *Listy z Číny do vlasti: A Jiná Korespondence s Evropskými Hvězdáři 1716–1735* (Prague: Vyšehrad, 1995).

44. See Gerlinde Gild, “The Introduction of European Musical Theory during the Early Qing Dynasty: The Achievements of Thomas Pereira and Theodorico Pedrini,” in *Western Learning and Christianity in China: The Contribution and Impact of Johann Adam Schall von Bell, S.J. (1592–1666)*, ed. Roman Malek, Monumenta Serica Monograph Series 35 (Sankt Augustin: Monumenta Serica Institute, 1998), 2:1189–1200.

45. A modern edition, *Teodorico Pedrini: Sonatas for Violin and Bass, Op. 3*, ed. Joyce Lindorff, is forthcoming.

46. See Peter C. Allsop and Joyce Lindorff, “Da Fermo al corte imperiale di Cina: Teodorico Pedrini, musico e missionario apostolico,” *Rivista Italiana di Musicologia* 42, no. 1 (2009): 69–104. This may be the place to say that there is simply no evidence to support the claim that Pedrini built an organ for the Beitang (the North Cathedral, built by French Jesuits in 1703).

47. Teodorico Pedrini to Luigi Appiani, 15 September 1719, in A. B. DuVigneau, “Théodorice Pedrini: Prêtre de la Mission, Protonotaire apostolique, musicien de la Cour Impériale de Pékin,” *Bulletin Catholique de Pékin* 287 (July 1937): 372. In the

same letter, Pedrini went into great detail about the intrigues in getting this instrument into an acceptable location at the Imperial Palace.

48. Testa is sometimes credited with the invention, around 1700, of the first European free-reed organ (the *organino*), but as no examples survive, it is difficult to validate this claim.

49. Augustin von Hallerstein to his brother, 24 April 1736, letter 585 in *Der Neue Welt-Bott*, vol. 4, Vienna: Kaliwoda, 1755, 74–76.

50. For more of the complex story of Pedrini's mission work, his disputes with the Jesuits, his release from prison in 1723, and his founding of the Xitang residence and church, see Peter C. Allsop and Joyce Lindorff, "Teodorico Pedrini: The Music and Letters of an Eighteenth-Century Missionary in China," *Vincentian Heritage Journal* 27, no. 2 (2007): 43–59.

51. This man was probably Florian Bahr. He was the son of an organ builder and arrived in Beijing in 1739 along with Hallerstein and the French painter J. D. Attiret (1702–68). Along with Pedrini and Walter, Bahr was called to the court, in 1743, to teach organ, violin, and flute to eighteen of the courtiers. See W. Henkel, "Florian Bahr (1706–1771), ein schlesischer Jesuitenmissionar in China und Musiker am Hof in Peking," *Archiv für Schlesische Kirchengeschichte* 34 (1976): 59–91. As Zhao was introduced to the Nantang organ by Hallerstein, it is likely that Hallerstein would have arranged for his friend who had rebuilt the organ to demonstrate the instrument.

52. ZHAO Yi, "Yanpu zaji" [Jottings of Yanpu], in *Zhongxi wenhua jiaoliu de lishi jianzheng* [Historical Witness of Sino-Western Cultural Exchanges], ed. YU Sanle (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 2006), 246.

53. In an undated letter (early 1776) to his father, Jean-Baptiste Joseph de Grammont (1736–1812) wrote, "Cette année [1775], notre plus belle église de Péking [Nantang] a été brulée et réduite en cendres. L'Empereur [Qianlong] a voulu qu'on la rebatût et nous a prêté pour cela 80 000 francs" (Lettres de J. de Grammont *ad familiares*, French Jesuit Archives, Vanves, France, cited in Xavier Walter, *La troisième mort des missions de Chine* [Paris: Guibert, 2008], 183). These comments would seem to invalidate theories that the fire was not very severe and that the organ could have survived it.

54. The Rites Controversy centered on the Jesuits' toleration of the Confucian ancestral rites, which they considered to be civil and not religious practices. Other orders of priests thought otherwise. The matter came to a crisis in 1705, with the arrival in Beijing of the papal legate Cardinal de Tournon, whose brief was to ban Chinese Christians from performing these rites. This enraged Kangxi and set the stage for a later ban on Christianity.

55. This was not always true where organs were built by missionaries. A surviving bamboo organ built by Father Diego Cera in 1816–24 for the Church of St. Joseph

at Las Piñas, near Manila, was constructed to normative eighteenth-century Iberian specifications. See Helen F. Samson, *The Bamboo Organ of Las Piñas* (Las Piñas: Bamboo Organ Foundation, 1977; 2nd ed., 2006).

56. I use the organ census numbering system of the Pipe Organ in China project.

57. The *sheng* itself was thought to resemble the phoenix (*feng*) visually. See XIAO Jun, "The Golden Phoenix: The Classical *Sheng*," *Chinese Music* 33, no. 1 (2010): 1–6.

58. This inability was due, it seems, to the fixed Western scale of the keyboard and to the organ's temperament, which Zhao (and most others) felt was incompatible with Chinese music.

59. A giant, organ-like *sheng* (or, rather, a *sheng*-like reed organ) was brought to Beijing around 1260–64, to the emperor Kublai Khan, from what is now Iraq (it was almost certainly made in Baghdad). This was a gift from his brother and ally, Hulagu, who had founded the Persian Ilkhanate dynasty. The instrument, fitted with percussion-type reeds two centuries before the the organ built with reed stops in 1460 by Heinrich Traxdorf, was reportedly copied by the Chinese, utilizing, it is thought, free reeds of the *sheng* type. But the contraption and its ten or so reproductions fell into oblivion after the end of the Yuan dynasty in 1368. See A. C. Moule, "A Western Organ in Medieval China," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Association*, n.s., 2, no. 2 (1926): 193–211.

60. See, for example, Johanna Waley-Cohen, "China and Western Technology in the late Eighteenth Century," *American Historical Review* 98, no. 5 (1993): 1525–44; Waley-Cohen, *Sextants of Beijing* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999).

61. In this connection, see Ian Rae, "The 'Cross-Cultural Communication' Approach of the Early Jesuit Missionaries in China," *Review of Culture* [Macau] 21, no. 2 (1994): 121–32.

62. See Allsop and Lindorff, "Teodorico Pedrini," 53, for much more on this topic.

63. Quoted in Waley-Cohen, "China and Western Technology," 1525.

From Colonial Modernity to Global Identity

The Shanghai Municipal Orchestra

Hon-Lun Yang

In November 2012, the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra (SSO) announced a four-year partnership with the New York Philharmonic,¹ the former claiming a history just several decades shorter than the latter. The SSO celebrated its 130th anniversary in 2009 with high-profile publicity. It claims as its predecessor a town band founded in 1879. A colonial establishment created to serve British settlers in the Shanghai International Settlement, the town band paraded at official events, opened horse-racing ceremonies, performed at public gardens in summer evenings, accompanied performances by amateur drama clubs, and played at banquets and balls.² Above all, the town band represented British sovereignty in semicolonial Shanghai, in which local Chinese had no part. As British historian Robert Bickers has pointed out,

the “Shanghai Community” [at the time] . . . excluded Chinese residents of the settlement. There was little scope for any incidental transmission of European classical music to a Chinese audience, save for the Chinese servants of European families looking after European children in the Public Garden, or ceremonial attendance by local Chinese officials.³

For these and other reasons, it seems worth exploring why the SSO actively articulates its connections to its predecessor, publically celebrating its long history whenever opportunity allows.⁴ Some changes must have taken place in the second phase of the development of the town band for it to have become a now highly valued and prided musical ensemble of the People’s Republic of China (PRC).⁵

In the pages that follow, I consider factors and actors that facilitated such a change, through an examination of the orchestra's various interactions with the Chinese community. It may be argued that the town band, known as the Shanghai Public Band and later the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra (SMO), went through phases of transformation by establishing contacts with the Chinese community during the interwar years. These contacts were crucial to the transculturation of Chinese music in the second half of the twentieth century. Such a study sheds light on issues pertinent to cultural encounters and cross-cultural relations, both of which were essential in China's journey toward modernity.⁶

ZEITGEIST AND CHANGES

The year 1922 was a milestone in the history of the Shanghai Public Band, the year when it changed its name to the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra,⁷ signifying a new phase in the institution's development under Mario Paci (1878–1946). Paci, the orchestra's director from 1919 to 1942, succeeded in leading the orchestra to become "Far East No. 1."⁸ The emergence of the SMO as a leading professional orchestra in Asia coincided with a tumultuous phase in the history of contemporary China, marked by frequent political and social unrests. The New Culture Movement of 1919 laid the foundation for profound cultural transformation led by Chinese intellectuals educated in the West.⁹ Such a change had been anticipated by various modernization attempts made during the late Qing dynasty, before its downfall in 1911. Various facets of Western knowledge, including science and technology as well as Western music, had been introduced to Chinese soil in the early twentieth century.¹⁰ By 1922, Shanghai had become a center of Western musical activities, where not only Westerners but also a good number of Chinese engaged with Western music as practitioners and/or appreciators. *Shen Bao*, the local Chinese newspaper, documents the complexity of Shanghai's musical soundscape, characterized by the coexistence of musics of diverse origins—Chinese musical genres from different geographical regions as well as different kinds of Western music, classical, pop, jazz, Russian, Jewish, and so on.¹¹

Prior to the mid-1920s, SMO concerts were not open to Chinese audiences. Rules established by Western settlers during the nineteenth century prevented Chinese from entering the Global Settlement's public venues.

Naturally, this included the municipal town hall, where regular SMO concerts took place until May 1930.¹² This practice changed shortly after 1922. Rising nationalistic sentiments that followed the student protest incident of 4 May 1919 prompted Shanghai Chinese to request access to public parks.¹³ The SMO had, in fact, helped force a more integrated Shanghai. Paci claimed that he had proposed to the Municipal Council that Chinese audiences have access to SMO concerts, even threatening to resign if his proposal was denied.¹⁴ In any event, Chinese audiences were allowed to attend SMO concerts after 1925, a crucial year in the history of the SMO, as it marked the ensemble's first encounter with the Chinese community. Probably not coincidentally, *Shen Bao* mentioned SMO concerts weekly in 1926.¹⁵

In 1931, the first Chinese musician was invited to join the Orchestra and Band Committee of the Municipal Council. HUANG Zi (also known as HUANG Tzu) was the first Chinese to sit on the committee, shortly after his orchestral composition *In Memoriam* (mentioned again in the next section of this essay) was performed by the SMO in 1930. Accepting a Chinese member onto the committee may have been little more than a way of appealing to Shanghai's Chinese ratepayers; meeting records show that neither Huang Zi, who served from 1931 to 1938, nor LEE Weining, who served from 1938 to 1942, spoke frequently at meetings.¹⁶ But for many Chinese, then as well as now, the gesture has carried utmost significance. It represented respect and recognition of the rights of Chinese ratepayers in the International Settlement, a big step for interracial and intercultural relationships in semicolonial Shanghai.

SMO concerts presented in various public spaces of the city were considered crucial in defining Shanghai's metropolitan outlook.¹⁷ After the municipal town hall, the SMO's original performing venue, was sold to a land developer in 1929, the orchestra's indoor concerts were held in various commercial theaters not designed for classical music performance, including the Grand Theater, the Carlton, and the Lyceum. After 1934, the Lyceum became the ensemble's permanent venue. Such a change afforded the orchestra an opportunity to reach out to Shanghai's entertainment world as well as to a wider public, prompting the institution to become more a community cultural asset than an adjunct of the Municipal Council.¹⁸

The institution's tradition of giving summer concerts at outdoor public spaces—Bund's Public Park, Jessfield Park, and Hongkew Park—was also a defining factor of its municipality. These concerts attracted large audiences of mixed origins, including a good number of Chinese listeners after the

parks were opened to the Chinese public in 1928. The attendance rate of regular indoor concerts went up after 1925 due to the admission of Chinese. By 1931, Chinese accounted for over 20 percent of the audience at the indoor concerts, the number was even higher at outdoor concerts, and the Chinese audience population grew steadily thereafter.¹⁹

SOUNDING COSMOPOLITAN

Situated in a “cosmopolitan” city, the SMO was forced to be cosmopolitan, to become an asset of Shanghai’s international and Chinese communities. The sending of complimentary tickets to seven or eight Shanghai newspapers serving nationals of different countries or ethnicities testified to the cosmopolitan outlook of the SMO’s organizers as well as audiences. Such an outlook was also reflected somewhat in the orchestra’s programming. Even though he was often being accused of favoring Italian works, Paci self-consciously appealed to Shanghai’s international audience in his programming strategy, more so during his early tenure. For example, on 9 May 1920, the date of his final first-season concert with the orchestra, Paci devoted the event to “compositions by musicians living in Shanghai.” The program featured works of R. Hurry, H. Ore, P. Brunelli, and D. M. Karlin, as well as a composition of his own. In the following few seasons (from 1920 to 1923), Paci regularly played the “nationality” card, organizing selected concerts around compositions of particular nations and highlighting the “nationalities” of each program in the titles of the concert brochures. There were concerts devoted to works by French, Italian, Russian, and even Bohemian composers. Probably for political reasons, the concert that opened the 1922–23 season was devoted to British composers and featured music by Charles Stanford, Granville Bantock, Frances Allitsen, Wilfrid Sanderton, and Edward Elgar, composers whose works are seldom performed today (with the exception of Elgar). German composers’ works—those of Beethoven, Wagner, Mendelssohn, and even Richard Strauss—were frequently featured but were never identified as “German.”²⁰

No other concert was more iconic of the SMO’s cosmopolitanism than the one presented on 15 April 1936,²¹ which featured the Chinese premiere of Beethoven’s *Symphony no. 9* in entirety. The large choir was made up of members of the Shanghai Choral Society (which consisted mostly of Westerners), the Shanghai Songsters (mostly Chinese singers), the Germans

Community Choral Group, the National Conservatory of Music, and the Russian Choral Society, to ensure a performance of the highest standard.²² Paci complained privately about the extra rehearsals he had to conduct, separately with each choir as well as collectively, to ensure a good performance.²³ Though it is not clear how much interaction the choir members of different communities actually experienced during rehearsals, their appearance together on the same stage singing Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" was symbolic of brotherhood and humanism, a gesture of international collaboration that reflected Shanghai's civic aspirations. The SMO's perceived significance as a metropolitan icon is confirmed by a petition note that XIAO Youmei, then president of the National Conservatory of Music, wrote in defense of the orchestra's continuation, just a few days after the Beethoven concert.

All metropolises in the world have their own orchestra to promote culture and enhance people's happiness. Shanghai is the biggest commercial city in our country, and the orchestra organized by the Municipal Council benefits our citizens the most. It costs over two hundred thousand dollars a year to run and is not what our [Chinese] government can afford. It is a great fortune that the Municipal Council has this orchestra. I heard about the recent proposal to vote for its abolishment and a meeting to be held this Wednesday (April 18th) by Chinese ratepayers for such a purpose. I thus urge you to make a protest and plead to the Municipal Council for the orchestra's continuation, as it not only benefits the whole city but is crucial for our city's cultural development in the future.²⁴

We do not know whether Xiao's petition had any impact at all. The SMO was to undergo a restructuring after 1936. There is no doubt that Paci was open to admitting more Chinese musicians into the SMO, whether as a result of his cosmopolitan outlook or simply as a marketing ploy to attract Chinese audience. The first composition by a Chinese composer played by the SMO was by Yale University graduate Huang Zi, whose overture *In Memoriam* was performed on 23 November 1930.²⁵ Huang's symphonic *Cityscape Fantasia* was played and recorded in 1935.

Events like these had a considerable impact on the Chinese community, because they suggested the possibility of recognition and success for those Chinese musicians who had the courage to pursue Western music, then known in Chinese as *xin yinyue* (new music). The performance of Huang's work was highly publicized in Shanghai.²⁶ Xiao Youmei wrote a long article

to celebrate the event; the article served not only as a congratulatory note to his staff (Huang was then a faculty member of the conservatory) but also as a proclamation of nationalistic sentiments.²⁷ For Xiao, that a city had a symphony orchestra and that a nation had its own composers and symphonic music was synonymous with civility and modernity. Precisely this attitude set the developmental path of Chinese music in the twentieth century.

Huang's *In Memoriam* can be regarded as a Western piece by a Chinese composer, in that it embodies no apparent Chinese flavors. Paci did go on to program more characteristically Chinese compositions; however, they were written not by Chinese composers but by the Russian Jewish composer Aaron Avshalomov (1894–1964). Featured in the second half of the SMO concert on 24 April 1932 were Avshalomov's *Beijing Hutong* and two Chinese songs sung by Chinese singers.²⁸ In the following year, Paci organized a highly publicized concert billed as a "special grand Chinese evening," which attracted attention from the Chinese community. Much of that concert consisted of works by Avshalomov that showcased the fusion of Chinese and Western elements.²⁹ The first half of the program featured traditional Chinese music by the Chinese music ensemble Datong Yuehui (Union Music Club). This was followed by a *pipa* piece by WEI Zhongle (also known as Wei Chung Lok; 1908–97), which may well have been the first public performance by a Chinese instrumental ensemble for a largely Western audience in Shanghai.³⁰ Wei was invited back to play with the Datong Yuehui in 1936 and played three *erhu* pieces with the SMO in 1941. These pieces may well have been the first fusion works in contemporary Chinese music, anticipating a compositional trend extremely popular in recent years.

SHOWCASING CHINESE SOLOISTS

After 1929, the SMO began featuring Chinese soloists more and more frequently, an important step in interracial and intercultural relations. At least one Chinese soloist performed with the SMO each year after 1933, and there were usually several concerts featuring Chinese soloists each year after 1940. This trend served a number of purposes. First, showcasing Chinese musicians was a good way to increase concert attendance, particularly from the Chinese sector. Second, there were more and more Chinese musicians of exceptional talent available in Shanghai to collaborate with the SMO. Third, using local talent was almost certainly a cost-saving strategy; after its 1936

restructuring, the orchestra had a reduced budget, and by the 1940s, China and the Western nations represented in Shanghai were at war with Japan.

The first Chinese soloist to play with the SMO was the French-trained, seventeen-year-old violinist MA Sicong. He played Violin Concerto no. 6 (then thought to have been composed by Mozart) on 22 December 1929.³¹ Ma's arrival in Shanghai in late 1929 must have been highly anticipated by the Shanghai public; *Shen Bao* wrote about him and his playing at least ten times within a two-month period.³² Other violinists who performed with the SMO included WANG Renyi (October 1935) and the Eurasian Leonora Valesby (also known as LIAO Yuji), who later became a regular member of the orchestra.³³ Ma's brother MA Si-Hong collaborated with a number of Russian musicians at a farewell concert for Gregory Singer in 1946.³⁴

The year 1929 was memorable for Shanghai's Chinese audiences. The Shanghai Songsters, the local Chinese choir, was featured at the special choral concert on 2 June that ended the SMO's 1928–29 season. As reported in *Shen Bao*, the fifty-member choral group had been established ten years earlier to cultivate Western music and had given well-received concerts in the past.³⁵ Its 1929 collaboration with the SMO was unprecedented, however. When the SMO toured Nanjing in April 1937, it joined forces with local choirs to perform Haydn's *Creation*, and in 1940, it collaborated with the Crescendo Chorus, under the leadership of CHAO Mei-Pa, at Shanghai's Jessfield Park.

In a special SMO concert featuring the Shanghai Choral Society and held on 11 and 22 December 1935, the Chinese tenor HU Ren appeared as one of three soloists. Hu also shared the stage with Chinese soprano Eva Hwang at the Chinese premier of Haydn's *Creation* on 14 January 1936. This was another "first" for Shanghai, because there was no lack of Western singers available at the time. Probably as a result of the concert's success, both Hu and Hwang appeared again with the SMO in March 1936. Chao Mei-Pa was another Chinese tenor the SMO brought to the limelight, in May 1937. Other singers showcased by the SMO included the bass SZE Yi-Kwei (who performed in February 1943) and sopranos KAO Chih-Lan (who performed in 1944 and 1946), LANG Yuxiu (Pansy Long) (who performed in 1937), and Ellie Mao (who performed at the orchestra's farewell concert in 1946).³⁶ All of them later became leading Chinese vocalists.

The SMO also helped launch the careers of a number of Chinese pianists. Mary Shen, a student of Paci's, was a case in point. Her debut concert took place on 25 August 1934 at Jessfield Park, during which she performed



The Shanghai Municipal Orchestra in 1936



The Shanghai Municipal Orchestra after the Haydn *Creation* concert on 14 January 1936, featuring two Chinese soloists, Ren Hu and Eva Huang, and the Shanghai Songsters

Grieg's Piano Concerto and Saint-Saëns's *Rhapsodie d'Auvergne*, as well as three Chopin pieces. Her playing was very well received by what was reported to have been a record-breaking audience.³⁷ The concert's success helped Shen acquire a government scholarship to study at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels, from which she graduated with a first prize in 1938; she was also reported to have received high marks at the International Pianist Competition in Paris before her return to Shanghai in 1939.³⁸ Shen later collaborated with the SMO a few more times, taking part in two chamber concerts held in April 1939 and March 1941 and in two concerto concerts held April 1940 and February 1943.³⁹

Lois Woo (also known as WU Leyi; 1919–2006) was another Chinese pianist who shone in SMO concerts. She was a student of the Russian pedagogue Boris Zakharov (1887–1943) at the National Conservatory of Music, which nurtured China's first generation of musicians in Western music. Woo played Grieg's Piano Concerto at her debut SMO concert in November 1937; in 1940, she performed as a soloist in three concertos just a few months apart.⁴⁰ As it turned out, Woo was to become one of the most prominent pianists in the PRC. She made great contributions to Chinese piano playing through her teaching at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, the successor of the National Conservatory of Music.⁴¹

HEARING SMO CONCERTS

The impact of SMO concerts on the development of Chinese music was profound. More than a few leading musicians claimed to have been so inspired by the SMO concerts they attended that they later decided to pursue careers in Western music. A note kept with the 1925 programs states that violinist TAN Shuzhen (1907–2002) attended the first concert of that season, which was the first SMO concert ever opened to the Chinese public. Two years later, in 1927, Tan joined the orchestra as a replacement. Although he only occupied the last desk of the second violin section, the news of his success was widely publicized, his fellow countrymen taking pride in him reaching the playing standard of the prestigious orchestra.

Attached to a SMO concert program dated 30 December 1939 is a note written by the Chinese conductor CHEN Zhuanxi (1916–2012), himself the first Chinese oboist with the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra. In the note, Chen wrote that he heard Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony" at the

concert and determined then to become a musician.⁴² During his student years, the renowned conductor LI Delun (1917–2001) was a diligent SMO concertgoer, and his vivid memory of the concerts he attended fill five pages of his biography.⁴³ Even the renowned ZHU Jian'er (b. 1922), one of the most prominent composers of symphonic music from the PRC, retained vivid memories of his first SMO concert.⁴⁴

A series of three concerts attended by Xiao Youmei in October 1927 may have had a profound impact on the history of Chinese music. In a concert review he wrote, Xiao regarded the SMO as “Shanghai’s only treasure.”⁴⁵ Because of the SMO’s presence in Shanghai and because of the teaching staff it made available to music students, Xiao went on to establish the first National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai in November 1927.⁴⁶

CONCLUSION

As the embodiment of Western music’s most advanced artistry, the SMO exerted a powerful influence on budding Chinese musicians. Indeed, the sounds of Western music were what many a Chinese youngster sought during and after the 1930s and 1940s, despite the fact that Shanghai’s musical soundscape was unquestionably multifarious. Whether the orchestra’s influence was more aesthetic or more ideological cannot now be determined. Certainly, the beautiful sounds of Western music were embraced as signs of cultural modernity and were invariably associated with Shanghai’s privileged classes, such as the Shanghailanders, the expatriates, wealthy Chinese bankers, powerful politicians, and compradors. No wonder there were numerous attempts among Chinese musicians, both amateur and professional, to form Western ensembles and small orchestras, all in the hope of one day being able to produce the sounds of the SMO. Yet the orchestra employed no regular Chinese players until 1938, and even the Chinese players then hired on a permanent basis were paid a salary lower than that of Filipino members.⁴⁷ None of them seemed to mind, however. The prestige of being part of the SMO probably made up for discriminatory treatment.

In that regard, Xiao Youmei made the right choice when he founded the conservatory in Shanghai. Whether a Western music school should have been established at all in China was a political/ideological issue that troubled the Chinese musical community for many years. Anticolonialism and anti-imperialism were high on the Chinese Communist Party’s agenda

during the first few decades of PRC history. Yet the SMO was never actually disbanded. Instead, during the 1950s, the orchestra went through a thorough transformation: its membership became entirely Chinese, and its Western repertory was gradually replaced by Chinese music. As it happened, this transculturation was temporary; it ended with the Cultural Revolution. But the transculturation of the Western symphony orchestra within China's musical life was permanent. Western symphonic music and its corresponding institution, the symphony orchestra, are now aspects of Chinese musical culture. Today, large numbers of youngsters learn Western instruments. Concert halls and orchestras can be found in Chinese cities. All these things continue to be perceived by the Chinese themselves as cultural icons of modernity and international identity.⁴⁸

Notes

1. *New York Times*, 14 November 2012, Late Edition (East Coast), C1. The New York Philharmonic, established in 1842, is the oldest professional orchestra in the United States.

2. The SSO took 1879 as its founding year, based on an advertisement published in a local newspaper, *The North China Herald*, 8 January 1879. According to Robert Bickers, however, the town band was supported by the Shanghai Recreation Fund and was not under the management of the Municipal Council. See Bickers, "The Greatest Cultural Asset East of Suez: The History and Politics of the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra and Public Band, 1881–1946," in *Ersbi shiji de Zhongguo yu shijie* [China and the World in the Twentieth Century], vol. 2, ed. CHANG Chihsiung (Taipei: Institute of History, Academia Sinica, 2001), 840.

3. Bickers, "Greatest Cultural Asset," 847.

4. Chinese objections have been raised regarding the SSO tracing its history to the municipal town band of the British settlement. See DAI Penghai, "Shishi qi-ushi, zunzhong lishi: 'Shangjiao' tuanling qisuan he qianshen pinggu de lishi yiju" [Counting on the Facts and Respecting History: Historical Evidence for Calculating the Years of Establishment and Assessing the Predecessor of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra], *Renmin yinyue* [People's Music] 411–12, nos. 7–8 (2000): 6–12, 20–26.

5. TANG Yading regards the SMO as a model for the future development of Western music in China. See Tang Yading, *Diguo feishan bianzouqu: Shanghai gong-buju yuedui shi* [Variations of Imperial Diasporas: A History of Shanghai Municipal Orchestra] (Shanghai: Shanghai yinyuexueyuan chubanshe, 2014).

6. A proliferation of secondary literature on the SMO focuses on the institution's connections with the Chinese community. For literature in Chinese, see

HAN Guohuang, "Shanghai gongbujue yuedu yanjiu" [A Preliminary Study of the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra], *Yishuxue* [Study of the Arts] 14, no. 9 (1995): 143–205; Yashiko Enomoto, *Xifang yinyuejia de shanghai meng: Gongbujue yuedu chuanji* [Western Musicians' Shanghai Dream: The Legend of the Municipal Orchestra], trans. ZHAO Yi (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 2009); WANG Yanli, YUAN Lin, and XIN Sui, "Ershi shiji shangbanye xishi guanxian yuedu yu zhongguo yinyuejia guanxi zhi tanjiu: Yi Shanghai gongbujue guanxian yuedu weili" [A Study of the Relationship between the Western Orchestra and Chinese Musicians in the First Half of the Twentieth Century: A Case of the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra], *Yishu yanjiu* [Art Research] 28, no. 3 (2012): 22–23; Tang, *Diguo feishan bianzouqu*. For literature in English, see Bickers, "Greatest Cultural Asset"; Pui-ling Pang, "Reflecting Musically: The Shanghai Municipal Orchestra as a Semi-colonial Construct" (PhD diss., University of Hong Kong, 2015).

7. Such a change of nomenclature is evident in concert programs from the 1922 season and is pointed out in all the studies of the SMO. The appointment of German conductor Rudolf Buck in 1907 was a turning point in the town band's development: Buck replaced the orchestra's earlier Filipino members with European players of a higher performing standard and introduced so-called classical music to the Shanghai audiences.

8. Such a commendation was suggested by Hisao Tanabe, who reported his attendance at an SMO concert of 22 April 1923 in his memoir. See Tanabe, *Zhongguo zhaoxian yinyue diao cha jixing* [China and Korea: A Trip to Study Music] (Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomosha, Shōwa, 1970), 247–49. Tanabe's reminiscence was quoted in Enomoto, *Xifang yinyuejia de shanghai meng*, 102–3. After 1942, Paci's collaboration with the orchestra was intermittent, but he did conduct concerts between 1943 and 1945.

9. For more information on the New Culture Movement, or May Fourth Movement, in China, see Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment: Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

10. Western bands were the first to appear on Chinese soil for ceremonial purpose.

11. This mixed soundscape in Shanghai has been pointed out in Andrew F. Jones's *Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in the Chinese Jazz Age* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001) and Joys Hoi Yan Cheung's "Chinese Music and Translated Modernity in Shanghai, 1918–1937" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2008). As mentioned in a *Shen Bao* report entitled "Xiyang xianyue tuan tizhi tongji" [Statistics of Western String Orchestra] (12 June 1923, 5), there were more than a handful of string ensembles in Shanghai by the 1920s. Reports of Western music concerts by Chinese instrumentalists and ensembles in Shanghai appeared in *Shen Bao* in the 1920s and 1930s.

12. The last concert in Town Hall took place on 18 May 1930. For the next two seasons (1930–32), concerts were held at the Grand Theater, then at the Carlton Theater, but the orchestra returned to the Grand toward the end of the latter season. Concerts continued to be held at the Grand until the end of the 1933–34 season, in May 1934. The Lyceum Theater then became SMO's regular concert venue until 1948. See SMO concert programs held in the SSO archive.

13. For more information about the opening of the public parks, see WANG Min et al., *Jindai shanghai chengshi gonggong kongjian (1843–1949)* [The Public Space of Contemporary Shanghai City] (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 2011), 37–38.

14. During an interview held in 1930 while he was in Italy, Paci stated, "Up till 1925 they were not allowed to attend them, but it was I who proposed to let them frequent the Town Hall, which was, one can say, the only place of artistic culture in a town of two million. I succeeded. From then, the Chinese, who are very intelligent and great lovers of musical art especially, have attended the concerts more and more. They particularly like to get on the same level as the cultured European public. A Choral Society has been formed by the Chinese, and I often let them perform at my concerts." A relevant newspaper article published in *Il Giornale d'Italia* (n.d.) is quoted in Floria Paci Zaharoff, *The Daughter of the Maestro: Life in Surabaya, Shanghai, and Florence* (New York: iUniverse, 2005), 154. In 1945, after the end of the Second Sino-Japanese War, the SMO's administration became a branch of Shanghai's city government. Paci wrote repeatedly to the director of the orchestra in hope of a reappointment. In a letter dated 4 November 1945, he explained, "When in 1923, Chinese, under the English rule, were not admitted to the Symphony Concerts in the Town Hall, I, an Italian, started a campaign against my employers and threatened to resign from my conductorship if that rule should have been further enforced" (quoted in Zaharoff, *Daughter of the Maestro*, 280).

15. ZHANG Ruogu, a professor at the Shanghai College of Fine Arts, provided program notes and concert reports for *Shen Bao*. Zhang also wrote about concert etiquette for Chinese audiences new to Western music concerts; see *Shen Bao*, 24 January 1926. Zhang's program notes were later turned into the volume *Dao yinyue-hui qu* [Go to the Concerts] (Shanghai: Liangyou tushu gongsi, 1927), probably the first music appreciation textbook in Chinese.

16. As recorded in the committee's minutes, Huang spoke twice, on 30 May 1932 and 5 October 1936, regarding the promotion of SMO concerts on behalf of the Chinese community. See Orchestra and Band Committee Minutes (1919 to 1941), Shanghai Municipal Archive (hereafter cited as SMA), U1-1-130, U1-1-131.

17. Such a view is presented in all the secondary literature on the SMO.

18. See Bickers, "Greatest Cultural Asset," 859–60.

19. According to Bickers (*ibid.*, 856), attendance rates of Chinese audience members was mentioned in the Municipal Council's annual reports.

20. This measure may have been instituted to avoid anti-German sentiments shortly after World War I.

21. The concert was originally scheduled for 7 April 1936, but due to Paci's illness, it took place on 14 April.

22. Regarding the arrangement of the concert, see Mario Paci to the Municipal Council secretary, 13 March 1936, SMA, U1-4-905.

23. Letter dated 7 April 1936, quoted in Zaharoff, *Daughter of the Maestro*, 173–76.

24. SMA, Q235-1-579.

25. Huang's *In Memoriam* was one of three student works featured at Yale in a concert held at Woolsey Hall on 31 May 1929. It was so well received that the *New Haven Evening Register* featured an article on Huang on 9 June 1929. Much has been written in Chinese about Huang Zi, but the most reliable information comes from Han Guohuang, "Huang Zi liumei ciliao de yanjiu" [Study on Information Pertinent to Huang Zi's Studying in the US], *Yinyue yishu* [Arts of Music] 12, no. 1 (1983): 54–72.

26. The event was reported in *Shen Bao* three times, first in an article by Xiao Youmei on 18 November 1930, then in an article by Zhang Ruogu on 23 November, and finally in a report of the performance on 30 November.

27. Xiao's article, "Huang Jinwu de 'Huajiu'" [In Memoriam of Huang Jinwu], is reprinted in *Xiao Youmei Quanjì* [Collected Works of Xiao Youmei] (Shanghai: Shanghai yinyue xueyuan chubanshe, 2004), 387–88.

28. An advertisement for the concert was placed in *The North China Daily News*, 21 April 1932, 13. I am indebted to John Winzenburg for sharing with me the advertisement before the entire run of the newspaper is available online through the database *Quanguo baokan suoyin* [National Press Index].

29. For more information on Avshalomov, see John Winzenburg, "Aaron Avshalomov and New Chinese Music in Shanghai, 1931–1947," *Twentieth-Century China* 37, no. 1 (2012): 50–72.

30. For more information on the Datong Yuehui, see Joys Hoi Yan Cheung, "Divide and Connections in Chinese Musical Modernity: Cases of Musical Networks Emerging in Colonial Shanghai, 1919–1937," *Twentieth-Century China* 37, no. 1 (2012): 30–49.

31. The concerto is now known to have been composed by Johann Friedrich Eck (1767–1838).

32. *Shen Bao*, 3, 5, 9, and 10 October 1929; 5, 7, 9, 14, 17, and 23 November 1929. The SMO concert was not reported. Ma Sicong (1912–87) went to France to study violin when he was eleven years old; unfortunately, his study was cut short in 1929, when his family was no longer able to support him. In 1950, Ma became the first president of the PRC's state-sponsored Central Conservatory of Music. During the

Cultural Revolution, he fled from China to Hong Kong and later emigrated to the United States.

33. Leonora Valesby was the daughter of Ellinor Valesby (whose real name was Inga Heinrich) and LIAO Shangguo, better known as LI Qingzhu (1893–1959), a famous music aesthetician of the time. For more information about the interracial marriage of Ellinor Valesby and Li Qingzhu, see LIANG Maochun, “Yueyi xinsheng pu gushi: Hualisi yishugequ yanqiu” [Newby to Set Old Poems to Music: A Study of Valesby’s Art Songs], *Yinyue yanqiu* [Explorations in Music] 1 (2014): 59–71. Valesby played Mozart’s Violin Concerto no. 3 at her debut concert (19 November 1939) and played Viotti’s Violin Concerto in concert half a year later (19 April 1940). In 1943, she performed Mozart’s Violin Concerto no. 5.

34. Advertisement in *The North China Daily News*, 18 June 1946, 2.

35. *Shen Bao*, 1 June 1929, 28.

36. The performers are mentioned in SMO concert programs.

37. A review of the concert was published in *The North China Daily News*, 26 August 1934, 17. *Shen Bao* (22 August 1934, 16) did make an announcement of Shen’s concert. In addition to pointing out Shen being Paci’s student, the newspaper mentioned that Alexander Tcherepnin praised her playing.

38. Shen’s success in Europe was publicized in *The North China Daily News*, 30 April 1939, 7. It was also reported a year later in *Shen Bao*, 13 April 1940, 16.

39. My sources for these concerts are the SMO concert programs.

40. Woo performed Chopin’s two concertos in April and August 1940, then Liszt’s Piano Concerto no. 1 in December. In November of the following year, she performed Schumann’s Piano Concerto. She performed Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto No. 1 in May 1942 and Mozart’s Piano Concerto no. 22 in December of the same year. A couple of months later, in January 1943, she again played Liszt’s Piano Concerto no. 1; this was her last collaboration with the SMO. Zakharov’s passing in 1943 and Paci’s departure from the SMO after his January concert probably had something to do with Woo’s disappearance from the SMO concert stage.

41. Aside from Mary Shen and Lois Woo, other Chinese pianists who collaborated with the SMO included Mary Hsia (in January 1937), Patrick Lin (in February 1939), Nancy Lee (in February 1944), and Kwong-Kwong Tung (in April 1944), as well as a number of others.

42. The archivist at the SSO archive in 2006 explained that these were interview notes that the preceding archivist had assembled in preparation for celebrating the 120th anniversary of the orchestra in 1999.

43. LUO Yunyun, *Li Delun Zhuan* [The Life of Li Delun] (Beijing: Zhuojia chubanshe, 2001).

44. For details of Zhu’s reminiscence, see the transcript of Phoenix Television’s program *The Hundred-Year Journey of an Orchestra: 130th Anniversary of the Shang-*

hai Symphony Orchestra, 26 September 2009, http://phtv.ifeng.com/program/zmdfs/200909/0929_1655_1370611.shtml (accessed 31 March 2013).

45. The three concerts Xiao attended took place on 9, 16, and 23 October 1927. The review was dated 24 October 1927, but the source is unclear. It appears in *Xiao Youmei Quanji*, 211–13.

46. His intention was mentioned in the review cited in n. 45, which was published again in the music journal *Yinyue zazhi* [Music Journal] 1, no. 1 (1928): 1–6. For more discussions on the National Conservatory, see Hon-Lun Yang, “The Shanghai Conservatory, Chinese Musical Life, and the Russian Diaspora, 1927–1949,” *Twentieth-Century China* 37, no. 1 (2012): 73–95.

47. Based on the pay record of 1939 (SMA, U1–4-945), the Chinese players were only paid between \$110 and \$130, their European equivalents were paid between \$250 and \$270, and Paci was paid \$1100. The Filipino players were paid between \$160 and \$180.

48. The research for this article was funded by a Faculty Research Grant from Hong Kong Baptist University (FRG1/11-12/026) and by the Hong Kong University Grant Council’s Competitive Earmarked Research Grant (CERG) (HKBU 248813).

Calafati, Sou-Chong, Lang Lang, and Li Wei
Two Hundred Years of “the Chinese” in
Austrian Music, Drama, and Film

Cornelia Szabó-Knotik

Since Marco Polo’s reports about China began to circulate among Europeans during the thirteenth century and since the growth of trade between Asian peoples and Europe expanded during the seventeenth, Chinese products have been important for Western lifestyles. China has also inspired the creation and distribution of attractive exoticisms (chinoiseries) in Western music as well as the visual arts. From a different point of view, the European attitude toward China has often been described as colonial, not only in matters of religion and commerce, but also in transferring to China certain aspects of Western musical culture, ideology, and opinions. This situation seems to be changing, as a globalized world increases both cultural and economic exchanges. Sino-European musical relations therefore continue to enjoy a continually evolving, intercultural dialogue.

This essay presents four case studies of Austrian-Chinese or Chinese-Austrian musical encounters, beginning with nineteenth-century entertainments and concluding with contemporary celebrities. Identifying and describing these encounters—which involve a lost statue from an amusement park, an operetta still performed, a famous concert pianist, and a children’s film—facilitate the unpacking of certain characteristics, patterns, and significations associated with them. Each encounter demonstrates that “orientalism” survives today, although it cannot always be defined in simplistic terms. As Jonathan Bellman explains, recent discussions of “orientalism in music” are often less concerned with music itself than with orientalism as an “ideologically suspect” phenomenon.¹ The discussion that follows explores

real-life encounters with Chinese musicians as well as stereotyped images of Chinese music making in order to reveal Austria's evolving yet continually reasserted national self-image as "Musikland."

CALAFATI: A NINETEENTH-CENTURY ENTERTAINER LIVE, AS A MONUMENT, AND ON STAGE

As early as the sixteenth century, chinoiserie came to Austria. Artifacts belonging to the collections of the Archduke Ferdinand of Tyrol, together with frescoes of exotic gardens that Johann Wenzel Bergl painted in Schönbrunn Castle for Empress Maria Theresa, reveal not only the historical extent of Austria's fascination with China but that nation's recurring interest in things "Chinese."² Nevertheless, until comparatively recently, Asia (meaning China and other nations more distant from Vienna than Turkey and the Balkans) remained more or less unknown to Austrians. Austria had no Asian colonies and experienced comparatively little contact, outside the borders of its own empire, with oriental "others" in the racial and ethnic senses of that term. During the nineteenth century, however, Chinese individuals and images established themselves more frequently and successfully within Austria's developing entertainment industry. Among them, Basilio Calafati and a statue known as the "Big Chinese" were especially important.

In 1766, Emperor Joseph II opened the imperial hunting preserve known as the Prater to the general public. Soon after, shooting galleries, food stalls, panopticons, and special events, such as fireworks displays, transformed the park into an entertainment center. On 3 April 1840, a carousel for the park was licensed; it consisted of a couple of railway cars pulled in a circle by horses and was known as "Zum schwarzen Rössl" (the Black Horse). Four years later, the horses were replaced by two locomotives, the Hellas (Greece) and the Peking (Beijing).³ These locomotives may be read today as representing Calafati's parents, at least his father: his mother's background remains unclear. The Hellas was a fitting symbol for the older Calafati, a carpet merchant who was born in Smyrna (today Izmir) and later lived in Trieste.

By 1820, Basilio Calafati himself was selling Emmentaler cheese and salami in the Prater. Ten years later, he was hired as assistant to Sebastian von Schwandenfeld (1770–1845), the Bavarian-born so-called Magician of the Prater. Calafati purchased von Schwandenfeld's gambling hall for twelve hundred guilders in 1844 and the Black Horse carousel for thirteen hun-

dred guilders in 1849.⁴ Unfortunately, due to missing documentation, we do not know precisely what kinds of music may have accompanied carousel performances; we do know that such entertainments were almost always accompanied by street organs (*Drehorgeln*). As early as 1778, Empress Maria Theresia issued a “busker’s license” to give disabled veterans an opportunity to earn money by playing this mechanical instrument.⁵

The growing popularity of orientalized diversions in Austria led to the transformation of Calafati’s carousel into a monument of exoticized entertainment. Just as locomotives replaced horses at the Prater carousel, so the old roof was replaced in 1854 with a new one, boasting a Chinese figure erected in honor of another contemporary public attraction, a family of Chinese artists that had appeared the year before at the Sperl, one of Vienna’s trendiest amusement centers and a venue at which members of the Strauss family often performed.⁶ The magnificently dressed statue, nine meters tall, was built so as to revolve with the rest of the apparatus. The renovated carousel thus became known as “Zum großen Chineser” (the Big Chinese), and the statue itself was named *Calafati*, after its owner. The Big Chinese, as eventually both the carousel and the statue came to be called, immediately became a Prater landmark.⁷ As such—as much or more Viennese than Chinese, more national than multicultural—the Big Chinese remains an important symbol of the park as a site of cultural memory.

Calafati was not alone in providing Vienna with something seemingly Chinese. In 1828, two years after he became leader of his own band, Johann Strauss I composed a *Chineser Galoppe* as his op. 20; it was performed that year during Carnival at Zur Kettenbrücke (the Chain Bridge), a Viennese suburban restaurant.⁸ Whether Strauss saw Chinese artists at one of the popular shows of exotic folklore offered by wandering showmen does not matter much: actual Chinese music was almost entirely unknown in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and Strauss cast his galop in the *à la turca* style. His “Turkish” galops, occasionally known as “polkas”—because “exotic” musical gestures originally employed with reference to one nation have often been recast with reference to others—remind listeners today of such works as Mozart’s *Rondo alla turca* from the Piano Sonata no. 11 in A Major, K. 331 (1778), or Beethoven’s *Dervish Dance* from the incidental music to August von Kotzebue’s *Ruins of Athens*, op. 113 (1811).

In 1832, visitors to Tivoli, another of Vienna’s entertainment establishments, witnessed a Chinese Festivity. A second celebration was held in 1840 in nearby Penzing, followed by other examples of musical chinoiserie (at



Basilio Calafati

least their titles were “Chinese”), perhaps intended to attract attention to their composers. In May 1847, for example, German publisher Friedrich Hofmeister’s monthly list of editions of sheet music announced that a collection of “beloved waltzes and gallops for orchestra” by a certain Joseph Labitzky (1802–81) contained a *Chineser Galoppe*, Labitzky’s op. 137.⁹ Labitzky, known as the “waltz king” of the famous Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad) spa in what is today the Czech Republic, visited Vienna several times during the mid-1820s and may have met several members of the Strauss dynasty. Other entries in Hofmeister’s bibliography attest to the continuing popularity of “Chinese” music throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—on stage, in the form of songs, and in the form of dances.¹⁰ Among Labitzky’s other works is a *Chingkong-Walzer (Chine)*,¹¹ his op. 250, published in September 1860 with the firm B. Schott’s Sons.



The Big Chinese

The Big Chinese no longer exists. Renovated in 1932, the statue was wrapped in some eighty meters of decorative Chinese brocade, which must have made it even more impressive. It was declared a historic monument in 1935. Unfortunately, the statue was destroyed during the last days of World War II. A replica of it was erected in 1967, and a recent (and much debated) theme park simulating certain “old Prater charms”¹² exploits Calafati’s value as a cultural icon—without, however, any reference to the Big Chinese statue, nowadays considered in bad taste.

Nevertheless, in preparation for the opening of the Prater’s spring 2008 season, a “whacky extravaganza” in the style of so-called Old Viennese popular theater (*Wiener Volkskomödie*) attracted attention. Entitled *Calafati’s Dream*¹³ and outfitted with music inspired by local folklore (*Wienerlied*), the show featured a story in which gods and mortals mix and mingle in love while Fortuna desperately tries to straighten things out. The show also featured the former carousel owner as *Kulturheld* (cultural hero) and drew

on the few known facts of his life. The entire production was presented as “a comedic homage to Vienna’s famous Prater king.”¹⁴ Although the music for this extravaganza was little more than typical modernized Viennese folk music, the posters advertising the event were illustrated with images of the Big Chinese instead of Calafati himself.

SOU-CHONG: A REPRESENTATIVE OF “ORIENTAL WISDOM”

The Austrian stage has long featured imagined musical representations of China and Chinese characters. Beginning with Metastasio’s *Le Cinesi* (1735) and *L’Eroe Cinese* (1752) and Metastasio/Gluck’s *Le cinesi* (1754), diversions of many kinds—including ballets, operas, operettas, and musical comedies—have referenced China as an exciting site of orientalized exoticism. Around 1900, for example, under the influence of art deco—which, as a style, drew on a multitude of folkloric sources—chinoiserie again became fashionable. Operettas of that era featured appropriate decorations that created spectacular stage effects and were accompanied by lush orchestral arrangements.

The two best-known operetta composers of the day were newcomer Paul Abraham (1892–1960) and veteran Franz Lehár (1870–1948), both products of the multinational Austro-Hungarian Empire. The empire’s many folkloric traditions provided local-color material for Abraham’s and Lehár’s polyglot compositions. But the ways in which that material was handled changed over time. In his earlier operettas, for example, including *The Merry Widow* (1905), Lehár employed ethnic musical idioms to emphasize conflicts between or among characters on stage. Beginning in the 1920s, however, he increasingly employed exotic sounds for their own sakes—that is, as entertainment—and with considerable skill.¹⁵

Another novelty of Lehár’s later operettas was their tragic endings. One explanation for this shift in storytelling involves post–World War I socio-political changes that made sentimental sorrow rather popular. In 1929, *The Land of Smiles* (*Das Land des Lächelns*), a sweetly sad story, became perhaps Lehár’s most performed later work.¹⁶ The success that greeted *The Land of Smiles* was achieved only after a considerable dollop of pathos had been added to an unsuccessful version of the show presented six years earlier.¹⁷ Entitled *The Yellow Coat* (*Die gelbe Jacke*), this version has been described as “blithely playful chinoiserie.”¹⁸ The inspiration for both works, both of

which reference China as well as Vienna, is said to have been a newspaper article published as early as 1904. The article dealt with the wedding of “Mr. Hsüeh-chi-Tschong,” then first attaché at the Chinese Embassy in Vienna, to a woman named Zenoth from Berlin.¹⁹ Although the bridegroom had never lived in China (he was the son of a teacher at Berlin’s Institute for Oriental Languages), the wedding attracted considerable attention as a purportedly “Asian” event. Having read a newspaper squib about the wedding, author Victor Léon suggested the story to Lehár, who rejected it at first but returned to it after World War I.²⁰

One review of *The Yellow Coat*’s 1923 premiere gushed, “China! The land of fabulous customs and traditions, the unsolved riddle of past centuries and of days coming in the future arises before us. A colorful picture-book that really entices to turn its pages and that seems to be full of promises in terms of stage effects.”²¹ Although the critic in question proclaimed the plot boring and without charm, he was enthusiastic about the music (“a weird combination of East-Asian rhythms and Viennese melodies”) and compared it with Arthur Sullivan’s “musical comedies from the exotic world of China.”²² Tenor Richard Tauber, for whom most of Lehár’s male leading parts were written, was also enthusiastic. In fact, Tauber convinced the composer to rework *The Yellow Coat*. Two younger writers, “Ludwig Herzer” (a pseudonym for Ludwig Herzl) and “Fritz Beda-Löhner” (a pseudonym for Fritz Löhner) were hired to produce a new libretto. Every character was renamed to emphasize the revised work’s novelty, and a new unhappy ending was invented.

In its more familiar form, Lehár’s *Land of Smiles* combines two fundamental forms of staged exoticism: (1) an insertion of the other into familiar circumstances and (2) an imagined visit to a distant place.²³ The romantic male lead, Prince Sou-Chong of China, appears in noble Viennese salons; this causes the leading lady, Countess Lisa, to fall in love with him and travel with him to China. Unfortunately, unhappy experiences abroad cause her to return to her former and equally unhappy circumstances at home. Count Gustav Pottenstein and Sou-Chong’s sister Mi, the buffo couple whose story mirrors that of the prince and the countess, undergo the same sort of adventures but without the same intensity of passion and tragic attitudes.

For *The Land of Smiles*, Lehár wrote some new music and entirely reorchestrated what he had previously composed for *The Yellow Coat*. In the process of revision, the “playful Chinoiserie of *The Yellow Coat*” was transformed into something more pathetic and in art deco style.²⁴ The stylistic

markers of the Chinese sphere are predictable pentatonic melodies, parallel fifths, doubled vocal and orchestral lines, and percussion sonorities combined with rather shrill, high-pitched wind instruments. Contrasts between these comparatively novel sounds and those of familiar Viennese entertainments enhanced the operetta's "Chineseness." As one musicologist put it, "*The Land of Smiles'* musical exoticism exploits both catchy foreign sounds and stereotypical hopes, wishes, and problems associated with the Chinese-European liaison on which the show is based."²⁵

Regardless of critical complaints cast at Lehár's work, audiences received *The Land of Smiles* with open arms. Much of their enthusiasm was due to Tauber's performances. Prince Sou-Chong's catchy first number became a real hit, reminding listeners of the operetta's title—and of that title as a marker of Chineseness—through its repeated calls for unbroken smiles in the face of pains as well as pleasures.²⁶ In the *Yellow Coat*, Sou-Chong embodies such traditional and pejorative Chinese clichés as threatening glances from narrow eyes. At the same time, he represents important Chinese achievements, including the inventions of porcelain, gunpowder, paper, and printing. Some of the Viennese characters condemn the marriage of a white woman to an "oriental" male. Count Hardegg, however, expresses a different opinion: "My dear nephew, I do not tolerate any criticism of Prince Sou-Chong. He is so charming that one doesn't even experience his exotic character as exotic."²⁷ In *The Land of Smiles*, Sou-Chong is more emphatically presented as a tragic hero who has to master his emotions and follow, so to speak, the reason of state.

Compared to the Prater's Big Chinese, *The Yellow Coat* and *The Land of Smiles* represent a somewhat different aspect of orientalized Austrian culture, that of early twentieth-century official encounters between representatives of China and Western nations. During 1902–4, for example, Ou Tai Tcham, the first Chinese ambassador to Austria, lived in Vienna; beginning in 1904, Chinese soldiers, sailors, and policemen were trained in that city.²⁸ As is often the case, the inspiration for both operettas has become a subject for speculation. One theory holds that any of several weddings to Viennese females within the Chinese Embassy's staff may have inspired librettist Victor León's story of *The Yellow Coat*. A recently published family recollection²⁹ claims, instead, that the original idea for the earlier operetta's plot came from León's daughter Lizzie, whose father granted her 10 percent of future royalties when he took his daughter's story as the basis for his own work. Lizzie married Hubert Marischka, a well-known actor, but died in

1918 at thirty, while giving birth to their son—well before *The Yellow Coat's* premiere. After Lizzie's death, León dedicated the operetta's libretto to her memory. Finally, references to the Taiping Rebellion of 1850–64 and the student protest of 4 May 1919 appear in *The Yellow Coat* in terms of queues or pigtaails. Under the Qing dynasty's Manchu rulers, ethnic Chinese men were required to wear pigtaails. In *The Yellow Coat*, a conservative uncle of Prince Sou-Chong named Miao Chwang refuses to give up that hairstyle.³⁰

Another real-life development related to Lehár's Chinese-Viennese operettas is the establishment of sinology as a university discipline, one practiced by Arthur von Rosthorn,³¹ the real-life Chinese attaché's father. Sinology was the academic outcome of a more widespread interest in Chinese arts, language, and thought, fueled by reports of missionaries in China as well as by the publications of Western scholars.³² One example of that interest is the 1907 edition of "Chinese poetry" by Hans Bethge, whose literary model was a French translation from the Chinese prepared by a certain Marquis D'Hervey de Saint-Denis. Bethge's work, published as *The Chinese Flute*, inspired Gustav Mahler to compose *Das Lied von der Erde* during 1908–9, and Mahler's work is a setting of some of Bethge's poems. In 1924, a German translation of the oldest Chinese text, the *I-Ching* (Book of Transformations), was published by sinologist Richard Wilhelm.³³

Since the seventeenth century, missionaries to China had translated the works of Confucius into European languages. By the end of the nineteenth century, ideas taken from Chinese philosophers, especially Confucius, had been widely disseminated in the West. "Confucianism"—ironically, a term that does not possess an equivalent term in Chinese—was understood both to identify a pragmatic attitude toward everyday affairs and to extol virtues such as composure and stoicism.³⁴ Seen from this perspective, the designation "Land of Smiles" can be understood as a term synonymous with China or other countries of East Asia. Even today, that designation appears as a clichéd nickname in travel advertisements and journalism, although it has been associated in recent years with Thailand rather than China.³⁵

LANG LANG AND HIS "LITTLE MOZART"

Since its introduction in 1992, the World Wide Web has grown by leaps and bounds. During the second half of 1993, the number of web users doubled every three months; as late as 2009, the number doubled a little less of-

ten than every six months.³⁶ Nevertheless, the “global village,” a “one world, one people” dream of equality and humanity, might more accurately be expressed today as “one world, one mass of consumers.” How has the web’s transformation of our daily lives and of our awareness of the world we live in also transformed the representations and meanings of exotic “others” and the way they are presented in terms of music?

In 1985, *Especially Gifted Bodies*, a spectacular special event produced by André Heller and sponsored by the People’s Republic of China, featured artists from the Chinese National Circus performing abroad for the first time. The artistry of *Especially Gifted Bodies* may be seen as a kind of artistry to be compared with the “cultivated” artistry of international superstar pianist Lang Lang, “the first Chinese pianist to be engaged by the Berlin Philharmonic, the Vienna Philharmonic and the top American orchestras.”³⁷ Lang Lang’s global career exemplifies two features typical of our own time: (1) a repertory that includes jazz and pop as well as canonical classical music and (2) an active interest in welfare and educational projects—among them, the Lang Lang Steinway project designed to teach music to children.³⁸ Although he has been associated with “the classics” throughout his career, Lang Lang has not so much been “colonized” by Western music as he himself has “colonized” Western audiences, extracting from them high fees for concert tickets, CDs, and other cultural commodities.

The beginning of Lang Lang’s contacts with Austria and his first live performances before Viennese audiences coincided with a special occasion in terms of Austria’s national musical identity. In June 2005, he took part in the second so-called Concert for Europe, a series of performances said to have been organized around the wishes of Wolfgang Schüssel, then Austria’s Christian Democratic chancellor.³⁹ Schüssel wanted to promote Austria’s membership in the European Union on the occasion of its tenth anniversary by celebrating the EU as a “community of peace,” a stock description also associated with Austrian identity.

The EU-Enlargement is a reason for joy: Europe is a continent of peace of which the countries are united in friendship. In our Europe united again it is important that we listen to each other, that we are sensible for in-between-tones and that we strive for harmonic unity within diversity. This idea shall reverberate in the Concert for Europe.⁴⁰

Consequently, some ninety thousand spectators listened in June 2005 to the Vienna Philharmonic perform in front of Schönbrunn Castle, a national

place of memory and, perhaps even more important, a prominent tourist site. In press materials associated with the event, Clemens Hellsberg, the orchestra's chairman, alluded to the commonplace, even clichéd idea of music as a universal language, one "understood by all groups and nations and thus able to contribute to Europe's new unity."⁴¹ In promoting materials associated with the concert's CD release, Hellsberg referred to a "musikalische Volksbewegung" (musical people's movement) and expressed hope for a peaceful political future.⁴²

The Schönbrunn program,⁴³ which starred Lang Lang, also included the familiar *Wiener Blut* waltz, as "a musical greeting from Austria," and Tchaikovsky's 1812 *Overture*, as a memorial to European devastation sixty years earlier. Five additional works—Elgar's *Enigma Variations*, Bizet's *Carmen Overture*, Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto, and John Philip Sousa's marches "Semper Fidelis" and "The Stars and Stripes Forever"—represented, respectively, the Four Powers (Britain, France, Russia, and the United States) that liberated Europe from Nazi oppression at the end of World War II. After the Tchaikovsky concerto, Lang Lang also played a medley of well-known melodies from operas and operettas—a kind of encore unknown, at least since Liszt's day, at traditional classical concerts. Lang Lang's encore testified to the high-pop character of that outdoor entertainment.

Lang Lang's next highly promoted public appearance in Austria coincided with the 2008 European Soccer Championship. This performance took place on 28 June, the day before the final match, and again involved both the Viennese Philharmonic (this time conducted by Zubin Metha) and the grounds of Schönbrunn Castle. During the intermission at a dress rehearsal for his subsequent world tour with the orchestra, Lang Lang impressed a crowd of students not only as a performer but also by means of his "coolness and composure" as well as his "down-to-earth" and "boyish" character, traits that made them wish they could "listen to him for hours and hours."⁴⁴

Consciously or accidentally, Lang Lang's Austrian appearances have exploited a variety of mediated venues, including his free and open-air performances, his television and radio broadcasts, and his own website's announcements and updates as well as YouTube and Wikipedia posts. Through the last of these digital sources of information, Marc Yu (born 5 January 1999), a child prodigy, came to the attention of many Austrian music fans. By 2009, Marc had already appeared on *The Tonight Show* with Jay Leno, *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, and National Geographic's *Brain Child*.⁴⁵ Marc's musical idol, of course, is Lang Lang, who calls Marc his "Little Mozart."

Precisely at cultural intersections of this kind, conventional notions

of China's "colonization" by orientalizing Western nations begin to break down. Today, Chinese artists increasingly exploit Western opportunities for advancement and international recognition of unprecedented kinds. On 22 July 2012, Lang Lang himself was accorded an honor unique among classical pianists of any race or nation, the opportunity to carry the torch through London at the beginning of the Games of the XXX Olympiad.⁴⁶

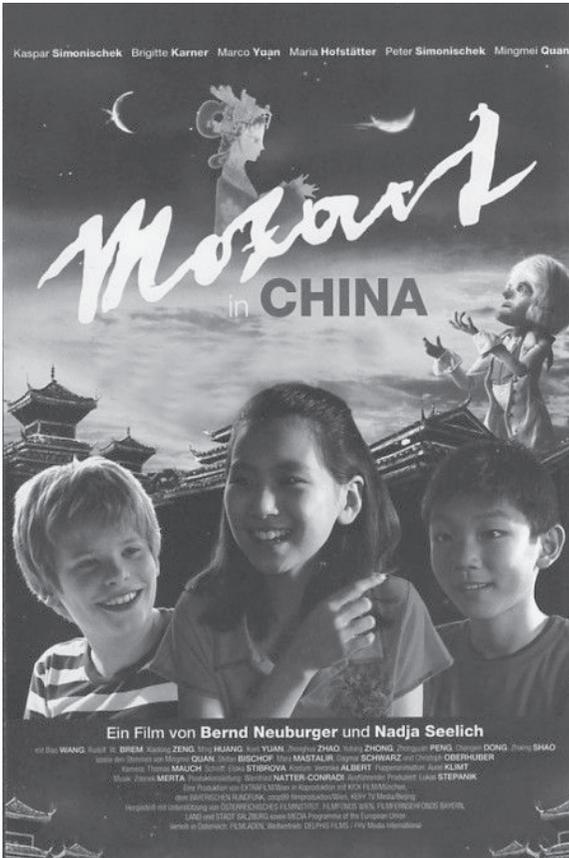
LI WEI AND MOZART IN CHINA

Mozart also figures prominently in a recent Chinese-Austrian coproduction of an educational film. Instead of attempting to dominate a foreign nation, Austria continues to move toward mutual understanding with China and global equality. At the same time, the Chinese-Austrian coproduction *Mozart in China* contributes to our understanding of the Western world's methods of dealing with the musically exotic.

Mozart in China—the title can be read as English as well as German, depending on pronunciation—was produced in 2007 and released the following year.⁴⁷ It tells the story of Danny and Li Wei, two ten-year-old playmates from Salzburg, who pass their holidays with Li Wei's family on the Chinese island of Hainan. Hidden in Danny's suitcase is a Mozart marionette from the Salzburg Puppet Theater, which makes the journey to Hainan with them. Li Wei's grandfather owns an old shadow theater, heavily damaged during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which he and his granddaughter Lin Lin carefully restore as the movie proceeds. Danny and Lin Lin also become friends, and the Mozart marionette falls in love with the beautiful shadow princess Ming Mei. Trouble appears when a loan shark gives Grandfather Wang only ten days to make a payment and threatens to confiscate the shadow theater and sell it to an international chain of hotels if the money is not forthcoming. With the help of the marionette Mozart, the children prevent catastrophe, and Mozart decides to stay in China a little longer.

Teaching materials published online inform prospective viewers of the film's intention.

The film *Mozart in China* deals with cultural difference. . . . The chronological storyline and simple plot targets audiences of small school children. Moments of suspense are intended to appeal to older children as



A screen capture from
Mozart in China

well. The story of Mozart's love of Ming Mei is animated to make it easily distinguishable from the main plot. Prejudices are depicted as mutual phenomena, meals being one example, insults another. . . . When Danny uses the term "slit-eyes" because he dislikes a traditional Chinese breakfast dish as much as Li Wei dislikes cocoa, Li Wei says that white people stink. Nevertheless, in spite of these differences, the children unite to preserve the shadow theater embodies the film's message, that cooperation is crucial, and that mere talk doesn't dissolve cultural differences.⁴⁸

This message is exemplified through the inclusion of both German and Chinese dialogue. Even when Danny comes into contact with local children, however, and even without Li Wei or Lin Lin present on screen, the dialogue

is in Chinese. The gestures Danny uses help German speakers understand what is happening. Other relevant topics addressed include tourism, discrimination, and intercultural contact in artistic circumstances. The Chinese loan shark turns out to be an employee of an even bigger bounder from Germany, an investor named Meier. A hotel concierge treats Danny differently than Li Wei, and the scene in which Mozart and Danny first encounter the shadow theater's marionettes corresponds to a scene in which Li Wei accompanies Danny during a Salzburg Puppet Theater performance featuring a composition of Mozart's. Finally, the shadow theater is rescued because of its popular—that is, financial—success, especially in terms of the scene in which Princess Ming Mei joins the Mozart marionette in a performance of the “Chinese Sonata” he has composed for love of her.

This sonata, a work of musical-stylistic fusion compiled by Czech soundtrack composer Zdenek Merta, is no “sonata” in the classical sense. Rather, it is “an instrumental piece” in which Mozartian (i.e., “Western”) passages introduce and follow pentatonic (i.e., “Chinese”) sections. Like the film's intercultural love story between puppets, the sonata's message is that music—in this case, classical Austrian music—can bridge cultural gaps because music is a universal metalanguage of emotion. Not by chance did the same phrase appear in Clemens Hellsberg's statement on behalf of the 2005 Concert for Europe. Moreover, the phrase is often ascribed to no less a personage than Joseph Haydn, another Austrian classical composer.

Western classical music itself alludes to Austria's national identity as “Musikland,” a construction that has played important roles in Central European history throughout the twentieth century. *Musikland* may be a clichéd term, but Austria has long perceived itself as possessing a special brand of unchallenged hegemonic cultural authority over Europe and even over aspects of North American, Japanese, and Oceanic nations.⁴⁹ The happy ending of *Mozart in China*—Grandfather Wang's rescue from the loan shark's threat, together with the shadow theater's renewed financial success—suggests that Austrian classical music triumphs even in China, producing “happy Chinese locals” as well as “happy Western tourists.” Although the shadow princess speaks Chinese whereas Mozart speaks German, the lovers understand each other, because the power of love and music overcome all language barriers.

Unfortunately, the subtext that supports this idyllic story is that of Austrian cultural hegemony, a colonial attitude that Austrians willingly support and that is an official part of the nation's cultural activities as promoted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Even “cultural bridge building” is rooted

in Austria's self-definition as *Kulturnation*, the characteristics of and arguments for which can also be traced back far in its history.⁵⁰ *Mozart in China* is said to have originated with Ursula Wolte, wife of the former Austrian ambassador to China, who had been involved with Austrian-Chinese projects of cultural exchange. In an interview published online (together with the teaching materials quoted above), Bernd Neuburger, the film's director, states, "What proves attractive in anything foreign is the combination of the exotic and enigmatic with sudden and unexpected moments that reveal something familiar—for instance, when one can share a laugh with a stranger in a foreign place."⁵¹

In other words, *Mozart in China* covertly reasserts colonialist prejudices in favor of Western cultural superiority, despite good intentions and the educational purposes it addresses. What we learn by unpacking this film is a seemingly banal conclusion: how powerful old attitudes still are and to what extent they linger in the twenty-first century's mediated world of technologically sophisticated unawareness. Despite both the days of political colonialism bygone and the academic influence of Edward Said's groundbreaking publications,⁵² a fascination with exotic "others" is still at work and continues to appear in fashion and film, in music and images.

Notes

1. Jonathan Bellman, "Musical Voyages and Their Baggage: Orientalism in Music and Critical Musicology," *Musical Quarterly* 94, no. 3 (2011): 426.

2. Like contemporary princes, Archduke Ferdinand II possessed a collection of curious and remarkable objects and pieces of art, characteristic for the Renaissance interest in man and nature. His so-called *Kunst- und Wunderkammer* was put into the renovated Castle of Ambras in Tyrol. See <http://www.habsburger.net/de/kapitel/die-kunstkammer-auf-schloss-ambras> (accessed July 2016). The so-called Bergl Rooms are a well-known feature of Schloss Schönbrunn in Vienna. See <http://www.hofburg-wien.at/wissenswertes/kaiserappartements/rundgang-durch-die-kaiserappartements/berglzimmer.html> (accessed July 2016).

3. The first railway line in Austria opened in 1838 and connected northern Vienna with the border of Bohemia.

4. See Hans Pemmer and Ninni Lackner, *Der Wiener Prater einst und jetzt (Nobel- und Wurstelprater)* (Vienna: Deutscher Verlag für Jugend und Volk, 1935); Pemmer and Lackner, *Der Prater von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Günter Dürriegl and Ludwig Sackmayer, 2nd ed. (Vienna: Deutscher Verlag für Jugend & Volk, 1974).

5. See Otto Krammer, *Wiener Volkstypen: Von Buttenweibern, Zwiefel-Krowoten u. anderen Wiener Originalen* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1983). This license was valid as

late as 1930, and Franz Schubert's *Winterreise* (op. 89, D. 911) contains a song alluding to this practice (no. 24, "Der Leiermann").

6. See Felix Czeike, "Chinesen," in *Historisches Lexikon Wien*, ed. Felix Czeike, vol. 1 (Vienna: Kremayr und Scheriau, 1992), 567.

7. Among the most prominent cultural events that took place close to the same time were the Viennese World Exhibition of 1873 and the International Exhibit of Music and Theater in 1892.

8. See https://www.naxos.com/mainsite/blurb_reviews.asp?item_code=8.225252&catNum=225252&filetype>About%20this%20Recording&language=German (accessed July 2016). The same restaurant also provided the name of a beautiful waltz by Strauss's colleague Joseph Lanner.

9. *Hofmeisters Musikalische Monatsberichte, May 1847*, http://www.hofmeister.rhul.ac.uk/2008/content/monatshefte/1847_05/74.html (accessed July 2016). For information about Labitzky, see <http://www.johann-strauss.org.uk/index.php3?content=labitzky.html> (accessed July 2016).

10. See (M.) Durst, *Characteristisches Walzer-Panorama als: Londoner, Pariser, Ungarischer, Oberösterreichischer, Wiener und Chineser-Walzer f. Violine m. Begl. d. Pfte, Op. 5* (Vienna: Diabelli, 1836); (J.) Liehmann, *Chineser Polka: Prager Favorit-Galoppen, No. 119* (Prague: Hoffmann, 1843); E. Toller, *Ching-Kong Galopp, Op. 19* (Leipzig: Stoll, 1856); Anton Göller, "Ein Chinese: 'Die Wienerstadt ist wunderschön,'" in *Couplet-Album* (Vienna: Kratochwill, 1887); Johann Sioly, *So a Aehnlichkeit: "Chineser und a Frauenzopf" Wiener Duett m. Pfte* [Such Similarity: "Chinese and a Woman's Braid"] (Vienna: Blaha, 1900). The last title is another clear hint for an ongoing othering of the Chinese, in this case done by relating the "exotic" other to the "other" gender in a degrading way. See <http://www.hofmeister.rhul.ac.uk/2008/content/database/database.html> (accessed July 2016).

11. See <http://www.hofmeister.rhul.ac.uk/2008/content/database/database.html> (accessed July 2016).

12. <http://www.praterservice.at/en/history> (accessed July 2016).

13. Program information includes the following: "Zauberposse mit Gesang von Susanne Felicitas Wolf; mit: Konstanze Breitebner, Adi Hirschal, Roswitha Meyer, Angela Schneider, Nicolaus Hagg, Peter Lodynski, Rainer Stelzig, Marcus Thill; Regie: Adi Hirschal, Musik/Musikal. Leitung: Thomas Hojsa, Liedtexte: Helmut Emersberger; Künstlerische Mitarbeit/Dramaturgie: Sabine Pribil; Kostüme: Gerlinde Höglhammer; Choreographie: Ferdinando Chefalo; Die wienerischen Klänge stammen von Thomas Hojsa. [Liedtexte: Helmut Emersberger]" (<http://www.prater.at/Berichte/Ansicht.php?Id=1075395> [accessed July 2016]).

14. The original story line consists of the following: "Im Geisterreich hängt der Liebesegen schief. Der böse Geist Sekantius (Nicolaus Hagg) liebt die schöne Glücksgöttin Fortuna (Konstanze Breitebner) und lässt sich auf ein fatales Spiel ein. Fortuna wettet mit Sekantius um das Liebesglück eines Sterblichen. Wet-

teinsatz ist der glutvolle Italiener Basilio Calafati (Adi Hirschal), seines Zeichens Salami-Vekäufer im Wiener Prater. Calafati selbst steht zwischen zwei reizvollen Frauen, der reschen Mizzi Magerl (Angela Schneider) und der zarten Sali Weit (Roswitha Meyer). Sekantius bringt Calafati dazu, der Liebe abzuschwören und schon beginnen allerlei Verwicklungen, in die ein kupplerischer Vater (Marcus Thill), ein möglicher Ehemann (Rainer Stelzig) und der Zauberer Schwanenfeld (Peter Lodynski) hinein trudeln. Das Durcheinander lässt sich nicht einmal durch Fortunas heimliche Ränke zum Besten wenden. Oder doch?" (ibid.).

15. For Stephen Banfield, any form of "musical contrast" is important to operetta and musical comedy; furthermore, the "musical other" is normally in the South or East—in this and other cases, far in the East (Banfield, "Popular Musical Theater (and Film)," in *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century Opera*, ed. Mervyn Cooke [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005], 295–96).

16. See Volker Klotz, *Operette: Porträt und Handbuch einer unerhörten Kunst*, rev. ed. (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2004), 462. A first film version of *The Land of Smiles* (1930; directed by Max Reichmann) featured Richard Tauber. A second version, filmed in color (1952; directed by Hans Deppe and Erik Ode), featured Martha Eggerth and Jan Kiepura in the last movie they made together. The music for this second version was arranged by Alois Melichar.

17. *The Yellow Coat* premiered 9 February 1923 in Vienna, with a libretto by Viktor Léon (pseud. Viktor Hirschfeld). *The Land of Smiles* premiered on 10 October 1929 in Berlin, with a libretto by "Ludwig Herzer" (pseud. Ludwig Herzl) and "Fritz Beda-Löhner" (pseud. Fritz Löhner).

18. Klotz, *Operette*, 462.

19. Anonymous, *Die Woche* (Berlin), 12 November 1922, quoted in Otto Schneidereit, *Franz Lehár* (Berlin: Lied der Zeit Musikverlag, 1984), 195. Schneidereit introduces this quote of a German newspaper by stating (ibid.) that at the time of the *Merry Widow* (i.e., about 1905), the Chinese Embassy in Vienna employed a number of diplomats that had "a certain role" in the city's social life.

20. See Schneidereit, *Franz Lehár*, 194–98.

21. *Reichspost* (Vienna), 10 February 1923, 6.

22. *Wiener Zeitung*, 10 February 1923, 5. Gilbert and Sullivan never wrote about China, however; *The Mikado* is set in an imagined Japan. This documents how completely a generalized musical "exoticism" was accepted at the time; operetta audiences preferred a clichéd "other" to anything more realistic.

23. Klotz (*Operette*, 91) calls this "Ausbruchs- und Einbruchs-Exotik."

24. "*Das Land des Lächelns* ist die pathetisierte Umarbeitung der heiter verspielten Chinoiserie" (ibid., 462).

25. "Musikalischer Exotismus geschieht im LdL [*Land des Lächelns*] gleichsam mit dem Zeigefinger, plakativ auf die fremde Klangwelt verweisend und damit die im wesentlichen klischeehaft dargestellten Hoffnungen, Wunschvorstellungen und

Probleme der chinesisch-europäischen Liaison" (Peter Revers, *Das Fremde und das Vertraute: Studien zur musiktheoretischen und musikdramatischen Ostasienrezeption* [Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1997], 143).

26. "Immer nur lächeln und immer vergnügt, Immer zufrieden, wie's immer sich fügt, Lächeln trotz Weh und tausend Schmerzen, Doch wie's da drin aussieht, geht niemand etwas an" There are many sources or lyrics for this popular song; see, e.g., <https://www.flashlyrics.com/lyrics/richard-tauber/immer-nur-lacheln-30> (accessed July 2016).

27. "Das Exotische an ihm als exotisch" empfinden. (*Das Land des Lächelns, 1st act, 1st scene*), cited from Peter Revers, *Das Fremde und das Vertraute: Studien zur musiktheoretischen und musikdramatischen Ostasienrezeption* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1997), 134.

28. See Czeike, "Chinesen," 567.

29. Franz Marischka, *Immer nur lächeln: Geschichten und Anekdoten von Theater und Film* (Vienna: Amalthea, 2001), 77–80.

30. Revers, *Das Fremde und das Vertraute*, 114–15. Note that the uncle's name is the name of a Chinese emperor. Han Chinese men almost entirely abandoned pigtailed in 1922, when Puyi, the last Chinese emperor, cut his off.

31. See the *Österreichisches Biographisches Lexikon 1815–1950*, ed. Peter Csendes and Eva Obermaier-Marnach, vol. 9 (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences, 1988), <http://www.biographien.ac.at/oelb?frames=yes> (accessed November 2012).

32. The first chair for sinology was established in Paris during the early nineteenth century. Between 1829 and 1831, Carl Friedrich Neumann, a professor of oriental studies, brought twelve thousand books from Guangzhou to Munich and established the East-Asia Collection of the Bavarian and Prussian state libraries. Ferdinand von Richthofen pursued geological and geographical researches in China in the early 1860s, and institutes for Chinese languages and literatures had been established in Germany by the 1880s. See <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sinologie> (accessed August 2012).

33. Richard Wilhelm, *I-Ging: Das Buch der Wandlungen* (Jena: Diederichs, 1924).

34. This understanding was more or less accurate. For additional information about Confucian thought and teachings, see the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/confucius/> (accessed November 2012).

35. For example, see "Tourism Thailand," <http://www.tourismthailand.com/> (accessed November 2012).

36. <http://www.mit.edu/people/mkgray/net/web-growth-summary.html> (accessed March 2009).

37. <http://www.langlang.com> (accessed March 2009).

38. Lang Lang has given master classes at institutions around the world, including the Juilliard School, the Curtis Institute of Music, the Manhattan School of Music, and the Hannover Hochschule für Musik, as well as conservatories of China where he holds honorary professorships.

39. The series consisted of just four somewhat similar concerts. Later, Hellsberg is reported to have disavowed the name “Concert for Europe” because of its arbitrariness—or, perhaps, because the European Union has not proven itself all that popular in Austria, where Hellsberg thought it “better to stick with our Viennese roots” (<http://www.wien-konkret.at/kultur/konzert/sommernachtskonzert-schoenbrunn> [accessed March 2009, this entry no longer exists]).

40. Wolfgang Schüssel, inaugural address, <http://www.europa-konzert.at/konzert.htm> (accessed May 2004, this entry no longer exists).

41. <http://www.europa-konzert.at/DATA/presstext3.pdf> (accessed March 2009, this entry no longer exists).

42. See Cornelia Szabó-Knotik, “Liegst dem Erdteil Du inmitten, einem starken Herzen gleich: How Central and/or European Is Austria’s Cultural Identity?” *Spaces of Identity* 6, no. 1 (April 2006), <http://www.yorku.ca/soi> (accessed July 2016).

43. <http://www.europa-konzert.at/DE/Index.html> (this entry no longer exists). Other numbers included Josef Hellmesberger’s *Danse Diabolique* and the *Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka*.

44. “Bevor die Wiener Philharmoniker mit Zubin Metha und Lang Lang auf Weltreise gingen, konnten Jugendliche der Generalprobe von Frédéric Chopins Klavierkonzert Nr. 1 und Richard Strauss’ Heldenleben lauschen. In der Probenpause stellte sich Lang Lang mit größter Gelassenheit und Lockerheit den zahlreichen Fragen. Die Jugendlichen waren vor allem von seinem Spiel aber auch von seinem unkomplizierten und jungenhaften Wesen begeistert und meinten, sie hätten ihm stundenlang zuhören können” (<http://www.wienerphilharmoniker.at> [accessed March 2009, this entry no longer exists]).

45. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marc_Yu (accessed July 2016).

46. <http://english.cri.cn/8046/2012/07/23/2724s713075.htm> (accessed July 2016).

47. *Mozart in China* (2007; directed by Bernd Neuburger and Nadja Seelich), <http://www.mozartinchina.at/kontakt.html> (accessed March 2009, this entry no longer exists).

48. <http://www.kinomachtschule.at/data/mozartinchina.pdf> (accessed July 2016).

49. Information about *Mozart in China* appears almost exclusively on German-language websites, suggesting a local, rather than global, reception.

50. See Szabó-Knotik, “Liegst dem Erdteil Du inmitten.”

51. <http://www.kinomachtschule.at/data/mozartinchina.pdf> (accessed July 2016). Additional information was found on the website of the Chinese-German Society, <http://www.chdg.de> (accessed February 2009; this website no longer exists).

52. See especially Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Routledge, 1978).

PART 2

*“Staged” Encounters and Theatrical
Representations of Chineseness*

Eastern Fantasies on Western Stages

Chinese-Themed Operettas and Musical Comedies in Turn-of-the-Last-Century London and New York

Michael Saffle

Anything Goes—a musical comedy with book by Guy Bolton and P. G. Wodehouse, lyrics and music by Cole Porter—has long been popular. Even Porter’s admirers, however, have mostly forgotten the renaming of two subordinate characters since the show opened on Broadway in November 1934. Originally identified as “Ching” and “Ling,” Porter’s imagined Chinese converts to Christianity and “reformed gamblers” were identified as “Luke” and “John” for the 1987 revival, which also featured a swing band (instead of a pit orchestra) and an extensively rewritten book by Timothy Crouse and John Weidman. On 7 April 2011, however, Ching and Ling resumed their original roles as orientalized misfits and frauds on stage at New York’s Stephen Sondheim Theater.¹

Restoring the Chinese names of these characters represents one attempt to validate Porter’s original intentions for twenty-first-century audiences. This restoration also acknowledges, perhaps inadvertently, the popularity of Chinese characters, costumes, musical gestures, stage sets, and even entire shows in London and New York City from the end of the nineteenth century to the end of the 1920s. Most of the earlier diversions were variety shows—revues or vaudevilles. Story lines were often confusing, ludicrous, or nonexistent; one critic wrote of *Chin-Chin* (1914) that “if there is a plot,” it is “so thin that you cannot find it.”² Another dismissed the show as a “childhood fantasy.”³ More coherent dramatically were operettas, with their recitatives and lengthy ensemble numbers. As early as the 1840s, American

audiences welcomed the “novelty” and “spectacle” that these imported diversions provided.⁴ Whether revues or operettas, all of them, it seems, were “reputable”—or, at worst, “semireputable”—entertainments, far superior to the “disreputable” diversions created for (and attended by) the “lowest and most degraded class of society.”⁵

After 1918, revues and frillier, less-coherent operettas began to lose their appeal, as “the pastiche[s] of earlier times gave way to well-written scripts” as well as to songs composed with specific characters and situations in mind.⁶ Orientalized diversions also became less popular. Wodehouse, a highly successful lyricist whom biographer Robert McCrum dubbed Broadway’s “flavour of the month” in 1917, watched *The Rose of China*, one of his own so-called princess musicals, fail two years later.⁷ In 1925, *China Rose*, a cheerful fantasy that ran for a solid 120 performances on Broadway, was dismissed by critic Percy Hammond as “a florid octogenarian . . . who has left the blessings of retirement for the cruel discomforts of modern, Times Square Life.”⁸

Every pre-1930s Chinese-themed show drew on unpleasant stereotypes, and the racist epithets found in many of them were never amusing. In these musicals, however, there was sometimes more than racial slurs. In this essay, I examine several of the Chinese-themed revues, operettas, and musical comedies (or shows) presented in London and New York during the late 1800s and earlier 1900s. After pointing out some of the difficulties associated with studying these productions today, I identify a few of their salient features, including the kinds of imagined Chinese men and women they portrayed and the somewhat different Chinas they represented before and after World War I. Finally, I evaluate the music written for them, mostly in terms of characteristic Chinese tropes and traditions that are today associated with musical “Chineseness.”

POSTCOLONIAL CRITICISM VERSUS MUSIC; POLITICAL AGENDAS VERSUS ENTERTAINMENTS

The pages that follow are devoted primarily to how—rather than why—certain late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century British and American scriptwriters, lyricists, and composers sought to simulate China and its inhabitants on stage. I pay less attention to theorizing capitalism, colonialism, imperialism, and racism and more attention to examining musicalized entertainment as a field of aesthetic and commodified discourse.

I freely admit that portions of the lyrics found in some of the musical examples reproduced below are offensive. However, theorizing how and why they are offensive is not my primary purpose.

One reason I came to this decision is that prejudices in the United States against East Asians, both on and off the musical stage (including the prejudices confronting Chinese immigrants and their offspring), have already been discussed elsewhere at some length.⁹ So, too, has the presence (i.e., mostly the absence) of ethnic East Asian performers on pre-World War II English-language stages.¹⁰ But Chinese-themed musical comedies of a century ago have mostly been ignored.¹¹ A few American historians have even overlooked the remarkable success of *Chu Chin Chow*, perhaps because it was both British and Arab-themed.¹²

Several reasons exist for reexamining earlier Chinese-themed entertainments. First, many of them achieved real success during the 1890s, 1900s, 1910s, and 1920s. Second, their scripts and songs occasionally reveal attitudes sympathetic to China and the Chinese, especially when individual scenes and songs are unpacked within their recorded dramatic contexts. This raises an important but ultimately unanswerable question: in what spirit was each entertainment presented to turn-of-the-last-century audiences? A properly timed smile or grimace, especially in satirical circumstances, can underscore an unfortunate racial stereotype or turn it upside down. Third, often only documentary sources and musical scores survive and can be evaluated with confidence, and a few of the Chinese-themed numbers preserved in those scores were skillfully composed and embody musical traditions and tropes that survive to the present day.

The principal reason I concern myself primarily with musical issues, however, is that music itself is worthy of study. In an article that appeared shortly after the 2011 Broadway revival of *Anything Goes*, Jonathan Bellman pointed out that “the word ‘orientalism’ . . . has in recent decades generated a good deal of attention in musicology.”¹³ Like other aspects of Western culture, music has been employed to denigrate, marginalize, and misrepresent Asian peoples. Any form of racially motivated oppression is abhorrent, and the historical impact of British and American anti-Chinese prejudices cannot be denied. As Bellman goes on to explain, however, recent discussions of so-called musical orientalism have been “less about the music than . . . about orientalism.” For many critics, orientalist musical gestures, as a self-reflexive field of inquiry, have become “a kind of Original Sin,” their “mere existence . . . proof of their involvement with ‘the orientalist/capitalist-imperialist project’

and the attendant complicity (= guilt) of their composers.”¹⁴ The “cartoonish postcolonialism” Bellman describes has become

untethered from the music it purports to be engaging, and the preemptive disavowal of transcultural musics that don’t pass ideological litmus tests is more draconian even than the aesthetic snobbery of criticism past (McClary’s “old-fashioned hierarchies of taste”). Common sense dictates that it is impossible to proscribe, limit, or in any way regulate the cultural conversations that transcultural musics by definition embody and provide; attempts to do so reduce criticism . . . to ideological gate-keeping, which is neither its proper function nor its right.¹⁵

If nothing else, Bellman’s critique has encouraged me to examine, rather than automatically condemn, the Chinese-themed shows I evaluate below—to take them seriously, if only within the pages that follow.

TWO DOZEN CHINESE-THEMED MUSICAL SHOWS, 1888–1931

Between 1885 (when *The Mikado*, W. S. Gilbert’s and Sir Arthur Sullivan’s most successful “Savoy opera,” opened in both London and New York) and the early 1930s (when East Asian characters largely vanished, for several decades, from musical comedies on London and New York stages), Western composers, impresarios, lyricists, and scriptwriters produced some two dozen musicalized diversions featuring Chinese titles, characters, settings, and songs. Table 1 identifies each of these shows—including *Chin-Chin*, *The Rose of China*, and *China Rose*, all mentioned above—by title, surname(s) of lyricist(s) and/or authors, surname(s) of composer(s), and year of first performance.¹⁶ Titles of individual songs appear only if the shows in question are primarily Arabian or Japanese in setting, story, and/or simulated musical style.¹⁷

Most of these entertainments were successful by the standards of their day, a few of them spectacularly so. Between 1916 and 1921, *Chu Chin Chow* ran for 2,235 performances in London and several hundred more in New York. That show’s West End run broke the London record of 1,075 performances, set by *A Chinese Honeymoon* in 1901–4. *San Toy* ran for 778 London performances, *The Geisha* (Japanese-themed rather than Chinese-themed)

TABLE 1. Chinese-Themed Operettas and Musical Comedies, 1888–1931

Show (book and/or lyrics; composer[s])	Date	Numbers (if primarily Arab- or Japanese-themed)
<i>The Pearl of Peking</i> (from <i>Fleur de thé</i> by Byrne & Duru; Kerker & Le Cocq)	1888	
<i>A Trip to Chinatown</i> (Hoyt; Gaunt)	1891	No Chinese-themed music of any kind
<i>Wang</i> (Goodwin; Morse)	1891	“The Eminent Regent Wang” (mostly Japanese-themed)
<i>The Geisha</i> (Hall & Greenbank; Jones)	1896	“Chin Chin Chinaman” (mostly Japanese-themed)
<i>The Mandarin</i> (DeKoven; Smith)	1896	
<i>A Chinese Honeymoon</i> (Talbot; Dance)	1899	
<i>San Toy</i> (Morton, Greenback & Ross; Jones)	1899	
<i>A China Doll</i> (Smith & Smith; Aarons)	1904	
<i>The Chinese Honeymoon</i> (Howe; Miller)	1904	
<i>The Man from China</i> (Bratton; West)	1904	
<i>The Mayor of Tokio</i> (Peters & Carle; Carle)	1905	“Chin Chin Chinaman” (mostly Japanese-themed)
* <i>Chinatown Charlie</i> (Davis)	1906	
<i>See-See</i> (Tours; Ross)	1906	
<i>A Trip to Japan</i> (Burnside; Klein)	1909	“Danse chinoise” (mostly Japanese-themed)
<i>Bow Sing</i> (Fleming & Voeglin, Klein)	1911	
<i>The Yellow Jacket</i> (Hazelton & Benrimo; Furst, arr. Taubman)	1912	Several faux Chinese numbers
<i>Chin-Chin</i> (Caldwell, Burnside & O’Dea; Caryl)	1914	
<i>Chu Chin Chow</i> (Asche; Norton)	1916	“I am Chu Chin Chow of China” (mostly Arab-themed)
<i>Shanghai</i> (Duncan; Hampton & Witmark)	1918	
<i>East Is West</i> (Bowers)	1919	“Chinese Lullaby”
<i>The Lady in Red</i> (from the German—Donaldson; Caesar)	1919	“China Dragon Blues”
<i>The Rose of China</i> (Bolton & Wodehouse; Vecsey)	1919	“Tao Loved His Li”
<i>Cairo</i> (Asche; Fletcher)	1921	“The Chinaman’s Song” (mostly Arab-themed)
<i>Chinese Love</i> (Kummer)	1921	
** <i>The Chinese Lantern</i> (Hart; Rodgers)	1922	“Chinese Lantern Love” may have been written for this show.
<i>China Rose</i> (Sloan, Cort; Stoddard)	1924	
** <i>Cherry Blossom</i> (Paulton; Hamblen)	1926	“Temple Bells,” “China Loo” (mostly Japanese-themed)
<i>Chee-Chee</i> (Hart; Rodgers)	1928	(In certain senses, Arab-themed)
<i>Shanghai Lady</i> (Grossman & Sizemore)	1929	
* <i>Chinese Bungalow</i> (Gay)	1931	

Note: Includes some Japanese- and Arab-themed shows containing Chinese-themed numbers.

* Could not be adequately examined.

** Apparently never produced.

for 750. No one production was quite as successful in the United States, but *The Man from China* ran for 618 performances on Broadway, *A Chinese Honeymoon* for an additional 376.

Not every Chinese-themed show was a hit, of course. *Chinese Love*, for instance, ran for just twelve performances. However, both of its songs (including “Golden Love”; see example 1) were published, and so was the play itself, the latter a sign of favor. Earlier shows such as *See-See*, which included lengthy ensemble numbers, were more likely to appear in piano-vocal scores (see example 2). Even shows that never got off the ground sometimes achieved partial publication. Apparently, *Cherry Blossom*—“not yet on view” in New York, as one critic put it in 1926 (and not to be confused with Sigmund Romberg’s *Cherry Blossoms*)—was never produced.¹⁸ Nevertheless, seven of its songs survive in archives.

The persistence of enthusiasm for Chinese-themed entertainments, especially during the first two decades of the twentieth century, is noteworthy. *The Mikado* (a Japanese-themed, rather than Chinese-themed, show that had a powerful influence on many later “exotic” productions) was revived in New York almost every year until 1914. It even inspired a full-length burlesque, *Another Mikado*, which ran for 128 performances in 1885–86. Also popular, *The Pearl of Peking* (1888) was revived in 1891, *A Trip to Chinatown* (1890) in 1894 and on several subsequent occasions, *Wang* (1891) in 1892 and again in 1904, and *The Yellow Jacket* (1912) in 1916 and again in 1928. Several of these shows and others were also performed in London. Finally, the score for *The Yellow Jacket*, a “Chinese play” with interpolated but unsung instrumental interludes arranged for percussion and piano, was published in 1941. Apparently, the show’s creators, their publishers, or both thought it still had a future.¹⁹

CHINESE SHOW TITLES, SETTINGS, AND INDIVIDUAL SONGS

Only a few of the entertainments identified in table 1 were “Chinese.” Despite its title, *Chu Chin Chow* is almost entirely about imagined Arabs. Before act 1 even begins, the show’s eponymous “merchant mandarin” is murdered by the evil Abu Hasan, who then takes the merchant’s place. Faux Chinese music accompanies Hasan’s entrance in Chinese disguise (see example 3), but the rest of the show, which recasts the familiar adventures of Aladdin, is

Moderato e grazioso

Un - der the slant - ing Chi - nese sun, I first met you, my
Be - fore the slant - ing sun - had set, I know I nev - er

dear be - lov - ed one - And tho' you bowed with
could - for - - get - The way you spoke my

Example 1: "Golden Love," measures 1–9, from *Chinese Love* (1921)

outfitted with a score dimly reminiscent of Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakov. With a book by G. V. Hobart, lyrics by A. Baldwin Sloane, and music by Reginald de Koven, *From Broadway to Tokio* (1900) features characters from almost every past and present nation, including a Chinese thief named Lee High Hung who speaks pidgin English: "Me no takee heart" (the theft of Cleopatra's heart is the show's principal plot device) and "Me tookee satchel [by] mistake" are two examples.²⁰ Gilbert and Sullivan managed to avoid such "offensive phraseology,"²¹ and *San Toy* would be far more effective and charming without it. As it happens, though, Lee High Hung in *From Broadway to Tokio* did not steal the satchel; he merely mistook his luggage for Mrs.

Hail Che - oo! Hail Che - oo!

Hail Che - oo! Hail Che - oo!

Hail Che - oo! Hail Che - oo!

CHIEGO.

Hang out more lan - terns on the walls For not on ev - ry day be -

- falls A feast of so much glo - - ry

CHORUS.

A feast of so much glo - - ry!

A feast of so much glo - - ry!

A feast of so much glo - - ry!

(K.P. & C^o L^{td} 1689.)

Example 2: Act 2 opening chorus, measures 149–63, from *See-See* (1906)

Chu Chin Chow. *Slow and grand.*

Piano. *ff*

CHU.

Heavy, stately and slow.
CHU. *quicker*
CHORUS.

I am Chu Chin Chow of Chi - na: Of Shang - hai Chi - na

mf

(2141)

The image shows a musical score for the song "I am Chu Chin Chow of China." It consists of three systems. The first system is for the piano accompaniment, with a vocal line for "Chu Chin Chow." above it. The tempo is "Slow and grand." and the dynamic is "ff". The second system continues the piano accompaniment. The third system introduces a vocal line for "CHU." with lyrics: "I am Chu Chin Chow of Chi - na: Of Shang - hai Chi - na". The tempo for this section is "Heavy, stately and slow." and the dynamic is "mf". The section is divided into "CHU." and "CHORUS." parts. The score ends with a double bar line and the number "(2141)".

Example 3: "I am Chu Chin Chow of China," measures 1–13, from *Chu Chin Chow* (1916)

Billington's.²² Nevertheless, his very presence on stage undercuts the dignified image of a mandarin in the *tableau vivant* that opens act 1.

Other turn-of-the-last-century diversions conflated imagined Arabs and Chinese in various combinations. In *Chin-Chin*, an evil Arab named Abanazar runs a Chinese shop staffed by both Arab and Chinese employees. The show's imagined Chinese are brighter than and at least as morally upright as their American and Arabian counterparts. Abanazar, for instance, attempts to locate a lamp purportedly owned by the legendary Aladdin and sell it to wealthy Americans. One employee, coincidentally also named Aladdin,

then they heard the old bride shriek I'll shoot the first six men who speak.
 in his lap, he could not clap, He had to waive his hand - i - cap.
 bridegroom wrecked the train at nine, He had a wash-out on the line.

CHORUS.

4. On that Chi - nese Hon - ey - moon In the month of June,
 5. On that Chi - nese Hon - ey - moon In the month of June,
 6. On that Chi - nese Hon - ey - moon In the month of June,

mf

While the Chi - nese fid - dles Chimed a Chi - nese tune.
 While the Chi - nese fid - dles Chimed a Chi - nese tune.
 While the Chi - nese fid - dles Chimed a Chi - nese tune.

Example 4: "A Chinese Honeymoon," measures 60-71, from *Chin-Chin* (1914)

finds the lamp and, in love with the virtuous Violet, hands it to her at the end of the show. *A China Doll* occasionally foregrounds explicitly American virtues. It features Hi-See, son of Sing-Lo, who first refuses to marry the woman his father has picked out for him, then falls in love with Pee Chee San, daughter of a “Gold Button” mandarin. “This is what I get for sending you to an American college,” Sing-Lo mutters.²³

Although many numbers from *A China Doll* contain orientalized musical touches, “My Little China Doll,” sung in act 2 by Pee Chee San and the chorus, is entirely Western in style and substance. *From Broadway to Tokio* contains no Chinese-inflected songs. Most of *Chin-Chin’s* songs are also Anglo-American, including “A Chinese Honeymoon” (see example 4), “Chipper China Chaps,” and “Ragtime Temple Bells.” “In an Oriental Way” sways to a tango-like tune.

TABLE 2. Chinese-Themed Songs from Other Musical Entertainments, 1897–1930

Show (book and/or lyrics; composer[s])	Date	Song (only famous composers are indicated)
<i>A Stranger in New York</i> (Max Hoffman)	1897	“On a Chinese Honeymoon”
<i>The Candy Shop</i> (Hobart; Golden)	1909	“Chinese Love Song”
* <i>Mr. Lode of Koal</i> (various)	1909	“Chink Chink Chinaman”
<i>Up and Down Broadway</i> (various)	1910	“Chinatown, My Chinatown”
* <i>The Honeymoon Express</i> (Atteridge; Schwarz)	1913	“My Yellow Jacket Girl”
<i>Hello Broadway</i> (Schwarz)	1915	“Chinese Waltz”
* <i>Going Up</i> (various)	1917	“China Rose”
<i>Ziegfeld Follies of 1917</i> (various)	1917	“Chu Chin Chow”—not from the show of that name
<i>Hitchee-Koo of 1918</i> (various)	1918	“Chinese Letter Song” (George Gershwin), “Hitchee-Koo”
Untitled vaudeville skit (Timberg)	1919	“Chicken Chow Mein”
<i>Jimmie</i> (Stothart & Hammerstein)	1920	“Ming Poo”
<i>The Poor Little Ritz Girl</i> (various)	1920	“Pretty Ming Toy” (Sigmund Romberg)
* <i>Tick-Tack-Toe</i> (Timberg)	1920	“Chinese-American Rag”
<i>Ziegfeld Follies of 1920</i> (various)	1920	“Chinese Firecrackers” (Irving Berlin)
<i>Cairo</i> (Asche; Fletcher)	1921	“The Chinaman’s Song”
* <i>Good Morning, Dearie</i> (Caldwell; Kern)	1921	“Sing-Song Girl”
<i>Bye Bye, Barbara</i> (Jones, Price, Carlo, et al.)	1924	“China”
<i>George White’s Scandals</i> (various)	1928	“Where East Meets West”
** <i>East Meets West</i> , a Ziegfeld review (various)	1929	“In a Mandarin’s Orchard Garden” (George Gershwin)

* Unavailable for careful examination.

** Never produced.

Still other British and American shows were set in Japan but incorporated incidental Chinese-themed characters and/or songs: *Wang* is one example, *Cherry Blossom* possibly another. A few authors, lyricists, and composers may have been unclear about which nation was which, or they may not have cared. Travel to East Asia was much more difficult prior to World War I than it is today, and only a few Western tourists (as opposed to diplomats, merchants, missionaries, and soldiers) had explored either China or Japan by 1914. In most cases, the addition of Chinese elements to Japanese-themed shows provided opportunities for contrasting costumes and musical styles.

A few entertainments that incorporated Chinese-themed music were set mostly or entirely outside Asia. Table 2 identifies a selection of non-Asian shows by title, lyricist(s) and composer(s), year of first performance, song title, and a few especially well-known composers' names.²⁴ *Song of the Flame* (1925) might be considered borderline Chinese. With book and lyrics by Otto Harbach and Oscar Hammerstein, music by George Gershwin and Herbert P. Stothart, *Song of the Flame* calls to mind the Silk Road as well as Russia. Like *Shanghai*, which includes a "Mongolian barcarole" entitled "The Chinese Sailor Man" (see example 5) as well as "The Shanghai Foxtrot" and "Would Confucius Change His Mind," *Song of the Flame's* numbers—especially "Tar Tar: Maid of the East, Reckless and Wild"—lie somewhere close to an imagined China's borders or firmly within them: the rules of China's Qing dynasty were Manchu rather than Han, and foreign visitors to nineteenth-century Beijing sometimes referred to the Purple Forbidden City as the "Tartar City."²⁵ Incidentally, *Song of the Flame* ran for a credible 218 performances, and its musical numbers were published in 1928.

Most of the entertainments identified in table 2 were revues, assemblages of skits with few or no continuing characters and little sense of plot. Post-1918 shows often told more coherent stories, and some of them referenced China in one way or another. *Tick-Tack-Toe*, proclaimed Broadway's "latest and brightest musical outburst" when it opened in 1920, features Sing Hi, a "Chinese vamp," and takes place in Stu-Hi's Chinese American restaurant. *The Poor Little Ritz Girl*, also of 1920, includes Sigmund Romberg's song "Pretty Ming Toy." Four years later, *Bye Bye, Barbara* opened with a number entitled "China" and included several Chinese characters.

A few of these superficially sinicized songs proved exceptionally long-lived. "In the Mandarin Orchid's Garden," with music and lyrics (respectively) by George and Ira Gershwin, suggests "true art song"²⁶ by way of its parallel first-inversion triads; sudden, unprepared, and highly chromatic

Allegro moderato

ff

Oh, the queer - est duck that sails the seas Is the
Oh, he sits on deck and smokes his pipe That is

mf

Mon - gol ma - ri - ner, if you please, The "jol - ly Jack Tar" of the
filled with the fruit of the pop - py ripe, And when - ev - er he fails to

Example 5: "The Chinese Sailor Man," measures 1–9, from *Shanghai* (1918)

modulations; and a lovely theme. Fortunately, it is available today in at least one anthology.²⁷ "Chinatown, My Chinatown" (see example 6), with music by Jean Schwartz and lyrics by William Jerome, has been reprinted much more frequently. One of America's best-known Chinese-themed popular songs, it was recorded by Al Jolson and Louis Armstrong, and Woody Allen included it in his 1987 film *Radio Days*.²⁸

The best example of an ostensibly Chinese-themed show with almost nothing Chinese in it is *A Trip to Chinatown*. Outfitted with miscellaneous

Allegro Moderato

PIANO

VOICE

When the town is fast a - sleep, And it's
Strang - ers ta - king in the sights, Pig - tails

mid - night in the sky, That's the time the fes - tive
fly - ing here and there; See that brok - en Wall Street

Chink Starts to wink his oth - er eye,
sport, Still thinks he's a mil - lion - aire,

Example 6: "Chinatown, My Chinatown," measures 1–22, from *Up and Down Broadway* (1910)

songs, this fanciful farce opened on Broadway in November 1891 and ran for 657 performances. Prior to *Irene* (1919), *A Trip to Chinatown* was Broadway's longest-running musical entertainment. Author Charles Hoyt's story involves a group of well-to-do young people who tell their wealthy guardian Uncle Ben that they are going to visit San Francisco's Chinatown—during the 1890s, a Northern California destination that was potentially enlighten-

ing yet dangerous, especially for young women.²⁹ Instead, they plan to party all night. Various characters drink too much, flirt with each other (one lady's maid is actually named "Flirt"), and get into trouble, until Ben pays the bills, after which everything ends happily.

SHIFTING SCORES AND FRAGMENTARY PUBLICATIONS

Like *A Trip to Chinatown*, stage musicals have always been and continue to be rewritten, often extensively, between their first and last performances. The music employed in *A Chinese Honeymoon* has been described as "extremely mobile during its initial long run" at London's Royal Strand, with "Egypt" by Clare Kummer as well as "The Maid of Peking" and "Chow-Chow's Honeymoon" interpolated as novelties.³⁰ The same was true of *Chu Chin Chow*. The "right piece at the right time," especially for British soldiers on leave from the trenches during World War I, *Chu Chin Chow* briefly incorporated "The Allies and the Dominions," an "Armistice tableau" celebrating England's November 1918 victory.³¹ Unfortunately, neither of the surviving, purportedly "complete" piano-vocal scores includes this patriotic material.

A Trip to Chinatown's songs have little or nothing to do with the plot. Moreover, which songs were performed in which productions cannot always be determined. *Songs from Hoyt's "A Trip to Chinatown"*, published in 1902 (long after the show opened), ostensibly featured all of its hits. "The Bowery," with words and music by Percy Gaunt, the show's "composer," was original with Gaunt and appears in that collection. "Reuben and Cynthia," also known as "Reuben, Reuben," appears there too,³² and the words to both songs appear in Hoyt's script.³³ Other numbers—including "Push dem Clouds Away" and "Out for a Racket"—are referenced only in the play's text, while still others survive only as titles in programs and newspaper reviews. One 1894 production even included a "burlesque of Italian opera."³⁴ In fact, *A Trip to Chinatown* mentions Chinese customs just once: in act 2, a widow named Mrs. Guyer appears in orientalized costume and "does Chinese specialty" (whatever that means). "Don't you see this is a Chinese dress," she cries, "and the Chinese for mourning wear white. I know my business."³⁵

Locating words as well as music for earlier Chinese-themed entertainments is often impossible. Several shows survive only in association with the names of the composers and lyricists who wrote them or of the actors who appeared in them. Only a few of the earlier shows had their overtures

or entr'acte music published, and *Chinatown Charlie* seems to have vanished entirely.³⁶ Others simply failed. Much of the music for *Chee-Chee*, a “rather peculiar play about the seduction of a beautiful girl by the son of the Grand Eunuch, and dominated by the theme of castration”³⁷ (and, to that extent, quasi-Arabian in theme), also seems to have disappeared. The Richard Rodgers Collection in the Library of Congress contains piano-vocal drafts for just three numbers from that show, none of them “Chinese.” Other numbers were apparently “mere snippets.”³⁸

SCRIPTS PLUS SONGS: PREJUDICE, SATIRE, AND SYMPATHY

Understanding what these and other orientalized entertainments can tell us about emerging Anglo-American attitudes toward China and the Chinese and about their music requires scripts. Fortunately, archival material survives for *A China Doll*, *China Rose*, *The Man from China*, *See-See*, and several other shows. Published scripts also exist for *A Trip to Chinatown*, *Chu Chin Chow*, *Chinese Love*, and, of course, *The Yellow Jacket*.

We know that *The Man from China* is more “Chinese” in both story and song than *A Trip to Chinatown* or *Chu Chin Chow*, from a typescript copy of its book in the University of Wisconsin’s Mills Music Library and a copy of its principal musical numbers that was published in 1904. However, the “man” mentioned in the title is not really “from” China. Instead, an American “uncle” named Timothy Tittlebat—returning from the Far East “with fifty million dollars”—is expected momentarily in Palm Beach, Florida. Tittlebat’s servant Peter Pudge, together with Tommy Dodd, Peter’s assistant, arrive ahead of the millionaire. So do Sing-Hi and Sing-Lo, two “celestial” Chinese detectives searching for “joss,” idols, or other Chinese religious tokens stolen by Tittlebat. Tommy, a lowlife trickster who owes money to his former business partner, the Count Luigi di Spaghetti, pursues the lovely Amorel in hopes of securing her father’s fortune. Meanwhile, Mr. Gustavus Giltedge, Amorel’s father, loses the fortune in question (when the peach crop fails), then gets it back.

Like Lee High Hung in *From Broadway to Tokio*, the two detectives speak only pidgin English. They also display cowardice in the face of their emperor’s threats to cut their heads off if they do not return his “joss.” Fortunately, everything works out, and the detectives are about to reclaim the

stolen items at the end of the show. But “Ting Tang Kee,” the show’s only Chinese-themed song (see example 7), is not about any of this. Instead, Peter—the “human band”—sings it at Tommy’s urging, in order to “prove” that Peter is the “man from China” (which he is not) and can speak Chinese (which he cannot). The moral is clear: Americans may be clever, but they really do not know anything about China. Today we may consider “Ting Tang Kee” racist, because its lyrics seem to mock the Chinese language. Yet the song also satirizes American greed and gullibility. Songs of this kind challenged and subverted “the Victorianisms of middle-class, native-born Americans,” even as they “traded heavily in . . . stereotyped national and racial characters.”³⁹

San Toy presents more sympathetic Asian characters and is even more dubious of certain Western ways. “The Mandarin,” a quintet performed by jeweler Wai Ho and other residents of the imagined town of Pynka Pong, makes fun of examinations—British as well as Chinese—in a manner reminiscent of “When I Was a Lad” from Gilbert and Sullivan’s *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Later on, the show’s eponymous ingenue, the daughter of a mandarin, disguises herself as a boy, confesses her disguise at the end of act I, and is briefly drafted into a women’s corps rather than into the regular army—the draft being a “progressive” touch for 1899. Our heroine initially seems happy in masculine drag, but she eventually decides that it is actually nicer to be a girl “When a lover makes you pretty rhymes / And the words that may be missing / He supplies by ardent kissing.”⁴⁰ In the show’s finale, Poppy, the daughter of Sir Bingo Preston, British consul at Pynka Pong, and Captain Bobby Preston’s sister, joins members of the chorus to give our heroine a rousing send-off after *San Toy*’s wedding to Bobby, a handsome English officer:

Fair be your lot,
 San Toy, oh!
 Now you are not
 A boy, oh!
 And when you are
 Dwelling afar,
 Yours be a star
 Of joy, oh!⁴¹

In *A Chinese Honeymoon*, this kind of topsy-turvydom, often associated with *The Mikado* and other Savoy operas, results in Tom Hatherton marrying

Allegretto.

Piano.

mf

Ting tang Kee, Was a
Ting tang Kee, Such a
Ting tang Kee, Hap - py

p

young Chi - nee, And he loved a Chi - nese maid - - en She was
suit pressed he, With his al - mond eyed young beau - - ty That his
boy was he, When she said, oh lets e - lo - - pee So he

Chin Chin Choo, With a two inch shoe, And her cheeks with pig - ment
chance was grand, To win heart and hand, And a good - ly share of
went one night, When the moon was bright, To her pal - ace with a

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Example 7: "Ting Tang Kee," measures 1–16, from *The Man from China* (1903)

Soo-Soo, the emperor's niece, as well as the show's ingenue and a sometime pretend singsong girl who, at one point, simulates suicide à la Shakespeare's Juliet. These shows may be less than inspired, but they have their charms, and many of their characters—not merely the crooks or comic fools—are Chinese. Furthermore, both *San Toy* and *A Chinese Honeymoon* suggest that

at least a few East Asian women, imagined or real, were acceptable spouses for turn-of-the-last-century British and American men.

Today we are well aware that a lot of pre-1914 Chinese-themed popular songs were thoroughly nasty. “Chin Chin Chinaman” from *The Geisha*, for instance, makes cruel fun of an impoverished Asian who must “shuttee shop” because he has gone “brokee broke.” Independently composed and published pop songs, however, may have been more consistently unpleasant than show songs. Broadway and West End shows catered to wealthier, more sophisticated individuals who were more likely to have visited foreign countries or to know more about them, and they could more effectively employ stereotypes for satiric purposes. Staged productions could also employ settings, scenery, and costumes to suggest wonderful worlds of the imagination, no matter how impoverished their real-life models have been and still may be. It is no small wonder that New York audiences preferred the “dramatic appeal” and “exotic setting” of *South Pacific*, one of a later generation of orientalized entertainments, to the “preaching morality” of *Allegro*, one of the least successful musical comedies of Rodgers and Hammerstein.⁴²

MUSICAL TROPES AND CHINESE-THEMED ENTERTAINMENTS

Stephen Banfield has identified some two dozen familiar narrative principles and performative tropes associated with modern operettas and musical comedies. His list includes plots derived from Roman New Comedy and involving the triumph “of youth and beauty” over impediments to marriages, medley overtures, opening choruses that introduce each diversion’s “more or less choreographed mass beauties,” and so on.⁴³ Banfield’s most intriguing observations involve “musical contrasts” and ethnic or geographically distant “others,” usually located to the south and east of “us”—for instance, the imagined Balkans of *The Merry Widow* (outfitted musically with “all-purpose Eastern folk topics”) or Puerto Rico in *West Side Story*.⁴⁴

Turn-of-the-last-century Chinese-themed shows also possessed tropes of their own. Described by one expert as “a grand tale with a bevy of suitable characters and lively and amusing situations and dialogue,”⁴⁵ *San Toy* ends with a dramatic device copied from British pantomime: that of boy’s roles “played by girls who appeared in elaborate feminine dress in the finale.”⁴⁶

Another trope involved processions or marches, such as Chu Chin Chow's entrance (see example 3). Still another was the "educational" duet. The lyrics for most of these duets involve boys teaching girls how to kiss, but "A B C" in *San Toy* has Bobbie creating an abecedarial of praise for his inamorata.

BOBBIE: A. for Almond eyes love-laden,
 B. for Beauty—
SAN TOY: Meaning me?
BOBBIE: C. for Charming Chinese maiden,
 My Delight—
 The word for D.⁴⁷

This and other conventions were themselves sometimes ridiculed on stage. In *Chin-Chin*, Ching asks Fan-Tan, "Were you ever kissed before?" After she replies "Never," he comments in good vaudeville fashion, "I'll be around Friday—that's amateur night."⁴⁸ Not every ingenue is altogether innocent. In the opening of "We'll Build a Brand New Bamboo Bungalow" from *China Rose*, Sing asks Fli Wun to marry him: "I will furnish bread and cheese, dear," he offers; "I the kisses," she replies.⁴⁹

Yet another trope involved patter songs featuring rapid-fire pseudo-Chinese syllables; "Pletty Littee Chinee" in *San Toy* is one example. More explicitly dramatic than musical were threats of torture and execution. At one point in *A Chinese Honeymoon*, Mr. Pineapple believes he will have to join his "wife" in death because an imaginary law—à la *The Mikado*—mandates this orientalized punishment. In *A China Doll*, Wing Lee, "Mandarin of the Red Button," proposes several alternatives to the "hundred slices" for condemned thief Sampson Muckles.

You might be boiled alive,
 A sentence very few survive;
Or taken sometimes [*sic*] after dark
 And fed in piecemeal to the shark.
But really you don't know how nice is,
 The hundred slices!

"The hundred slices!" the chorus murmurs in response, with the word *hundred* emphasized through the use of a half-augmented seventh chord built

on F-sharp.⁵⁰ Glittering accompaniment figures reminiscent of eighteenth-century revenge arias support Wing Lee's reference to boiling.⁵¹

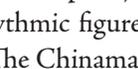
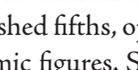
FAUX CHINESE MUSIC ON WESTERN STAGES

Did the turn-of-the-last-century Western stage offer any "authentic" Chinese show music?⁵² Could any late nineteenth- or early twentieth-century Broadway or West End composer have written anything truly Chinese? Would any Western musician have been able to perform it or wanted to? The answer to these questions is almost certainly no—and not only for demographic and economic reasons. Pre-1919 Chinese music was nothing like Western music. Successful Broadway and West End composers turned out new works scored for well-tempered instruments, works that foregrounded functional harmony and sought to delight (rather than disturb) cash-paying customers. Traditional Chinese musicians mostly reworked familiar melodies for alien instruments tuned in various ways, following in their ancestors' footsteps. They made "no deliberate attempt . . . to harmonize" the tunes they knew or to "build up" contrapuntal backgrounds for them.⁵³ In short, traditional Chinese music possessed and, to a considerable extent, still possesses its own "distinctive sound."⁵⁴ Actual Chinese melodies were quoted in a few Western compositions, but those melodies were intended to be performed by Western artists on Western instruments.⁵⁵

Nineteenth-century Westerners seldom enjoyed actual Asian music when they heard it. In 1846, John Peters commented on the "horrid din" made by Chinese instruments at an exhibition in Boston.⁵⁶ Three years later, Henry Sirr mentioned a Chinese "three-stringed instrument" that produced "most unharmonious and unmusical sounds" to an "abominable accompaniment."⁵⁷ Easier access to China and its customs did not inspire appreciation in post-World War I visitors. Around 1920, Alice Brockway shuddered over the "hideous gongs" struck at a "heathen [*sic*] funeral."⁵⁸ Clara Cushman, who troubled to write down a Chinese melody (with words in Chinese as well as English), reserved most of her praise for a local performance of Handel's *Messiah* and for the "very sweet" sounds of Chinese flutes—when, that is, they were played by "keen school girls" at a Christian missionary academy.⁵⁹ Even Philip Kerby, who was something of a China hand, considered most of the music he encountered "barbaric" and "weird."⁶⁰

Simulated or faux Chinese music was another matter. All stage music is simulated; real-life men and women simply do not break into songs and carefully choreographed dances as they go about their affairs. Furthermore, as much as 95 percent of the music employed in all turn-of-the-last-century shows was “resolutely diatonic, with chromaticism kept to a bare minimum” (see examples 1–2 and 4–6).⁶¹ Bland harmonies and simple tunes especially characterized love songs involving imagined Chinese females (see example 1, as well as “China Rose” from the show of the same name). “Dear, Oh Dear!” from Rodger’s *Chee-Chee* is one of many foxtrots, while *Chin-Chin* boasted one of many ragtime numbers (see example 4), almost all of which were “humorous.”⁶²

In *Cherry Blossoms*, however, Romberg employed “extensive chromaticism and the minor mode to evoke the sound of the exotic Other.”⁶³ Here we approach accounts of actual late nineteenth-century Chinese music. In 1899, Mrs. Timothy Richard mentioned “a good many distinctly minor [Chinese] airs”; others, she explained, employed a scale “nearly equivalent to our old ‘re’ [i.e., Dorian] mode, so rarely used [in the West] but so effective.”⁶⁴ Chu Chin Chow’s entrance (see example 2) is quasi-Dorian or quasi-Aeolian.

Other orientalized gestures occur in actual Chinese music, including pentatonic melodies (see example 3); open fifths, often “played in steady quarter-notes”⁶⁵ (see example 7); parallel motion (see example 1); dissonant grace notes simulating improvisation (see example 7); “tom-tom” rhythms (see examples 3 and 7); and recurring rhythmic figures such as  or  (see examples 2 and 6). “The Chinaman’s Song” from *Cairo* (see example 8) makes much use of diminished fifths, open fifths, and parallel motion, as well as characteristic rhythmic figures. Still other “orientalist devices” include Phrygian melodies, augmented intervals, melismata, harp-like arpeggios, and glissandi.⁶⁶ Many of these gestures can also be found in late nineteenth-century European art music as well as Appalachian ballads. Others are also associated with non-Chinese musical topoi—“tom-tom” rhythms with faux American Indian music, for instance. The use of horn-pipe gestures in “The Chinese Sailor Man” (see example 5) provides “musical variety” by way of sheer multicultural fun.

Much of the faux Chinese music in turn-of-the-century British and American operettas and musical comedies appears in introductions of various kinds, including overtures (see example 9). There it provides musicalized establishing shots for various characters and settings. “The Chinaman’s Song” (see example 8) shifts from minor to major, from greater to lesser

In moderately slow time.
 With a precise and quaintly marked rhythm.

PIANO.

mf

Me wel-ly good old Chi-na-man, Me Wei-San-Wei; Me sam-ie old as

mp

Al-lah be; Me Wei-San-Wei. Him nev-er lie, Him nev-er die,

cresc.

Like Wei-San-Wei. Me Wei-San-Wei,

dim. *p*

me nev-er die; Me flom Fe-kin, me full-ie sin, Me fool-ie men, me

poco cresc.

Example 8: "The Chinaman's Song," measures 1-16, from Cairo (1921)

INTROD'N.
Andante.

Tempo di Valse.

p cres.

ff rit.

Example 9: Opening of *The Pearl of Peking Waltzes* (1898)

dissonance, and from a more to a less emphatic vocal idiom as its verse gives way to its chorus. The *Pearl of Peking Waltzes* (1898; see example 9) opens with grace notes—although scarcely dissonant ones—and its introduction includes arpeggiated chords as well as “tom-tom” rhythms and a hint of chromaticism—G major in measures 6–7, followed by E-flat major. In example 2, E major gives way to G-sharp major. Similar shifts occur in early recordings; in James T. Powers’s rendition of “Chin Chin Chinaman” from

p a tempo
 There for a while the ten-der flakes In beau-ty rest; But
p a tempo

time no chance ex-cep-tion makes, — At his be-hest They
pp ten. *rall.*
 crum-ble, and their moth-er takes them to her
pp *rall.* *m.s.*

a tempo
 breast.
a tempo *poco rall.* *PPP*

Example 10: "Pink Cherry Blossoms," measures 11–20, from *Cherry Blossom* (1926)

The Geisha, a “histrionic fanfare of fake Chinese” music is followed by an “absolutely regular 4x4 verse-chorus structure.”⁶⁷

A handful of numbers contain something more imaginative. In example 2, phrases of irregular lengths—Cheoo’s call for “more lanterns” fills seven measures (155–61), the chorus’s response just two—may have been intended to suggest the irregular phrases of a few, semifamiliar Chinese tunes. The abbreviated overture to *The Yellow Jacket* mimics the openings of Peking opera scenes, with parts for cymbal, drum, wood block, and fan (the last to be struck by hand) before the “music” per se begins.

Only *Cherry Blossom* seems to have been consistently experimental. Apparently, “China Loo” was written as that show’s explicitly sinicized insertion, but “Pink Cherry Blossoms” is even more unusual (see example 10). Sung by Sakura, this “quasi arpa” number simulates improvised freedom and contains several mediant progressions—from D major to B-flat major in measures 9–10 and from G major to E major in measures 13–14. The grace notes are more dissonant in this song, and the vocal line is less predictable. Even the song’s words are unusually poetic, although scarcely Asian. Had the show made it to Broadway, a few of the tired stockbrokers for whom musical comedies were long thought to have been created probably would have experienced momentary confusion at lines like “Time to chance exception makes, / At his behest / They crumble, and their mother takes them to her breast.”

These examples suggest that at least a few attempts were made to simulate Chinese music in turn-of-the-last-century Western entertainments. Simulations of this kind have not been restricted to earlier British and American operettas and musical comedies. The *Yellow River Concerto* (1969)—a collaborative effort by YIN Chengzong, CHU Wanghua, and other Mainland Chinese composers, based on XIAN Xinghai’s *Yellow River Cantata* (1939)—sounds more “European” than “Chinese.” This is true even of its instrumentation: except for *dizi* and, in some versions, *pipa*, the concerto is scored entirely for Western instruments. Whether this and other examples of musical “Chineseness” are “authentic” depends on one’s definition of the latter word.⁶⁸ No composition is “too transcendent to be soiled by the muck of contextualization.”⁶⁹ Yet music can never be entirely understood exclusively from political and social perspectives, and there is nothing inherently disparaging about vocal melismata and open fifths or about playing Eastern melodies on Western instruments.⁷⁰

Notes

1. Crouse and Weidman also rewrote the book for the 2011 *Anything Goes* revival. See <http://theater.about.com/od/musicals/a/Anything-Goes-2011-Broadway-Revival.htm> (accessed 15 April 2013).

2. "Plays & Players," *Theatre Magazine*, December 1914, quoted in Robert Charles Lancefield, "Hearing Orientality in (White) America, 1900–1930" (PhD diss., Wesleyan University, 2004), 328.

3. Lee Davis, *Scandals and Follies: The Rise and Fall of the Great Broadway Revue* (New York: Limelight, 2000), 119.

4. Richard Traubner, *Operetta: A Theatrical History*, rev. ed. (New York: Routledge, 2003), 357.

5. The quotes are from a 1905 article in the *New York Observer*, quoted in Davis, *Scandals and Follies*, 49.

6. Steven E. Gilbert, *The Music of Gershwin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 126. For additional information about the emergence of the "book musical," see Mark N. Grant, *The Rise and Fall of the Broadway Musical* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2004), esp. 51–114.

7. Robert McCrum, *Wodehouse: A Life* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), 134. The Princess Theater in New York was the setting for the many successes of Bolton, Wodehouse, and Jerome Kern, including *Oh Boy!* (1917).

8. *The Encyclopedia of the New York Stage, 1920–1930*, ed. Samuel L. Leiter (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1985), 1:144. James Deaville also discusses this and related issues in the present volume.

9. See, for example, *Chinese American Voices: From the Gold Rush to the Present*, ed. Judy Yung, Gordon H. Chang, and Him Mark Lai (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); and Krystyn R. Moon, *Yellowface: Creating the Chinese in American Popular Music and Performance, 1850s–1920s* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2005). *Widening the Horizon: Exoticism in Post-War Popular Music*, edited by Philip Hayward (London: John Libbey, 1999), carries the discussion into more recent decades but mostly ignores Chinese American issues and stereotypes. In *Musicians from a Different Shore: Asians and Asian Americans in Classical Music* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007), Mari Yoshihara deals with compositional and performative venues generally excluded from discussions of the popular musical stage.

10. See Moon, *Yellowface*.

11. Oscar Asche's entertainments are exceptions, and *Chu Chin Chow* has been examined from almost every possible perspective. Lancefield ("Hearing Orientality," 330–31) discusses several show tunes, including "Chinese Lullaby" from *East Is West*, but he mostly deals with nontheatricalized, early twentieth-century popular songs.

12. See, for instance, Stanley Green, *The World of Musical Comedy: The Story of the American Musical Stage as Told through the Careers of Its Foremost Composers and Lyricists*, rev. ed. (South Brunswick, NJ: A. S. Barnes, 1968).

13. Jonathan Bellman, "Musical Voyages and Their Baggage: Orientalism in Music and Critical Musicology," *Musical Quarterly* 94, no. 3 (2011): 417.

14. *Ibid.*, 426.

15. *Ibid.*, 426–27. Bellman references Susan McClary's review of Charles Rosen's *The Romantic Generation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), published in *Notes* 52, no. 4 (1996): 1139–42.

16. Moon gives a longer list; see *Yellowface*, 180–81. I was unable to confirm many of her titles, and her list begins chronologically in the early nineteenth century.

17. Sources of information about names, dates, and so on include reference works ranging from *The Best Plays of 1909–1919*, ed. Burns Mead and Garrison Sherwood (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1933) to *The Oxford Handbook of the American Musical*, ed. Raymond Knapp, Mitchell Morris, and Stacy Wolf (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) to the Internet Broadway Data base at www.ibdb.com. No one source is entirely reliable or comprehensive.

18. Writing for the *New Yorker* (13 March 1926, 35), "R.A.S." mentions Hamblen's "distinctly semi-classical . . . music for 'Cherry Blossom,'" then confesses an inability "to discover anything that sounds like a wow."

19. An annotated copy survives of the "incidental music" from *The Yellow Jacket*, "as presented by the senior class of Smith College, 1919." Intriguingly, composer Roger Sessions served as supervisor of the music committee that oversaw the production.

20. *From Broadway to Tokio*, act 2, p. 113, prompt book, University of Wisconsin libraries.

21. Traubner, *Operetta*, 202.

22. *From Broadway to Tokio*, act 1, pp. 29–30.

23. *A China Doll*, act 1, p. 4, microfilmed typescript, film 20,301, reel 109, Manuscripts Reading Room, Library of Congress. The experiences of and influences exerted on and by Chinese students in American colleges and universities prior to World War II have been examined in some detail. See, for instance, Liel Leibovitz and Matthew Miller, *Fortunate Sons: The 120 Chinese Boys Who Came to America, Went to School, and Revolutionized an Ancient Civilization* (New York: Norton, 2011); and Weili Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China's Name: Chinese Students in the United States, 1900–1927* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001).

24. Table 2 references songs actually seen or investigated by me. Longer lists of songs of various kinds, dramatic and nondramatic, can be found in, among other publications, Moon, *Yellowface*, 169–79. Each of these lists references different works, because no one knows precisely how many Chinese-themed popular songs have appeared in print.

25. See, for instance, Martha Fitch Denby, "Impressions of Old Peking," *Pacific Era* (Detroit), 1907–08, 232. The Denbys were a prominent nineteenth-century American family; Charles Denby (1830–1904) married Margaret Fitch in 1858, and she lived with him while he served as US minister to China from 1885 to 1898.

26. Gilbert, *Music of Gershwin*, 243.

27. See *50 Gershwin Classics* (n.p.: Warner Bros., 1989), 204–8.

28. For a detailed discussion of the song itself, see Charles Hiroshi Garrett, *Struggling to Define a Nation: American Music and the Twentieth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), chap. 4.

29. "With rare exceptions, unmarried women were brought to nineteenth-century Chinatown only for the purpose of prostitution" (Ronald Riddle, *Flying Dragons, Flowing Streams: Music in the Life of San Francisco's Chinese* [Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1983], 109). The women in question were Chinese, and no respectable Caucasian miss would have associated with such disreputable creatures.

30. See Kurt Gänzl, *The British Musical Theater 1865–1914*, 2 vols. (Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan, 1986), 1:725. Facsimiles of a *Chinese Honeymoon* program from a London performance, dated 14 May 1904, identify two of these three numbers by title: see <http://www.lily-elsie.com/honey.htm> (access confirmed 1 August 2015).

31. Brian Singleton, *Oscar Asche, Orientalism, and British Musical Comedy* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), 132.

32. Often accorded folklike status, "Reuben and Cynthia" was published in 1871 as "Reuben and Rachel," with music by William Gooch and lyrics by Harry Birch.

33. Charles Hoyt, *A Trip to Chinatown; or, An Idyl of San Francisco*, reprinted in Charles Hoyt, *Five Plays*, ed. Douglas L. Hunt (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1941), 105–48.

34. Richard C. Norton, *A Chronology of American Musical Theater* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 546.

35. Hoyt, *Five Plays*, 126.

36. But see John P. Ritter, *Chinatown Charlie, the Opium Fiend: A Novel Founded upon the Play of the Same Name by Owen Davis* (New York: Ogilvie, 1906).

37. Kenneth Aaron Kanter, *The Jews on Tin Pan Alley: The Jewish Contribution to American Popular Music, 1830–1940* (New York: Ktav, 1982), 69.

38. Traubner, *Operetta*, 399. In *Musical Stages: An Autobiography* (New York: Random House, 1975), 118, Rodgers claims that *Chee-Chee's* musical numbers were "so interwoven with the story" that it would have confused 1928 audiences to peruse a list of them; see *Oxford Handbook of the American Musical*, 100.

39. Robert W. Snyder, "Immigrants, Ethnicity, and Mass Culture: The Vaudeville Stage in New York City, 1880–1930," in *Budapest and New York: Studies in Metropolitan Transformation, 1870–1930*, ed. Thomas Bender and Carl E. Schorske (New York: Russell Sage, 1994), 186, 193.

40. *San Toy; or, The Emperor's Own: A Chinese Musical Comedy* [piano-vocal

score], words by Edward Morton, lyrics by Harry Greenbank and Adrian Ross (London: Keith, Prowse, 1899), 192ff. Interestingly, “It’s Nice to Be a Boy” appears in this score only as a supplementary number; it does not appear in the script identified in n. 41.

41. *San Toy; or, The Emperor’s Own: A Chinese Musical Comedy* [libretto], words by Edward Morton, lyrics by Harry Greenbank and Adrian Ross (London: Keith, Prowse, n.d.), act 2, p. 40.

42. Traubner, *Operetta*, 404–5.

43. Stephen Banfield, “Popular Musical Theatre (and Film),” in *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-century Opera*, ed. Mervyn Cooke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 294–98.

44. *Ibid.*, 295–96.

45. Gänzl, *British Musical Theatre*, 1:707.

46. Raylyn Moore, *Wonderful Wizard, Marvelous Land* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1974), 62. Cross-dressing was commonplace in Cantonese opera, although it was more common for men to dress as women. For additional information about this and other phenomena associated with Chinese-language entertainments, especially in San Francisco, see Nancy Rao, “The Public Face of Chinatown: Actresses, Actors, Playwrights, and Audiences of Chinatown Theaters in San Francisco during the 1920s,” *Journal of the Society for American Music* 5, no. 2 (2011): esp. 238–45.

47. *San Toy* [libretto], act 1, p. 12.

48. *Chin-Chin*, act 1, scene 3, p. 27, typescript, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

49. *China Rose* [libretto], 17, typescript, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

50. *A China Doll: A Musical Comedy in Two Acts* [piano-vocal score], book and lyrics by Harry B. and Robert Smith, music by Alfred E. Aarons (New York: M. Witmark, 1904), 55–56.

51. Violence is suggested in the lyrics of other turn-of-the-last-century operettas. In *The Geisha*, a song sung by Wun-Hi ends with the refrain “Chop chop chop” that may have referred to attacks upon missionaries in 1895 China. See William A. Everett, “Imagining the Identities of East Asia in 1890s British Musical Theatre: The Case of Sidney Jones’s *The Geisha* (1896),” in *Franjo Ksaver Kuhac (1834–1911)*, ed. Vjera Katalinic and Stanislav Tuksar (Zagreb: Hrvatsko muzikolosko drusivo, 2013), 304–5.

52. I place the word *authentic* in quotation marks because it is a problematic term with a great many definitions. For six definitions of this word, see Richard Peterson, *Creating Country Music: Fabricating Authenticity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), chap. 6. Of these definitions, perhaps the most important in contemporary terms—and the most contested—is “credible in current context.”

53. Robert Wood Clack, *Celestial Symphonies: A Study of Chinese Music* (New York: Gordon, 1976), 26.

54. Richard Curt Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China: Middle-Class Ambitions and the Struggle over Western Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 16.

55. A single example must suffice: the Chinese folk song “Molihua” (Jasmine Flower) appears in Giacomo Puccini’s opera *Turandot*. Among many references in the literature, see Arman Schwartz, “Mechanism and Tradition in Puccini’s *Turandot*,” *Opera Quarterly* 25, nos. 1–2 (2009): 45. Schwartz describes the tune as “a four-bar pentatonic fragment that [Puccini] expands into a rocking melody,” albeit one “bizarrely” orchestrated—perhaps in an attempt to simulate an exotic sound.

56. John R. Peters, *Miscellaneous Remarks upon the . . . Chinese Museum in the Marlboro Chapel, Boston* (Boston: Eastburn, 1846), 164.

57. Henry Charles Sirr, *China and the Chinese*, 2 vols. (London: William S. Orr, 1849), 1:160.

58. Alice Pickford Brockway, *Snap Shots in China* (Canton, China: China Baptist Publication Society, [ca. 1920]), 57.

59. Clara M. Cushman, *Tientsin Scribbles* (Leominster, MA: Boutwell, Owens, 1925), 115, 142, 163.

60. Philip Kerby, *Beyond the Bund* (New York: Payson and Clarke, 1927), 14–15, 45. For additional information about the reception of Chinese music by nineteenth-century Westerners, see Mary Gertrude Mason, *Western Concepts of China and the Chinese, 1840–1876* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), chap. 11.

61. William A. Everett, “‘Chu Chin Chow’ and Orientalist Musical Theatre in Britain during the First World War,” in *Music and Orientalism in the British Empire, 1780s–1840s*, ed. Martin Clayton and Bennett Zon (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 285.

62. *Ibid.*, 55.

63. Everett, *Sigmund Romberg* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 216.

64. Mrs. Timothy Richard, *Paper on Chinese Music* (Shanghai: American Presbyterian Mission Press, 1899), 16. For additional information about traditional Chinese music, see—among a host of options—J. A. van Aalst, *Chinese Music* (Shanghai: Statistical Department of the Inspectorate General of Customs, 1884); and Frederick Lau, *Music in China: Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

65. Lancefield, “Hearing Orientality,” 703.

66. *Ibid.*, 705.

67. *Oxford Handbook of the American Musical*, 85. Two authenticated Japanese melodies appear in *The Geisha*. Again, see Everett, “Imagining the Identities of East Asia,” 305. This does not seem to have been the case with Chinese-themed shows.

68. For a vigorous discussion of these contested issues as well as of the *Yellow River Concerto* and its relationship to national and global perceptions of “authentic-

ity," see Eric Hung, "Performing 'Chineseness' on the Western Concert Stage," *Asian Music* 40, no. 1 (2009): 131–48.

69. Daniel K. L. Chua, *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 4.

70. I thank Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, especially the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, for support toward the completion of this essay. For their assistance, I also thank staff members, especially Catherine Rivers, in the Performing Arts Division of the Library of Congress, as well as responsible parties employed by Harvard University's Widener Library, the Center for Popular Music at Middle Tennessee State University, the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, the Tams-Witmark/Wisconsin Collection of the Mills Music Library at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and scholar William A. Everett. Finally, I would like to thank Kenneth DeLong for his thoughts on issues of ethnicity and nationalism in late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century music. This essay is dedicated to him, with gratitude and respect.

The Many Lives of Flower Drum Song (1957–2002)

Negotiating Chinese American Identity in Print, on Stage, and on Screen

James Deaville

Flower Drum Song occupies a unique position among American musical comedies that foreground issues of racial and ethnic difference.¹ Not only does it trace an exceptional progression through artistic media, from novel to stage to film, but it also has experienced a thorough revision and revival. To that extent *Flower Drum Song* resembles the racially problematic *Show Boat*, which director Harold Prince revived in 1993.² However, unlike *Show Boat* (from a novel by Edna Ferber), *Flower Drum Song* originated in a novel by a Chinese American author, Chin Yang Lee, a member of the racial/ethnic community “exploited” in the story’s ensuing lives on stage and screen.³ The following discussion will study the transformations of the original text from two perspectives: (1) how images of Chinese Americans and the “Chinatown experience” were transmitted between cultural forms and (2) how they were then communicated to the public through the various media of presentation. In doing so, we will discover how complex the negotiation of identity becomes when it extends over generations and between cultural forms.

If we were to distill all of its versions—novel, musical, film, “revisical”⁴—down to one basic narrative, the story of *Flower Drum Song* might read as follows: The old, traditionalist Chinese widower WANG Chi-Yang lives with his son WANG Ta in San Francisco’s Chinatown during the late 1950s. Master Wang has significant troubles adjusting to life in the New World—

Wang Ta, who is studying at university, experiences difficulties with his own Chinese American identity and his awakening hormones; he is infatuated with nightclub singer Linda Low, but he ultimately falls in love with the gentle, quiet Mei-Li, a Chinese émigré who has a talent for flower drum songs.⁵ That is all the common ground that exists between versions of this tale, one that deals with the timeless conflict between love and duty. Important differences exist between the novel and its adaptations, however. In the novel, Mei-Li does not come to America as a mail-order bride and has no contract to marry colorful nightclub owner Sammy Fong; in the musical and film, Helen Chao does not commit suicide; and in the revisical, Master Wang has no fully assimilated son Wang San. These are but three examples of difference.⁶

Before we unpack the individual manifestations of *Flower Drum Song*, a brief survey of the work's path through history is in order. C. Y. Lee published *The Flower Drum Song*, his first novel, in 1957, with the noted New York firm of Farrar, Straus and Cudahy and to generally favorable reviews. Scriptwriter Joseph Fields obtained the novel's stage rights from Lee, then sold the story to Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II. According to David Lewis, author of the popularizing study *Flower Drum Songs*, Rodgers and Hammerstein "immediately saw the potential and agreed to sign on."⁷ With Gene Kelly as director and a cast that included Miyoshi Umeki, Pat Suzuki, Jack Soo, Larry Blyden, and Juanita Hall, the musical opened on Broadway on 1 December 1958 at the St. James Theater, for a run of six hundred performances yielding six Tony nominations and mixed reviews.⁸

Like Rodgers and Hammerstein's other musicals, *Flower Drum Song* interested Hollywood. This resulted in the 1961 Universal Studios release that retained Fields as scriptwriter and Umeki, Soo, and Hall as characters, although Fields refocused the narrative and changed the order of songs.⁹ It was through television broadcasts of this film during the 1960s and 1970s that most Americans, including noted Asian American playwright David Henry Hwang, became familiar with *Flower Drum Song*. The musical allegedly haunted Hwang for over two decades, until he obtained permission from the Rodgers and Hammerstein organization in 1996 to rewrite and revise it.¹⁰ Hwang kept the songs but thoroughly reworked the script for a 2002 Broadway production that featured an all-Asian American cast and garnered three Tony nominations. Since 2002, Hwang's adaptation has received sporadic performances, including a two-week run in San Francisco during October and November 2008.

Lee's novel came at a time when Americans were receptive to China, an ally in the Pacific theater of operations. Two other novels by Chinese Americans appeared to considerable acclaim in the war and postwar years: *Father and Glorious Descendant*, by Pardee Lowe (1943), and *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, by Jade Snow Wong (1950). Like these other novels, *The Flower Drum Song* was less a unified narrative than a collection of episodes from the life of a particular family and vignettes of Chinatown. As such, it represented the ethnicization of the Chinese American experience, which—according to researcher Christina Klein—was compared by publishers, reviewers, and readers to the experiences of earlier waves of immigrants from Europe.¹¹

In his novel, Lee described the world in which he lived and worked. After graduating from Kunming University and receiving a master's degree in fine arts from Yale University in 1947, he wrote for two Chinese newspapers in San Francisco,¹² living in the very neighborhood he described in *The Flower Drum Song*.¹³ Indeed, the novel is full of observations about Chinese life in the city, leading the *Times* of London to call it "a fascinating picture of Chinatown"; the *Chicago Sunday Tribune* assessed it as "always fascinating, and by turns amusing and pathetic."¹⁴ Against this backdrop, Asian American critics have accused Lee of confirming stereotypes—for example, through father Wang's quaint traditionalism.¹⁵ Some commentators have argued that the novel is actually about the father, whose values—as amply displayed by Lee—represent those of an older generation caught in a conflict between tradition and assimilation.¹⁶ At the same time, *Flower Drum Song* shows that beneath the colorful panorama of Chinese customs and characters is a darker side of the community, revealing the impact of the Chinese Exclusion Act and the costs of assimilation.¹⁷

The lack of available Chinese women becomes a sad refrain throughout *The Flower Drum Song*, whereby the author openly exercises a not-so-subtle political critique against American immigration policy, which basically barred Asian women from entering the United States.¹⁸ Wang Ta's philosopher friend Chang gives clear expression to Lee's critique, after Helen Chao's suicide.

"And yet you want to write a book called *Chinatown After Dark*," Wang Ta said.

[Chang:] "I want to write about its romance, its uniqueness, its quaintness and serenity. Brutality only distorts the picture of Chinatown. I think this shooting is again a result of this peculiar situation—not enough women to go around . . ."

[Wang Ta:] "It seems to me you blame everything on the scarcity of women."

[Chang:] "I do. . . . You know, the more I think of this situation, the more I believe it has caused all the tragedies in Chinatown."¹⁹

Moreover, Lee's frank portrayal of male and female sexuality confronts Western images of the effeminate Asian male, on the one hand, and the female "lotus blossom" or "dragon lady," on the other.²⁰ Wang Ta actively searches for a mate throughout the novel, while Mei-Li vigorously defends herself against the criticisms of Master Wang and his servant Liu Ma. Wang Ta finds his own distinctive sexual and ethnic identity, despite competing pressures in his life and mistakes he makes along the way. One is hard pressed to read *The Flower Drum Song* as an orientalist fantasy, and it succeeds as a novel by virtue of its "abundant plot twists, . . . engagingly drawn characters, . . . [and] ample amusement and poignant drama," to quote Lewis again.²¹ The reviewer for the *New York Herald Tribune* prophetically noted, "It is called a novel though some day it will undoubtedly make a play."²²

The novel is not without its problems. Consider the absence of a tighter narrative structure and Lee's construction of the Asian American immigrant experience as analogous to that of white Europeans.²³ Lee's work nevertheless did not deserve the neglect it experienced over the next decades. Hwang recalls that in light of the subsequent "inauthentic," orientalizing cinema version of *Flower Drum Song*, the novel "became tainted by association," and its popularity in the general marketplace moreover "rendered it suspect as an example of true Asian-American literature."²⁴ On the one hand, it represents a particular historical stage in the emerging literature about the Asian American experience, as similarly evidenced in the novels of Lowe and Wong: the three authors' common goal was to make the first-generation and second-generation Asian immigrant experience accessible to the general American public. On the other hand, Lee wrote his book with niche readers in mind. Thus, in the novel's foreword, Lee makes it clear that he adhered to the style of his columns for *Chinese World*, which he explains "appealed to a younger generation."

Nothing in the novel, other than perhaps its episodic character, would have directly suggested a musical setting to theater producers. None of the narrative content revolved around music, nor did any of the characters significantly engage in musical performance. Nevertheless, *The Flower Drum Song's* popularity attracted Broadway producers, one of whom—Joseph

Fields²⁵—read the novel and recommended it to Rodgers and Hammerstein,²⁶ who had already produced a play about a family of Norwegian immigrants (*I Remember Mama*, 1944).²⁷

While Rodgers and Hammerstein recognized the novel's musical-dramatic potential, they preferred to highlight its ethnic qualities while omitting its darker side, as manifested in Lee's deeper engagement with the harsher realities of life and love in Chinatown, especially racial and class-based discrimination. Hammerstein was apparently drawn to the novel because it "reminded him of a Chinese *Life with Father*."²⁸ Even the sympathetic Lewis has admitted,

Rodgers, Hammerstein and Fields took the safest commercial route by following the eldest son's search for love—the most popular theme at the time with Broadway audiences. All three of Mr. Lee's principal female heroines . . . were incorporated into their libretto. At this troublesome juncture R. & H. needed a surefire hit. Romance and comedy promised the greatest chance.²⁹

As a result, Hammerstein removed from his script most of Lee's serious drama, ranging from servant Liu Ma's vindictive setup of Mei-Li to Helen Chao's suicide, and replaced it with lightly comic scenes that implied unproblematic assimilation.³⁰ As Rodgers himself said, "We show that East and West can get together with a little adjustment."³¹ The show's narrative followed Wang-Ta's search for love, which shifted focus from manipulative Asian American showgirl Linda Low (Linda Tung in Lee's novel) to the "sweet" Chinese immigrant Mei-Li, thereby contrasting two stereotypes of Asian femininity. However, Clifford Barr argues that Wang Ta is more the pursued than the pursuer, which places him in a feminized position, like the characters in Hwang's *M. Butterfly* (1988).³²

To bolster the lighter side of *Flower Drum Song*, Rodgers and Hammerstein added a major character, nightclub owner Sammy Fong, whose quasi-comedic role completes one of the two central heterosexual relationships. Sammy is the person whose mother sent for the mail-order bride (Mei-Li) and whose love for Low creates the underlying romantic conflict with Wang Ta. Indeed, by refocusing (or, rather, focusing) the novel's narrative onto Wang Ta and the three women in his life, Rodgers, Hammerstein, and Fields largely divested these characters of their potential for racial transgression, muting Wang Ta's sexuality (although he seems to have spent the

night with Helen Chao) and turning Mei-Li into a “lotus blossom” (albeit a quick-witted one). These characters—both feminized (i.e., “orientalized”)—thus became more stereotypical, more readily consumable by Western audiences.³³ In essence, they replaced the father-son conflict with the traditional two pairs of lovers (Wang Ta and Mei-Li, Sammy and Linda), which occasioned Ethan Morrden to comment, “The novel is about a father; the musical is about two couples.”³⁴

Moreover, for Rodgers and Hammerstein, San Francisco’s Chinatown became an exotic and romantic location, not unlike Bali Ha’i (*South Pacific*, 1949) and “Siam” (*The King and I*, 1951). This orientalist aspect to their musical collaborations came at a time, after World War II, when Americans were exhibiting an increased interest in Asian culture, even though that interest took traditional forms of Western domination. As Smith and Litton observe with regard to *Flower Drum Song*, “Once again Rodgers could evoke the East with lyrical, pseudo-Orientalist melodies.”³⁵

Rodgers’s score does take advantage of the orientalist possibilities afforded by the musical’s script, though perhaps not to the extent that Smith and Litton suggest. Like *South Pacific* and *The King and I*, *Flower Drum Song* features numbers that musically are pure Broadway, especially slow ballads like “Love Look Away” and “You Are Beautiful” and upbeat jazz songs like “I Enjoy Being a Girl” and “Grant Avenue.” The lyrics of “Grant Avenue” locate the eponymous street in the center of Chinatown but depict it as a “Western street with Eastern manners.” In contrast, a wide range of musical orientalism inhabits other numbers, from Mei-Li’s “I Am Going to Like It Here,” with its modally inflected, repetitive melody and solo flute plus harp accompaniment (more Japanese than Chinese), to “Fan-Tan Fanny,” which seems to exploit all possible chinoiseries in a risqué burlesque song and dance that Sammy Fong aims at the tourist visitors to his Celestial Bar. Ironically, the ostensibly identity-based song “Chop Suey”—performed at the naturalization ceremony of Madame Liang—only once refers to anything Chinese in its text, as if to underscore the subaltern image of Chinese culture that predominates the musical.

Chop suey, chop suey,
 Rough and tough and brittle and soft and gooey—
 Peking duck and Mulligan stew,
 Plymouth Rock and Little Rock, too.³⁶

The musical's most important song, "A Hundred Million Miracles," the melodic motif of which pervades most of the score, draws on Richard Rodgers's construction of a Chinese flower drum song from traditional Western musical evocations of China.³⁷ The text derives from the types of flower drum song lyrics that Lee presents in his novel. Orientalist melodic motifs include chromatic melodic inflections and repeated drum notes. The song both helps to establish Mei-Li's "gentle," optimistic character and serves as a metaphorical reference to the ultimate resolution of the characters' love interests.

Theatergoers and the press were not as enthusiastic over *Flower Drum Song* as they were over Rodgers and Hammerstein's other orientalist musicals. Yet the original production must be regarded as at least moderately successful: it ran on Broadway for six hundred performances (from 1 December 1958 to 7 May 1960), played in London (at the Palace Theatre) for over one year (opening on 24 March 1960 and running for 464 performances), and went on American tour for another eighteen months (from 10 May 1960, in Detroit, to 14 October 1961, in Cleveland, with productions in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Chicago). Among the major newspaper critics, Brooks Atkinson from the *New York Times* called it "a pleasant interlude among some most agreeable people"³⁸—in other words, not a smash hit. Time and again, reviewers referred to the musical's quaintness and modesty, as if *Flower Drum Song* were a synecdoche for the Chinese people according to Western stereotypes. At that time, critics were more concerned with *Flower Drum Song* as a manifestation of the stumbling Rodgers-Hammerstein operation than as a reflection of Asian identity onstage. Perhaps for this reason, Umeki and Suzuki carried the reviews by virtue of their convincing interpretations.³⁹ No critic of the time seems to have recognized that he was facing a largely Asian cast, although a feature article in the *New York Times* of 29 March 1959 pointed out the difficulties that casting director Edward Blum had in finding "Orientals." Blum himself noted with pride, "There is only one pure Occidental in the cast."⁴⁰

The apparent ambivalence of Rodgers and Hammerstein toward the subjects of *Flower Drum Song* undoubtedly fueled the mixed reviews. The team needed to secure success, so they fell back on formulas that should have worked whatever the ethnic content of a given story. Bereft of Lee's insights into Chinese American experiences, the musical took on an exotic veneer while remaining a product of Broadway—with the tacit approval of

Lee himself.⁴¹ Yet audiences were hearing and seeing Asian American voices and bodies on stage, in a world filled with people ostensibly of the same racial identity. As a result, we must ask whether *Flower Drum Song* was a site for the continued colonization of quaint oriental “others” or for the contestation of representational norms on Broadway. The stage of Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *Flower Drum Song* remains open to multiple readings, not least because it is inhabited by Americans, whatever their origins.⁴²

Like most of Rodgers and Hammerstein’s other successful musicals, *Flower Drum Song* soon found its way to Hollywood—in this case, to Universal Studios, which represented their break with Twentieth Century Fox, the studio that had produced such films as *The King and I* (1956) and *South Pacific* (1958). Continuity was provided by Joseph Fields, who reemerged at this point in the story’s life, as author of a screenplay based on the musical instead of the novel. Fields already had to his credit over fifty scripts for such major films as *My Sister Eileen* (1942), *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953), and *The Tunnel of Love* (1958). However, Fields had not yet worked on a major musical. Director Henry Koster, whose credits included, among others, *Harvey* (1950) and *The Robe* (1953), and producer Ross Hunter, whose credits included *My Man Godfrey* (1957) and *Pillow Talk* (1959), were likewise newcomers to large-screen musical comedy. For Lewis, Koster and Hunter were the primary reason for the film’s weaknesses.⁴³ In contrast, the film soundtrack’s conductor and music supervisor, Alfred Newman, had extensive experience with film musicals, including *Carousel* (1956), *The King and I* (1956), and *South Pacific* (1958).

Rodgers and Hammerstein created their own record label to release the Broadway cast recording of *Flower Drum Song*, which sold (only) three hundred thousand copies.⁴⁴ Universal produced a soundtrack album for the film in 1961; it was reissued in 2002 with a bonus track, Rosemary Clooney singing “Love Look Away.”⁴⁵ While a comparison of the soundtrack albums would take the present study too far afield, these recordings also reflect the “many lives” of *Flower Drum Song*.

Fields drew heavily on the script that he and Hammerstein had worked up for Broadway, although Fields reordered the songs and introduced characters at different points in the drama. Lewis and other critics of the 1961 film version seem not to have understood the screenwriter’s need to make revisions in order to accommodate the cinematic medium.⁴⁶ Indeed, Lewis’s discussion of the cinematic *Flower Drum Song* devotes considerable attention to explaining the “abysmal track record for Broadway hits being revised

beyond recognition on the huge soundstages out on Melrose Avenue or in Culver City.⁴⁷ Koster and Hunter apparently wanted to make the musical more relevant and accessible, the latter for people who had never seen the stage production. They intensified the generational conflict, employing orientalist musical motives to emblemize the older Chinese immigrants; in contrast, jazz and rock-and-roll styles represented the immigrants' assimilated Asian American children. In other words, the film version added contemporary touches to Rodgers's already jazzy score, including a beatnik setting for Wang Ta's "Like a God." In the film, the "Chop Suey" dance sequence progresses chronologically through square dancing, the waltz, swing, rock and roll, and jazz; at the end, however, the members of each couple bow to one another (and to tradition), while orientalist sounds accompany their gesture of generational reconciliation.

Contemporary reviewers of the film were not as opprobrious as Lewis. Even when they recognized its weaknesses, as did Bosley Crowther of the *New York Times*, they had something positive to say. Crowther wrote, "There's nothing subtle or fragile about this 'Flower Drum Song.' It is gaudy and gaggy [i.e., humorous] and quite melodic. Along those lines, it is quite a show."⁴⁸ Writing for the *New Yorker*, film critic Brendan Gill went as far as to deny any "loss in translation," noting that "the original work was preposterous and occasionally tuneful and pretty, and nothing has been lost in translating it to the screen: it's still preposterous and occasionally tuneful."⁴⁹ The anonymous reviewer for *Life* magazine made no comparative reference to the stage version, likewise implying that the film represents a direct transfer of the musical onto celluloid: "[After the titles,] the rest of the film, if not top Rodgers and Hammerstein, is gay, tuneful and well worth the admission."⁵⁰ For such critics, the film's authenticity vis-à-vis its Broadway origins did not matter as long as *Flower Drum Song* worked in its cinematic setting.

The film's transition from stage to screen required spelling out much that the musical left to the audience's imagination. This made for a sexier movie, as well as one more replete with lines and images that rely on stereotypes. However, for the negotiation of Asian American identity in the various public media, it would be an injustice to dismiss the film version out of hand. After all, in the absence of stage revivals, the film became the face and voice of *Flower Drum Song* to Americans for decades—even though the original cast recording was still in circulation in the 1960s.⁵¹ The cinematic version angered purist Broadway critics, however, and academics dismissed *Flow-*

er *Drum Song* as a film in general, on the basis of its orientalist discourse. Hwang and other Asian Americans watched it as a guilty pleasure.⁵² About the large-screen adaptation, Hwang himself observed, "I was pleasantly shocked: here were Asians who spoke without an accent,⁵³ in a love story between Asian men and Asian women."⁵⁴ Indeed, other than Juanita Hall, the film featured only Asian Americans in leading roles, a first for Hollywood and a decision that set the film apart from the 1958 Broadway production. Speaking at the 2002 San Francisco Asian American Film Festival, writer Joanna W. Lee explained why she liked the cinematic *Flower Drum Song*: it portrayed Asian Americans participating as "prominent and legitimate American citizens—a rare treat—progressive by even today's standards." She also admitted to having found the film "simply a lot of fun."⁵⁵

Despite occasional performances, the stage version of *Flower Drum Song* essentially lay dormant from the mid-1960s to the mid-1990s. In 1996, Hwang attended the Broadway revival of *The King and I*, and the creator of *M. Butterfly* was inspired to revive *Flower Drum Song*.⁵⁶ Recognizing its important role—as an object of both loathing and attraction—within the Asian American community, Hwang decided to rewrite the text while keeping the songs. As he worked, he aspired "to write the book that Hammerstein might have wanted to write had he been Asian American, to respect the tone and spirit of the original [musical] while adding [his] own perspective."⁵⁷ Hwang also wanted to make *Flower Drum Song* "relevant and moving to . . . contemporary audiences."⁵⁸ He received the blessings of the Rodgers and Hammerstein organization and of C. Y. Lee, whose "more bittersweet tone" Hwang hoped to recapture.⁵⁹

In Hwang's thorough rewrite,⁶⁰ *Flower Drum Song* became—in his words—"the story of a rundown theatre in San Francisco's Chinatown, whose patriarch dreams of performing Chinese opera despite an ever-shrinking audience. The story of this theater's transformation into a Western-style nightclub [becomes] a metaphor for assimilation."⁶¹ Along the way, Hwang streamlined the plot, dropping or modifying some characters and adding others: most significantly, he removed Sammy Fong and added the talent agent Rita Liang. With the insertion of the successful businesswoman Liang, the recasting of Mei-Li as an assertive political refugee (rather than a mail-order bride), and the creation of a more aggressive, sexually aware Wang Ta, Hwang tried to deflate the musical's stereotypical representations of Asian sexual identity.

At the same time, the 2002 *Flower Drum Song* revisical adds references

to the Cultural Revolution and to the darker side of the immigrant dream.⁶² Particularly poignant is a new scene at the docks (act 2, scene 6), in which emigrants explain why they want to return to China. “I am a physicist! And they made me scrub floors, like a coolie!”⁶³ In the previous scene (act 2, scene 5), Linda and Ta participate in the following exchange:

LINDA: I’m not in love with you . . .

TA: Because I’m Chinese? . . . Funny thing about your boyfriends: they all look alike. . . . How come you only date white guys? . . .

LINDA: For the same reason you always hated doing Chinese opera. We all wanna be Americans. . . . Aren’t you the guy that doesn’t date anyone who’s fresh off the boat?⁶⁴

Besides recapturing Lee’s “more bittersweet tone” about immigration, assimilation, and Chinese American identity, Hwang wanted to retain certain aspects of the original Broadway show. On the one hand, he parodied ethnic stereotypes from the musical, from the “Chop Suey Theater” circuit of San Francisco, and from American life in general.⁶⁵ In this sense, the *Flower Drum Song* revisical resembles the satire of blackface minstrelsy in Spike Lee’s 2000 film *Bamboozled*.⁶⁶ Hwang’s staging of “Chop Suey”—in which a host of scantily clad female dancers wear giant Chinese take-out boxes while male chorus members dance with huge chopsticks—is an obvious example of his attempt at disarming stereotypes through over-the-top exaggeration.⁶⁷

On the other hand, Hwang retained the lyrics and music from the 1958 musical, as arranged by orchestrator Don Sebesky (under the supervision of musical director David Chase). This decision remains one of the most puzzling aspects of Hwang’s production, and nowhere does he fully explain it, although his introduction to the revisical’s book does refer to his desire to “respect” the original (“the only Broadway musical ever produced about Asian Americans”) in a contemporary context.⁶⁸ What audiences remembered from the musical, however, were the songs, which—according to Lewis—were Rodgers and Hammerstein’s “passport to Broadway.”⁶⁹ Hwang’s insistence on keeping the show’s original songs forced him to create dramatic contexts and surrounding dialogue for each number—contexts and dialogue that drew on events and images simultaneously familiar to theatergoers and full of new life and narrative power. The resulting revisical certainly has its highly effective moments. Altogether stunning, for example, is the prologue’s revamped “A Hundred Million Miracles,” which transforms

Mei-Li's modest, sentimental song into a "defiant pro-Western anthem."⁷⁰ In 2002, Lea Salonga's vocal style, the insertion of new spoken text, and—above all—a brilliant *mise-en-scène* made this song work.

Hwang's revisical *Flower Drum Song* opened in Los Angeles at the Mark Taper Forum on 14 October 2001 (running through 13 January 2002) and on Broadway at the Virginia Theater on 17 October 2002 (running through 16 March 2003). The Los Angeles and New York companies were all Asian American, thereby carrying on the casting tradition established by Rodgers and Hammerstein. Again we see and hear Asian American bodies and voices on stage, this time delivering lines crafted by an Asian American. That Lea Salonga and Jose Llana, the show's two stars, were Philippine Americans seemed not to bother the director, the audience, or the reviewers.⁷¹ Instead, after the show received rave reviews in Los Angeles,⁷² the Broadway critics—who were heavily invested in the Rodgers and Hammerstein enterprise—rejected Hwang's musical as "straining to look modern while riddled by its own . . . flimsy stereotypes and weighted down by the uneasy interface of old songs and new ideas."⁷³ Audiences did not find enough of either the old or the new to justify attending, so the "revisical" folded after only 169 performances. Many are the possible reasons for the show's failure to maintain itself on Broadway in 2002, not least being the post-9/11 mood of the country.⁷⁴ Lee himself felt that Hwang had mistakenly slowed down the second act for the New York version by adding dialogue.⁷⁵ Still, Hwang's *Flower Drum Song* deserves more than the regional (and largely West Coast) niche market it has found since the Broadway run.⁷⁶ The recent wave of interest in Asian American studies not only has drawn attention to Hwang's revisical but has led to a reassessment of Lee's novel (and other works).⁷⁷

With this return to and valorization of Lee's novel, the many lives of *Flower Drum Song* have come full circle. Our exploration here has revealed how difficult it is to compare the four versions with one another. We could even construct a *Flower Drum Song* teleology, since each adaptation, drawing on what came before, required modification to accommodate its own mode of presentation. Moreover, because the book, the musical (rather than the revisical), and the film all date from a single five-year period, it might not be possible to assess *Flower Drum Song's* progress through subsequent decades or audience generations. In this regard, Hwang's revisical represents a major break, resulting from forty years of developments in social and cultural history. As commentaries have shown, the original narrative's individual manifestations have all found audiences (and detractors),⁷⁸ even though none of

the presentations has attained the status of an unqualified success—an interesting issue in and of itself.

We have seen how, in its various manifestations, *Flower Drum Song* has served different cultural functions that have subverted traditional markers of authenticity and identity formation. Who would have guessed that Asian Americans would not only find entertainment in but also experience some degree of inspiration from the film version, which Lewis and others have labeled as “inauthentic”; that the three stage/screen versions would transcend historical casting principles by featuring predominantly (if not exclusively) Asian American performers; or that Lee’s debut novel would provide meaningful characters and human situations that would spark the imaginations of notable playwrights, stage and film producers, and actors/actresses for over fifty years and that would speak to generations of readers, theater audiences, and cinemagoers? It is no wonder that *Flower Drum Song* has occupied an important position in the American cultural landscape of the late twentieth century and, as such, merits academic recognition. Its several iterations may not reveal a hundred million miracles, but there are enough beauties and points of sociological and cultural interest to please anyone who approaches it with an open mind and open ears.⁷⁹

Notes

1. This uniqueness was recognized by the Library of Congress in 2008, when it added *Flower Drum Song* to the National Film Registry, as “culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant” (their own terms). Library of Congress, *National Film Board: Film Registry*, at <https://www.loc.gov/programs/national-film-preservation-board/film-registry/> (accessed 29 July 2016).

2. Prince’s production opened in Toronto in 1993 and then on Broadway in October 1994, running for 947 performances. The director focused attention on aspects of racial inequality in the musical, which drew criticism in Toronto but earned praise from the New York press. Regarding the production and the controversy, see Foster Hirsch, *Harold Prince and the American Musical Theatre* (New York: Applause Theatre and Cinema, 2005), 191–204.

3. The originating novel is called *The Flower Drum Song*, but since the two musical versions and the film use the title *Flower Drum Song*, the present study will likewise omit the definite article outside of direct references to the novel.

4. The term *revisical* refers to a musical that has undergone significant revision. It seems to be used in the literature with particular reference to David Henry Hwang’s 2002 revision of *Flower Drum Song*.

5. A “flower drum song” is a traditional Chinese lyrical song that is accompanied by a hand drum. Known as *Fengyang huagu*, flower drum songs “originated in Anhui province and spread into Shandong and other areas” (Alan R. Thrasher, “China. I. Introduction: Historical, Regional, and Study Perspectives. 1. Han Chinese Regions and Genres. (i). Central Plain,” *Grove Music Online* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), accessed December 2010. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>)

6. In *Flower Drum Songs: The Story of Two Musicals* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2006), David H. Lewis provides a detailed comparison of the two versions of the musical, while also referencing the original novel and the film version. Lewis is clearly biased against the film version and Hwang’s revision, which leads to questionable interpretations and conclusions. Nevertheless, his work represents the best source of information for details about the musical versions.

7. Lewis, *Flower Drum Songs*, 16

8. See *ibid.*, 85.

9. A sympathetic reading of the film version of *Flower Drum Song* can be found in Karla Rae Fuller and Tom Gunning, *Hollywood Goes Oriental: CaucAsian Performance in American Film* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2010), 193–200.

10. See David Henry Hwang, introduction to *Flower Drum Song*, by Richard Rodgers, Oscar Hammerstein II, and David Henry Hwang (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2003), xi. Hwang also discusses his experiences in obtaining permission from author Lee.

11. Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945–1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 229.

12. Barred from returning to China because of Mao’s consolidation of control, Lee became a naturalized American citizen in 1949. Detailed biographical information about Lee is available in Andrew Shin’s interview with Lee entitled “Forty Percent Is Luck’: An Interview with C. Y. (Chin Yang) Lee,” *MELUS* 29, no. 2 (2004): 77–104.

13. Ronald Riddle’s description of the cultural practices of San Francisco’s Chinese community at the time supports the characterizations and depictions in Lee’s book. See the chapter “The Postwar Years” in Riddle, *Flying Dragons, Flowing Streams: Music in the Life of San Francisco’s Chinese* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1983), 164–73.

14. Cited in Lewis, *Flower Drum Songs*, 28.

15. For example, in *The Chinese Americans*, rev. ed. (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2003), 219, Benson Fong complains about Lee’s “success narrative” for Chinese Americans.

16. Regarding assimilation in the postwar era, see, above all, Clifford Barr’s “Community, Individualism, and the Postwar Musical as a Model of Cultural Assimilation” (PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1997), which specifically addresses Lee’s novel on pp. 271–72.

17. The US Chinese Exclusion Act dates from 1882 and was followed in the twentieth century by a series of congressional acts that increasingly limited Asian immigration. Not until the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 could all Asians emigrate to the United States. See Klein, *Cold War Orientalism*, 224–25.

18. According to US Census statistics, the ratio of Chinese American men to women actually improved over the course of the twentieth century, from 19:1 in 1900 to about 2:1 in 1950, when the census of Chinese Americans recorded 77,008 males and 46,021 females. See “Leaving China and the Journey across the Pacific,” *Chinese American Women: A History of Resilience and Resistance*, National Women’s History Museum, 2008, <http://www.nwhm.org/online-exhibits/chinese/2.html> (accessed December 2010).

19. C. Y. Lee, *The Flower Drum Song* (New York: Penguin, 2002), 117–18.

20. Regarding these stereotypes, see, above all, Yen Le Espiritu, *Asian American Women and Men: Labor, Laws, and Love* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008); Celine Parreñas Shimizu, *The Hypersexuality of Race: Performing Asian/American Women on Screen and Scene* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).

21. Lewis, *Flower Drum Songs*, 28–29.

22. Lewis Gannett, review of *The Flower Drum Song*, by C. Y. Lee, *New York Herald Tribune Book Review*, 2 June 1959, 1, 3.

23. See Edward Skillkin Jr., review of *Father and Glorious Descendent*, by Pardee Lowe, *Commonweal* 38, no. 4 (1943): 19.

24. David Henry Hwang, introduction to Lee, *Flower Drum Song*, xv.

25. About Fields, see Klein, *Cold War Orientalism*, 230.

26. Lee’s correspondence with Rodgers and Hammerstein is preserved, along with other materials relevant to his *Flower Drum Song*, in the C. Y. Lee Collection of the Howard Gottlieb Archival Research Center, Boston University.

27. *Oklahoma!* (1943) also features an “ethnic” character, the Persian Ali Hakim, who assimilates into a community on the American Western frontier.

28. Celia Smith and Glenn Litton, *Musical Comedy in America* (New York: Theatre Arts, 1981), 211.

29. Lewis, *Flower Drum Songs*, 33–34.

30. The manuscript musical materials for *Flower Drum Song* as a musical—including a full score and Rodgers’s sketches for various numbers—can be found in the Richard Rodgers Collection, Library of Congress.

31. Quoted in Robert Berry White, “Back in Lights,” *Newsweek*, 1 December 1958, 53.

32. Bart, “Postwar Musical,” 276.

33. A valuable resource concerning the historical consumption of Asian stereotypes on stage is Esther Kim Lee, *A History of Asian American Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

34. Ethan Morrdan, *Rodgers and Hammerstein* (New York: Abradale, 1992), 191.

35. Smith and Litton, *Musical Comedy in America*, 211.

36. Oscar Hammerstein II and Joseph Fields, *Flower Drum Song: A Musical Play* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1959), 64. The reference to "Little Rock" was not coincidental in the context of the song's melting-pot message. In 1957, American racial politics and policy of integration came to the forefront through the notorious case of the Little Rock Nine, in which nine African American students were initially prevented from entering Little Rock Central High School by the Arkansas National Guard. The intervention of President Eisenhower was required to enable their attendance.

37. Curiously, Lewis, Barr, and Hwang do not explore the meanings of the flower drum, despite its significance for the various *Flower Drum Song* versions. Even Lee's novel seems to take it for granted that readers will be familiar with the instrument and its tradition.

38. Brooks Atkinson, "Theatre: Oriental Musical; *Flower Drum Song* Opens at St. James," *New York Times*, 2 December 1958, 44.

39. Most memorable was the show's coverage in *Time*, which featured a photograph of Suzuki and Umeki on its cover. The accompanying review ("Broadway: The Girls on Grant Avenue," *Time*, 22 December 1958, 43–44) has been overshadowed by that iconic photograph. About the cover image, see Lee, *History of Asian American Theatre*, 21.

40. McCandlish Phillips, "Four Examples of the Orient's Inscrutable Influence on Broadway," *New York Times*, 29 March 1959, XI. Phillips's definition of "pure Occidental" must have been fairly broad, for the 1958 cast included Ed Kenney as Wang Ta and Larry Blyden as Sammy Fong, not to mention African American actress-singer Juanita Hall as Madame Liang (Hall also played Bloody Mary in *South Pacific*). That neither Umeki nor Suzuki was of Chinese descent seems to have had no impact at all on critics and audiences.

41. Lewis (*Flower Drum Songs*, 29) noted, "C.Y. Lee was observed to have stood amiably by, never once daring to question any of the decisions being made about how his [novel] should be turned into a stage musical."

42. An interesting reading of Rodgers and Hammerstein that penetrates surface essentialism is Jim Lovensheimer's *South Pacific: Paradise Rewritten* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

43. Lewis, *Flower Drum Songs*, 105–9.

44. See Russell Sanjek, *American Popular Music and Its Business: The First Four Hundred Years*, vol. 3, *From 1900 to 1984* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 352.

45. The reissue occurred on the occasion of Hwang's revisical, which retained Rodgers and Hammerstein's original musical numbers.

46. For example, Lewis called his brief chapter about the film "Hollywood Suey," indicting Fields for "coarsen[ing] the subtler Asian charms of the original [musical]"

and for morphing the visual elements into “a kind of orientalist Avon-calling fashion show for the masses of middle American [sic]” (*Flower Drum Songs*, 101–2).

47. *Ibid.*, 103.

48. Bosley Crowther, “*Flower Drum Song* Opens,” *New York Times*, 10 November 1961, 40.

49. Brendan Gill, “The Current Cinema,” *New Yorker*, 18 November 1961, 207.

50. “Life Guide,” *Life*, 24 November 1961, 27.

51. The public probably had a choice between the musical and film soundtracks when purchasing a recording of *Flower Drum Song* at their local record shop.

52. Jeffrey Nishimura admits, “The musical has become . . . a guilty pleasure for Asian Americans and admired for its ‘honorable’ attempt at racial equality on Broadway” (“Play(ing) in the Pear Garden: Theater and the Markings of the Asian American Identity,” *Asian American Literature: Discourses and Pedagogies* 1 [2010]: 29).

53. Hwang seems to have misremembered at this point, since even (or especially) African American Juanita Hall adopted a heavy faux Chinese accent. Also, in the film, Linda Low and Chao did not sing their own parts: Low’s singing voice was dubbed by noted backup singer B. J. Baker, and Chao’s “Love, Look Away” was lip-synched by Marilyn Horne.

54. Hwang, introduction to Lee, *Flower Drum Song*, xiv.

55. Cited in Lewis, *Flower Drum Songs*, 111.

56. Hwang recalls having seen the film as “a college student in the late 1970s” and dismissing it at the time as “inauthentic” (introduction to Rodgers, Hammerstein, and Hwang, *Flower Drum Song*, x).

57. *Ibid.*, xi.

58. *Ibid.* In an interview with Rebecca Lang, Hwang stated that his “hope was to create a show that felt like a Rodgers and Hammerstein musical and felt like a show from the ‘50s and also kind of reflected a more modern sensibility” [Lang, “*Flower Drum Song* Enters the New Millennium,” *Minnesota Daily*, 2 June 2009, <http://www.mndaily.com/2009/06/02/%E2%80%9Cflower-drum-song%E2%80%9D-enters-new-millennium#> (accessed December 2010).]

59. Hwang, introduction to Rodgers, Hammerstein, and Hwang, *Flower Drum Song*, xi. See also Shin, “Forty Percent Is Luck,” 80.

60. Hwang remarked to Lang, “There’s probably not a line left from the original script” (“*Flower Drum Song* Enters the New Millennium”).

61. Hwang, introduction to Rodgers, Hammerstein, and Hwang, *Flower Drum Song*, xii.

62. See Karen Wada, afterword to Rodgers, Hammerstein, and Hwang, *Flower Drum Song*, 110.

63. Rodgers, Hammerstein, and Hwang, *Flower Drum Song*, 88.

64. *Ibid.*, 86.

65. Regarding this vaudeville tradition in Asian American theater, see Misha Berson and Randy Gener, "Asian American Theatre," in *The Cambridge Guide to American Theatre*, ed. Don B. Wilmet, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 83–85.

66. See James Deaville, "The Minstrel Show in the 21st Century," *Bulletin of the Society for American Music* 29, no. 2 (2003): 35–36.

67. In his stage directions for act 2, scene 1, Hwang states, "The theatre now features neon, smoke and over-the-top 'Oriental' motifs" (Rodgers, Hammerstein, and Hwang, *Flower Drum Song*, 65).

68. Hwang, introduction to Rodgers, Hammerstein, and Hwang, *Flower Drum Song*, xi.

69. Lewis, *Flower Drum Songs*, 150.

70. *Ibid.*, 158.

71. The tradition of "cross-casting" Asians has enjoyed a long run on American stage and in Hollywood. See, for example, Jun Xing, *Asian America through the Lens: History, Representation, and Identity* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira/Rowman & Littlefield, 1998); Karen Shimakawa, *National Abjection: The Asian American Body Onstage* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002); *Screening Asian Americans*, ed. Peter X. Feng (Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002).

72. The Los Angeles performances received favorable reviews in the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Hollywood Reporter*, *Backstage West*, *L.A. Weekly*, the *Daily News*, and *Entertainment Weekly* (among other periodicals). Lewis reprinted brief excerpts from the reviews (*Flower Drum Songs*, 169).

73. Lewis, *Flower Drum Songs*, 190.

74. Wada (afterword to Rodgers, Hammerstein, and Hwang, *Flower Drum Song*, 114) also blamed the short run on the sluggish economy, the unusually cold weather, and the mixed *New York Times* review.

75. See Shin, "Forty Percent Is Luck," 81–82.

76. Performances have taken place in, among other cities, Seattle (October 2003), Oakland (September 2004), San Jose/San Francisco (October–November, 2008), and Minneapolis (June–July 2009).

77. Although Lee still seems "not ready" for monograph treatment, his work figures prominently in the literature that addresses broader issues of representation among Asian Americans, including studies by Fong, Klein, Esther Kim Lee, Nishamura, and Shimizu identified above.

78. Today, the novel, musical, film, and revisical of *Flower Drum Song* are all hypothetically available or accessible—at least, if the revisical is playing in a local theater.

79. For their kind assistance with this article, I wish to thank Eric Hung (Westminster Choir College of Rider University), Hon-Lun Yang (Hong Kong Baptist University), and Michael Saffle (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University).

Deterritorializing Spirituality

Intercultural Encounters in *Iron Road*

Mary Ingraham

True goodness / is like water. / Water is good / for everything. / It doesn't
compete.

It goes right / to the low loathsome places, / and so finds the Way.

URSULA LE GUIN¹

Media response following the premiere of CHAN Ka Nin's and Mark Brownell's opera *Iron Road* in April 2001 proclaimed it the epitome of Canadian contemporary society. Music critic William Littler of the *Toronto Star* applauded *Iron Road* as "the archetypal opera for the multicultural Canada of today,"² while John Coulbourn of the *Toronto Sun* described it as "our story."³ Chan and Brownell did not set out to write a quintessentially Canadian opera but, rather, were inspired by unfamiliar stories of early Chinese immigrants and their silencing in historical accounts of the Canadian West.

The famous publicity photo of the Last Spike, in which Donald A. Smith is surrounded by politicians and stockholders, gave Chan and Brownell the idea for an operatic scenario in which the thousands of Chinese who worked on the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) are reinstated into a historical account. The central narrative of a young woman who dresses as a man and follows her father to the New World evolved from their discovery of the social and economic realities that discouraged Chinese women from emigrating to Canada, thereby unsettling families on both sides of the Pacific. While researching these historical events, Chan came across a newspaper account of this reality from 1860s Victoria, British Columbia, that describes the arrival of 265 Chinese passengers aboard a Norwegian ship, of which only one was female.⁴ In engaging with these two historical events relating

to the immigration of Chinese workers in Western Canada—the one iconic but silent (a photograph), the other simply quieted in historical accounts (immigration data regarding gender)—*Iron Road* turns the photographer's image upside down, recognizing the workers themselves and revealing the tensions of contemporary intercultural encounters.

Deconstructing the interplay of narrative and musical elements in *Iron Road* encourages greater understanding of the intercultural encounters of these communities over a century ago. However, the opera also communicates a contemporary perspective on Canadian interculturality (beyond Littler's "multicultural Canada"), because of the immediacy and mediating properties of both Chinese cultural traditions and the Western operatic framework engaged for the work. Theatrical works that seek to represent multiple cultural perspectives are performative in their attempts to enact difference through textual and musical devices and to the extent that staged, dramatic genres such as opera are ritualistic, they also may be examined for the manner in which they express such intercultural encounters.

Richard Schechner's description of intercultural theater (in terms of performance theory) as a cross-cultural expression in which differing cultural practices are observable, although often modified to create new forms,⁵ allows us to consider the role of ritual as an aspect of cultural expression in the analysis of an opera such as *Iron Road*. Schechner's perspective on rituals takes four factors into account:

1. Structures—what rituals look and sound like, how they are performed, how they use space, and who performs them
2. Functions—what rituals accomplish for individuals, groups, and cultures
3. Processes—the underlying dynamic driving rituals; how rituals enact and bring about change
4. Experiences—what it is like to be "in" a ritual.⁶

Material (or tangible) expressions of spirituality in the text and music of *Iron Road* overlap with elements of individual and community performativity, thereby creating opportunities for contemporary audiences in particular to connect to profound spiritual experiences. In the pages that follow, I examine *Iron Road* as a consciously constructed hybrid of cultural expression that maintains distinct individual dramatic voices while engaging in cultural

negotiations of structure, function, process, and experience of ritual and ritualized performance within a Western opera.

The place of this spiritual hybridity in *Iron Road* is a passageway between cultures that may be described as a threshold, a bridge, a gate, a courtyard, and so on. I employ the term *passage* here to delineate the opportunities for movement through such a transitional space: neither wholly inside nor wholly outside a given frame (neither here nor there), but perhaps a little of both, a space that eschews directional or hierarchical presence, an entrance, a crossing, and the place of coming as well as going. Our experience of the place of encounter *Iron Road* is mostly here and now (contemporary), although the story describes a then and there (historical, albeit within a fictional narrative), suggesting a timeless present in the intersection of Old World and New World values.

I further characterize this passage as a space of spirituality. My use of the term *spiritual* warrants explanation, as it neither assumes nor precludes religion and ritual practices. Typologies of this term include its use to particularize a person or thing (an embodied feature; e.g., the spirituality of religious icons), a quality (“being” spiritual; i.e., not attached to material interests), or a state of being (a volatile essence; e.g., God’s spirituality). Multiple expressions of spirituality occur in *Iron Road*, ranging from the perceivable experience of ritual practices to the intangible, transformative experiences of performativity in the expression of beliefs through the utterance of rituals as well as codified behaviors. The opera’s spirituality is deterritorialized because of a perceived ambiguity within intercultural encounters and the fluidity of relationships and experiences that take place within the place and space of cultural exchange.

Spiritual encounters in *Iron Road* depict movement across Chinese and Canadian cultural traditions in which differing but deeply felt personal beliefs and spiritual practices coexist. They interact and define (or redefine) themselves, unfixing the translation of one identity, opening to another in a dynamic process that here engages with Chinese ritual and religious practices from Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism, as well as popular cosmologies; with intertextual and intermusical connections of Chinese and Western operatic traditions; and with language, voicings, and other forms of cultural expression. In this essay, I examine points of specific intercultural exchange in the opera, in an attempt to expose the potential for meaning in these linguistic, narrative, and musical domains.

SCENIC BREAKDOWN

The scenes of *Iron Road* break down as follows:

Act 1

Scene 1. Prologue: Old World

Scene 2. The Ship

Scene 3. The Iron Road

Scene 4. The Mountain

Scene 5. The Stream

Scene 6. The Camp

Orchestral Interlude

Act 2

Scene 1. Prologue: The Dream

Scene 2. The Fight

Scene 3. Ah Lum and Ah Charn

Scene 4. The Tunnel Mouth

Scene 5. The Cave

Scene 6. Iron Dragon

Scene 7. Epilogue

PLOT SYNOPSIS

Iron Road relates a fictional story of the building of the Canadian National Railway through the eyes of a young Chinese girl, Lai Gwan, who travels from southern China's Guangdong Province to Western Canada in the 1880s. The narrative begins with Lai Gwan attending to Ama, her dying mother. Ama urges Lai Gwan to honor her traditions and her father, (Manli), who left the family several years before to find his fortune in the New World. Following Ama's death in act 1, scene 1, Lai Gwan boards a ship bound for Canada (act 1, scene 2), to find her father, leading her on a journey in which she confronts her spiritual and cultural beliefs in a search for identity in a foreign country. Disguised as a young man, she joins the railway workers (act 1, scene 3) and quickly attracts the attention of both the Chi-

nese bookman Manli (he is only revealed to her as her father in act 1, scene 6) and his boss, the English Canadian railway foreman Nichol (to whom she is revealed as a woman in act I, scene 4).

Lai Gwan's fantasy of a better life in the New World is challenged by the realities of dangerous working and living conditions and the inequities of race and culture faced by an immigrant laborer (act 1, scene 5). The traditional Chinese values ingrained in her by Ama clash with the awakening of romantic feelings for Nichol, in an evocative dream sequence at the start of act 2. Turning her back on these values, Lai Gwan challenges her father's authority (act 2, scene 2) and professes her love to Nichol (act 2, scene 4), metaphorically stepping into the New World culture that her mother most feared. Devastated at learning of his wife's death, Manli chooses to enter a railway tunnel under construction and set the next charge (act 2, scene 3). Nichol, following Lai Gwan into the explosion that follows (act 2, scene 4), dies in Lai Gwan's embrace (act 2, scene 5), but Manli survives. The railway completed, the Chinese workers are pushed out of the way for the famous photo of the Last Spike (act 2, scene 6). In the final scene (act 2, scene 7), Lai Gwan achieves spiritual fulfillment and resolves the discrepancies between her Eastern beliefs and her Western inclinations, by reconciling with her father and performing the rituals of burial for the Chinese workers (act 2, scene 7).

CHINESE COSMOLOGIES

The opening and closing scenes of *Iron Road* are steeped in Buddhist ritual. In act 1, scene 1, and act 2, scene 7, village women recite a funeral chant in homage to the Buddha and a prayer of supplication to the Goddess of Mercy—first in the small, incense-laden hut where Lai Gwan attends to her dying mother, then again in the epilogue, when Lai Gwan and her father undertake restitution for their dead coworkers by gathering up their corporeal remains and performing a ritual ceremony of summoning and releasing of spirits. The opening text in Chan's score (labeled simply as "Buddhist chant"), "Namo Amitufo" (written phonetically in the score as "narm more or nay tor fu"), meaning "Infinite light, infinite life, infinite wisdom," is a familiar greeting to the Buddha and a common meditation in most Buddhist traditions.⁷ Repeatedly reciting the Buddha's name (often done in shifts) is believed to assist humans in retaining pure mindfulness throughout the various stages of death.

While these moments in *Iron Road* provide opportunities for positive, authentic cultural practice, the spirituality of the central character, Lai Gwan, is challenged at other points in the narrative when spiritual traditions are not observed, such as when dead coworkers are abandoned in the pursuit of settler progress, without the observation of fitting ceremonial rites and for reasons of either ignorance or fear of punishment from an intolerant, Caucasian superior as occurs in act 1, scene 5. Abandoning her beliefs is simply not an option for Lai Gwan for whom the spirit of a dead coworker improperly buried is presumed to “roam in agony, unable to return to his ancestors.”⁸ At this point, prevented by the English foreman Nichol from attending to those who have died, Lai Gwan manages only to pause and “speaks a private prayer of invocation.”⁹

Confucian Social Practices

Central to Confucian beliefs is the virtue of familial relationships. In *Iron Road*, Ama upholds her primary role in the family by remaining loyal to her long-absent husband and by teaching her daughter Lai Gwan both a moral obligation to family and a responsibility to her ancestors and traditions. Lai Gwan crosses the threshold of Confucian filiality toward New World values at several points in the drama: textually in the opening scene, when she insists on speaking English, by dressing as a boy and leaving home to follow her father to the New World in act 1, scene 2, and during the chaotic cross-cultural encounter in the prologue to act 2 (scene 1, “The Dream”), in which Ama (in spirit) and the chorus speak to Lai Gwan of her responsibilities to ancestors and warn her of the perils of having romantic feelings for the English Canadian Nichol. This threshold is underscored musically in the overlapping of otherwise distinct melodic characters and harmonic centers created through the combination of pentatonic melodies and tonal and atonal harmonies. Despite her death early in the opera, Ama continues to figure into Lai Gwan’s experiences at important points in the drama in order to remind her of responsibilities, such as in the prologue scene just described and in the epilogue (act 2, scene 7), when Lai Gwan and Manli return to honor their dead coworkers. Ama’s enduring presence in text and music reminds Lai Gwan (as well as the audience, as witness to the events) of the importance of the Confucian principles of respect for the dead and for

one's ancestors, as well as of the fundamental belief in the transformation of spirits from their human form.

Popular Cosmologies: The Five Elements

References to the five elements of Taoist cosmology (wood, water, fire, metal, and earth) are infused into the text and music of *Iron Road*. Brownell and Chan specifically fashioned Ama as wood, Lai Gwan as water, and Manli as fire,¹⁰ while Lai Gwan's interactions with railway foreman Nichol suggest a reference to metal. Representative text excerpts that illustrate these elements appear below as quotations 1–4. English translations of text that appear in the libretto in phoneticized Cantonese are indicated by parentheses in these quotations; stage directions are italicized.

Quotation 1: Ama as wood. Excerpt from act 1, scene 1:
prologue, "Old World"

We must follow our traditions.
Without our tradition, we're adrift.
We must wait for your father.) *And, drawing Lai Gwan to her, sings:*
(Let me hold you, child.
My arms are weak
But I can still cradle my daughter.)

Quotation 2: Lai Gwan as water. Excerpt from act 1,
scene 5: "The Stream"

Cool mountain water
Wash, bless, clear, calm
Cool mountain water
Hands, face, fingers, flesh
Cool mountain water
Flowing through my fingers
Cool mountain water
Flowing to the sea

Watching my fears float away
 I'm floating on cool mountain water
 I'm pulled by a river
 Tumbled to a new shore.

Quotation 3: Manli as fire. Excerpt from act 1, scene 4: "The Mountain"

I'm the fire
 That starts from a little spark
 And grows to inspiring flame
 My light lets me see
 The answer spread out before me!

Quotation 4: Nichol as metal. Excerpt from act 1, scene 3: "The Iron Road"

My name is Nichol
 Curtain of rock, you've met your match
 Wall of stone, I am harder than you
 Harder than Hell, I will smash you! *Uses nitro to blast through*

In performance, choreography supported the discreet representations of these five elements, although directions for this aspect of the production are not included in either the score or the libretto. In particular, dance featured prominently in the prologue to act 2 previously mentioned, in which Lai Gwan dreams of—and dancers enact—the five elements. Earth is the great equalizer in this system, revealing the balance of all elements, and is experienced in *Iron Road* by spirituality actualized through the enactment of traditional practices. Overt references to the five elements are paralleled throughout the narrative and in the use of specific musical gestures and instrumental timbres as each character is shown to nourish or influence another, and their interactions in the drama are portrayed as either complimentary or contentious.

As water, Lai Gwan's character proves the most flexible in her interactions with other characters: water nourishes and destroys wood (Ama), threatens and is threatened by fire (Manli; see quotation 5), cools and warms metal

(Nichol; see quotation 6), and sustains and consumes earth. As wood, Ama provides fuel for the fire of the family: she supports herself in balance with the spirituality of the earth, and she is transformed when fed by water. But wood may also be destroyed by metal, which at least partially explains Ama's perceived threat of Nichol's relationship with Lai Gwan. As fire, Manli sputters with water, is fed by wood, and is capable of destroying metal. In several instances throughout the opera, word imagery highlights the elemental reactions between characters; at other times, the specific words themselves are subverted, while the dialogue carries the tension of their interaction. Quotation 5 below represents the latter cases, quotation 6 the former.

Quotation 5: Fire (Manli) threatened by water (Lai Gwan). Excerpt from act I, scene 4: "The Mountain"

BOOKMAN: Kid. A word of advice.
You're in the New World now.

Burn the past
And start a new future!

LAI GWAN: . . . one dollar a day?

BOOKMAN: Better than Guang Dong [*sic*] pay

LAI GWAN: What's your take?

BOOKMAN: I take what I can.

LAI GWAN: Stolen from . . .

BOOKMAN: I work harder than you!

LAI GWAN: I doubt that is true.

BOOKMAN: I am a self made man.

LAI GWAN: When do we get paid?

BOOKMAN: So many questions . . .

Lai Gwan shouts louder in Cantonese

LAI GWAN: (When do we get paid?)

CHORUS: (When do we get paid?)

BOOKMAN: Too many questions!

NICHOL: What's the delay?

BOOKMAN: This one's trouble boss.

NICHOL: You got a problem, Chinaman?

LAI GWAN: Just asking questions.

NICHOL: You speak English good.

LAI GWAN: Better than you.

Quotation 6: Metal (Nichol) reacts to water (Lai Gwan). Excerpt from act I, scene 5: “The Stream”

NICHOL: She comes like the tide
 My strong will wears down
 Rolled by her waves
 Old life floats away
 Old ways break apart
 Revealing a new life.

INTERTEXTUAL AND INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTERS

The opening chant at Ama’s deathbed in act I, scene I (described above), which intones an homage to Amitabha Buddha in the alto voices and the words “Guan Shi Yin Pusa” (a chant to invoke the compassion of Guanyin, the Goddess of Mercy) in the sopranos, is punctuated by an extra-large tam-tam at the beginning and the sounds of handbells at irregular intervals throughout, the former an example of the traditional use of percussive instruments to delineate form in Chinese opera and the latter a feature of Buddhist funeral rites. The four-note rhythmic temple block that announces the start of the “Guan Shi Yin Pusa” chant is a further example of the Chinese operatic tradition in which a percussive instrument is used to mimic the monotone/monorhythm of chant. While observing these Chinese practices in text, instrumentation, and performance, Chan’s presentation in this opening scene also signals the complexity of future intercultural encounters: by combining these two chants and engaging with the timbral effects of two distinct musical practices, he is able to establish a level of harmonic tension and rhythmic variation across the “melodies” that underscores their overlapping voices and pitch levels in a manner that might be heard as more Western than Eastern.

At the beginning of the opera, the nuclear family is introduced musically as well as textually, through instrumental associations—some used iconically in connection with individual characters in the drama, others used in a manner more idiomatic of Chinese opera, as in the tam-tam and temple block examples noted above. Lai Gwan is associated with the *guzheng* and *dizi*, Ama with the *erhu*, and Manli (although physically ab-

sent in this scene) with the *yangqin*. Lai Gwan enters into the opening scene with a *guzheng* solo in measure 17; the *guzheng* will follow her interactions with her mother and father at important points in the drama.¹¹ At measure 34, she switches to English and to talk of her father and the New World (see quotation 7), and Chan here adds the *dizi* (which will be connected to Lai Gwan later, in the New World, and ultimately replaced with a flute) and the *yangqin*, which I associate with Manli's Old World persona. The Chinese melodic orchestra is used exclusively in this scene and is combined with percussion instruments at important structural moments. For example, in measures 31–32, the wood block and bend-up gong mark the entrance of the *erhu* (Ama's instrumental character) and the change from stylized speech to sung melody. Ama's emphatic reminder to Lai Gwan to uphold her family and spiritual obligations is supported by the instruments of mother and father—*erhu* and *yangqin*—together in measures 41–42 (see example 1).

Quotation 7. Excerpt from act 1, scene 1: prologue, "Old World"

AMA: Ai-ya-ya

LAI GWAN: (Quit fussing)

AMA: (Lai Gwan, I am so afraid for you.)

LAI GWAN: (It's alright, Ama.)

AMA: (My daughter, what will you do when I am gone?)

LAI GWAN: (Oh, you're leaving me?)

AMA: (Don't be smart. / You know what I mean.)

LAI GWAN: (Ama, you won't die. / You're a tough old boot.)

AMA: (Such a tongue.)

LAI GWAN: This tongue speaks English now. / That's our ticket to the new world. / It's a new world, Ama.

AMA: (No, no, no. / We must follow our traditions. / Without our traditions, we're adrift. / We must wait for your father.)

Iron Road's instrumental associations in these few measures further underscore future musical entanglements in the narrative, and although we meet Manli in absentia in this scene, he is resolutely announced in act 1, scene 4, as representative of fire and accompanied by a Western instrument, the clarinet. However, for his first encounter with Lai Gwan in the New World, in act 1, scene 4 (where neither is aware of their family connection),

Solennemente ♩ = 60

[Dizi 8va to m.38]

Lai Gwan *mp* Such a tongue.) This tongue speaks Engli- ish now That's our tick- et to the

Ama 牙 尖 嘴 利
gnar jeem juerr lay

[Erhu] [Guzheng to m.38]

[*mf*] [Yangqin to m.37] *p*

36 new world It's a new world, A - ma. *mf*

文 也 也
Ai - ya - ya

[Guzheng] [Erhu to m.44]

[Yangqin] *mf*

39 不 得 啊 自 幼 放 得 受 教 訓 沒
No, No, no, We must fol - low our trad - i - tions With -
but dug ah jeer yout gar cheeun sout gari fun mood

[Erhu] [Yangqin to m.44] *p*

43 有 風 俗 到 處 飄
out trad - i - tion we're a - drift
yout f(own) joke doe cheeu peel

[Erhu] [Yangqin]

Example 1: Excerpt from *Iron Road*, act 1, prologue: “Old World,” measures 33–44

Manli's association with the *yangqin* is juxtaposed with Lai Gwan's *guzheng* and *dizi*. Lai Gwan begins her musical and cultural journey on stage with this dialogue. The interaction between her and Manli, excerpted in the text of quotation 5 and the music of example 2, exhibits textual and musical characteristics consistent with their Taoist elements. Threatened by water, fire sputters and is defeated, illustrated here as an unsatisfactory communication and distinct, alternating voices in the musical dialogue. Chan separates Manli from Lai Gwan instrumentally in this instance, for while Lai Gwan presses him for fair treatment (honor) and truth, the *guzheng* is combined with the *erhu* (Ama's "voice"); Manli's responses are accompanied by the *yangqin*.

As water, Lai Gwan often has a fluid musical representation (see the text of quotation 2 and the accompanying musical excerpts shown in example 3). The opening measures of act 1's fifth scene ("The Stream") embody the water designation in a short flute figure: here a Western instrument is heard as appropriating the Chinese *dizi*. The *guzheng* takes over at the beginning of measure 3, and Lai Gwan continues her solo journey with an undulating string accompaniment beginning in measure 13 and clear textual evolution along her path.

Lai Gwan continues to push Manli for fair treatment of the Chinese workers. Yet, in her next interface with the bookman (act 1, scene 6), she is silenced by fear of his reproach. A reminder of their previous conflict is here reflected in the instrumental association, such that the text might be superfluous. Simply by the instrumental figuration of the *guzheng* and *yangqin* shown in example 4, measures 278 and 280, we are aware that it is Lai Gwan who has raised Manli's anger; the *dizi* is also added briefly in measure 280. Interestingly, in this conflict, the *erhu* has been removed from Lai Gwan's music, representing a new distance between her and Ama and further separation from her Old World life.

Nonetheless, Ama reappears in subsequent dream and reflective scenes, as reminders to Lai Gwan of her family and her traditions. An example of this is found in the prologue of act 2, "The Dream" (see quotation 8). Ama there conspires with the Chinese chorus to remind Lai Gwan of the dangers of getting too close to Nichol.

183 **Vivo** ♩ = 144

Lai Gwan

Manli

[Bend-up gong to m. 194]

183 **Vivo** ♩ = 144

[Guzheng and Yangqin]

mf

[Cello, Bass, Bassoon]

[Guzheng and Erhu]

187

day?

Manli

mf

Bet - ter than Gwong Dung pay.

What's your take?

I take what I

187 [Guzheng and Erhu]

[Yangqin]

[Cello, Bass, Bassoon]

190

Sto - len from...

I doubt that is true.

can

190 [Yangqin]

[Guzheng and Erhu]

I work hard - er than you

[Guzheng and Erhu]

[Yangqin]

[Cello, Bass, Bassoon]

Example 2: Excerpt from *Iron Road*, act 1, scene 4: “The Mountain,” measures 183–92

The image shows a musical score for a flute and piano. The top system is for the flute, starting with a 'Soli' marking and a dynamic of *mf*. The tempo is marked 'Larghetto' with a quarter note equal to 63. The piano accompaniment starts with a dynamic of *mf* and includes a section marked *f animato* with triplets. The bottom system continues the piano part with a dynamic of *f* and later *mp*.

Example 3: Excerpt from *Iron Road*, act 1, scene 5: “The Stream,” measures 1–3

Quotation 8. Excerpt from act 2, scene 1: prologue, “The Dream”

CHORUS: (Metal, Wood, Water, Fire, and Earth)

AMA: Lai Gwan.

(Always shifting, fighting, freeing

Always shifting, but always one!)

CHORUS: (The ancient laws are clear.)

AMA: (Meet fire with water

Meet stone with wave.)

(If you want to be happy, you can’t marry Nichol.)

Further conflict erupts between Lai Gwan and Manli in act 2, scene 2 (“The Fight”), and the accompanying text is again soaked with water imagery and smolders with references to fire. Here Chan again inserts the *yangqin* and *guzheng* into the orchestral timbre, but in a new manifestation (see quotation 9). Manli dominates this scene, still connected to his traditions in text, yet drawing on his new strength with extensive accompaniment from the clarinet, the instrument we first heard associated with him, before Lai Gwan entered his world. Lai Gwan, now known to him, attempts to speak and to remind him of his role as her father. Her interjections are accompanied by the *yangqin* and *guzheng*, the main instruments of musical conflict in previous sections, carrying their Old World associations. This marks an important point of development in the opera, in which both characters face

275

Lai Gwan

Manli

ff (Enough! Who is responsible for this?) [bend-down gong]

可 怒 也 邊 個 深 鬼 [All kow-tow and look to she comes forward]
 call loud yeah bean gore gour t(out) LAI GWAN -

275

[Guzheng]

f
[Yangqin]

279

I should have known [Yangqin and Dizi] (So, you lead this mob, Speak!)
 我 應 該 知 道 你 帶 頭 這 幫 人 認 罪 認 罪
 I should have known [Yangqin and Dizi] lay die t(out) ying mm ying

279

[Guzheng]

[Yangqin]

f [Yangqin and Guzheng]

Example 4: Excerpt from *Iron Road*, act 1, scene 6: “The Camp,” measures 275–81

off for the truth: Manli utilizes his elemental power to ward off Lai Gwan’s attack, and she relies on what are now ineffectual Old World responses.

Quotation 9. Excerpt from act 2, scene 2: “The Fight”

MANLI: Look at you
 Drowning in self-pity
 Not a thought to your father!
 No thought to what you have done to me!
 LAI GWAN: . . . what?
 MANLI: I am ashamed in front of them!
 Those peasants!
 I could crack them in two and burn them like kindling

But now they look down on me! / They look down on Manli! [. . .]
 You have shamed me
 You have washed away my reputation!

Ultimately, Manli collapses back into his past as he learns that his wife has passed away, and Chan inserts brief *dizi* figures into the otherwise Western orchestra as Manli reminisces (quotation 10). Elements of the relationship of fire and wood are evident in his text.

Quotation 10. Excerpt from act 2, scene 2: “The Fight”

MANLI: My wife is dead
 And she died alone.
 White hot flames
 burn her spirit
 into my heart. [. . .]
 Memories of hardship,
 pain and hunger,
 but warmed by love’s fire.
 Golden memories,
 laughter and smiles,
 sun breaking through cloud.
 Golden family,
 safe and secure,
 with me to protect them.
 All gone now.
 All gone, all gone
 And I am alone with . . .
 Burned and broken,
 smoldering ruin
 of blackened memories

In addition to his representation of family conflict and resolution through text and instrumental associations, Chan also uses Chinese instruments to highlight interaction between the chorus of Chinese Workers and the CPR chorus. Quotation 11, from act 2, scene 6 (“Iron Dragon”), illustrates one such interaction. Here, when the last spike has been driven and the railway completed, an important moment of cultural integration occurs:

voices and languages are combined, and the emblematic integration of *erhu*, *guzheng*, and *yangqin* into the orchestral palette reflects a nation united.

Quotation II. Excerpt from act 2, scene 6: “Iron Dragon”

CPR WORKERS: Our Nation

CHINESE CHORUS: (Your Nation!)

CPR WORKERS: Our Nation

CHINESE CHORUS: (Not ours!)

ALL: Our Nation! (Our Nation!)

Subsequently, the members of the CPR chorus sing a jaunty drinking song to their success (“Hurrah for the grand ol’ CPR, / pushing hard through the mountainous road. / So raise a drink to our success / ’cause we’ve conquered hell once more!”). This, however, chafes against the chorus of Chinese workers, who sing of their fear and trepidation over the Iron Dragon (“In the distance, / smoke and fire. / It’s coming for us—/ the Iron Dragon . . .”), accompanied still by the *guzheng* and *yangqin*.

Ama, Manli, and Lai Gwan appear once more in the epilogue (act 2, scene 7), a final reflection of linguistic, instrumental, and melodic movement across the intercultural threshold. At the beginning of this excerpt, Manli sings a poetic interpolation of the funeral rites—“Wash, Wrap, Burn, Bless”—accompanied only by strings and resolved to a solid harmony in C major. When Ama reappears, the *erhu* is heard briefly, but accompanying her reference to Lai Gwan is the crossover harp/*guzheng* with flute (importantly, not with Lai Gwan’s Old World instrument, the *dizi*). Musically and textually, Ama has served, throughout the drama, to unite the family and to remind them of their traditions and culture. Her final appearance and the last use of Chinese instruments in the opera occur between measures 129–40 of the epilogue, with only the *erhu* and *guzheng*.

Chan’s iconic use of instrumental associations at this moment are important also in Lai Gwan’s spiritual journey, as an indication of her past (represented by Ama’s presence and her instrumental accompaniment) that is moving toward the future (with Manli). Ama’s final text and the accompanying ascending third in the *erhu* in measure 140 is cut short by Lai Gwan and Manli, who unite symbolically on Ama’s earlier melodic motive, here simply on the word *remember*. In measure 147, flute takes over from the *gu-*

zheng, now with a triadic rhythmic figure rather than a pentatonic one, and although Lai Gwan uses the text that follows to recall Nichol with great affection, she and her musical accompaniment of harp and flute live clearly in the present and in the New World (see quotation 12).

Quotation 12. Excerpt from the epilogue to act 2, scene 7.

MANLI: (Wash, Wrap, Burn, Bless)
 LAI GWAN/MANLI: (Remember) *Ama appears*
 MANLI: (Remember my wife
 Remember her smile.
 Carry her memory
 each iron mile)
 AMA: (My husband
 My daughter
 A family once again)
 LAI GWAN/MANLI: (Remember) *Nichol appears*
 LAI GWAN: Nichol my love
 Open-mouthed kiss
 Fire in his touch
 Remember that bliss
 NICHOL: Beautiful water
 Nothing can stop you
 Flowing towards the future
 LAI GWAN: Remember
 Oh remember.

Nichol's appearance at this point in the drama brings the transformation to the New World in this final scene into new perspective: from here, the chorus sings in English, the Chinese melodic and percussive instruments disappear, and strings alone mimic the overlaying melodies of "Wash, Wrap, Burn, Bless," ending with full orchestra and chorus unison on "Restless spirits, go in peace." In the final moments of the opera, tenors and basses intone the funeral chant of the opening, with sopranos and altos presenting (once more in Cantonese) final repetitions of "Wash, Wrap, Burn, Bless," while Lai Gwan and Manli remember, forgive, and reconcile. A subdued extra-large tam-tam sounds the closing timbre. In these final moments of

the opera, through reminiscence and reconciliation of family relationships and through Manli and Lai Gwan's efforts to prepare their dead comrades for burial and transformation, spirituality restores equilibrium.

SPIRITUALITY AND MUSIC: METAPHORICAL CONNECTIONS AND MUSICAL EXAMPLES

In addition to the material aspects of spirituality evident in the intercultural encounters in *Iron Road*, metaphorical connections occur as a result of Chan's dissolution of the textual and musical hierarchies of Western and Chinese operatic traditions. Instrumental associations with individual characters, timbral considerations across the opera, melodic features of scale and pitch and figuration, and linguistic elements of Cantonese and English reveal further strata of connectivity mediated by the performance of ritual and traditional beliefs. Cantonese is utilized for approximately one-third of the libretto, resulting in a nearly total lack of communication between the CPR workers who speak only English and the Chinese chorus; given its importance to the drama, the fact that the Cantonese text (prepared by George K. Wong) was a translation of Brownell's English original story might serve as a further place for examination of interculturality, beyond the scope of this essay.

Chan's instrumental ensemble includes a Western classical chamber orchestra of strings, winds, brass, and percussion, as well as elements of Chinese opera's melodic and percussive orchestras: Chinese percussion and the *erhu*, *dizi*, *guzheng*, and *yangqin*, representing bowed, wind, plucked, and hammered sounds respectively. Western and Chinese instruments are utilized for their timbral qualities as well as their potential for sounding further musical characterizations. The opera's nuclear family, presented musically in act 1, scene 1 (prologue, "Old World"), establishes associations with the *guzheng* and *dizi* (for the female lead, Lai Gwan), the *erhu* (for Ama, Lai Gwan's mother), and the *yangqin* (for Manli, Lai Gwan's father). Traversing the path of the narrative, Chan explores the possibilities for timbre as a transitional space, utilizing distinct ensembles to represent the two primary cultures, with Lai Gwan and Manli crossing the sociocultural divide between the Old World and the New World with translated instrumental associations. For Lai Gwan, the *dizi* is replaced by the flute, and the *guzheng* with the harp. Manli "appears" in Ama's recollection of him in the prologue in his Old World guise with the *yangqin* but sings first in his mediated New

World persona with clarinet and accompanied by Chinese percussion (act 1, scene 4). Lai Gwan's reminders of Manli's past in a later scene result in the return of the *yangqin* (and Cantonese) to his voice for brief but significant encounters (act 1, scene 6).

Using the combined orchestral ensemble in traditional and nontraditional ways allows Chan to find opportunities to cross over generic frameworks and to explore timbral connections. His use of an extensive percussion section, for example, demonstrates a considerable fluidity across Eastern and Western operatic styles. Percussion that is used to mark scene changes, portend abrupt changes in emotion, and punctuate important moments is largely incorporated from Chinese operatic traditions and used in connection with the Chinese characters; percussion that establishes meter and tempo occurs mostly in connection with Western characters.

Chan also creates a fluid sonic environment for the exchange of musical languages in which pentatonicism is heard as both a distinguishing feature of Chinese traditional music and a feature of tonal music. In a preperformance interview with CBC/Radio-Canada host Larry Lake, Chan explained his compositional process as flowing naturally out of Cantonese pronunciation that he described as "tend[ing] to form the pentatonic scales." He continued, "I discovered some other means to go away from these tones, such as shifting the pitch level of a group of words so I have more notes available."¹² This "shifting" of pure pentatonicism to extended melodies enables Chan to enrich his melodic language while retaining distinct voices in the narrative. For example, the pentatonic scale, used for most of the melodies of the Chinese chorus, contrasts with the largely tonal soundscape of the CPR chorus in act 2, scene 6. Ama retains her Old World musical character throughout, characterized exclusively by a pentatonic melody and pitch-language inflection (intonation and accent), as well as her association with the *erhu* and the Cantonese language. Additionally, Chan finds connections between the Chinese opera traditions of stylized spoken and sung lines inflected by pitch and stress of language and the formal sung sections of Western opera's recitatives, ariosos, arias, and choruses.

CONCLUSIONS

Lai Gwan's path began at home in China, at her dying mother's bedside, and ends with her uniting completely with her father in the New World. She

has traveled from the safety of her mother's care to endure the challenges of daily life in the New World, by simply refusing to give up on or completely give in to her family. Over the course of the opera, she has survived personal conflicts with her father, suffered her mother's disapproval, and, despite all odds, learned to love. Elementally speaking, even metal (Nichol) is ultimately defeated by the powerful combination of water, wood, and fire, the opera's nuclear family. Timbrally, Chan has led Lai Gwan from the instruments of her traditional culture to full integration into a Western soundscape and orchestra. Her final redemption, then, cannot be viewed as per the Western (Christian) meaning of salvation but, rather, in the Eastern and likely Buddhist sense of awakening to the truth of "what is."

That Chan chose to end the opera with Lai Gwan and Manli reunited and not with the impassioned, massed community expression of "Our Nation" (act 2, scene 6, "Iron Dragon"; see quotation 11) reminds us of the greater importance of family to this historically based narrative. In reconstructing some of the layers of personality and political contexts in which the actual story took place, Chan and Brownell have created a work that ultimately resolves some of the tensions between the two cultures and, in the process, they have reinstated Chinese citizens as active agents in Canadian history. Text and language impact dialogue and communication between cultures in this space of cultural exchange; instruments and timbres are used to manipulate private and public relationships between persons and cultures; and the individuation and integration of formal, melodic, and harmonic principles of both Chinese and Western operatic musical traditions suggest purposeful cross-cultural influence in the service of the narrative.

Considering the material expressions of spirituality in *Iron Road* is just the beginning of an understanding of its interculturality. Similarly, spiritual connections in the opera occur not only in the performance of specific spiritual practices but also in the moment-to-moment negotiation of the space in which these intercultural encounters occur. In *Iron Road*, we experience an unapologetic reflection of the multiple positionalities of individuals and distinct cultures, presented by the librettist and the composer as frequent shifts in narrative and musical perspective. While the relationships that develop between these subjective positions frequently communicate the conflict of ideologies, the transitional space that facilitates movement between their voices in the performance of community is precisely the point—the place of *Iron Road's* spirituality. As witnesses to such intercultural encounters, we are

exposed to a deterritorialized sense of spirituality that crosses the threshold of time and space, connecting the past and present of both cultures.

Notes

1. Ursula K. Le Guin, *Lao Tzu Tao Te Ching: A Book about the Way and the Power of the Way* (Boston: Shambhala, 1998), 11. Le Guin's poem continues, "For a house, / the good thing is level ground. / In thinking, / depth is good. / The good of giving is magnanimity; / of speaking, honesty; / of government, order. / The good of work is skill, / and of action, timing. / No competition, / so no blame."

2. William Littler, "Iron Road a Score for Multiculturalism," *Toronto Star*, 22 April 2001, D3.

3. John Coulbourn, "Iron Road Triumphs: Tale of Fortune Seekers, Hard Work, and Love." *Toronto Sun*, 21 April 2001, 50.

4. In his article "My First Opera," *Canadian Theatre Review* 110 (Spring 2002): 38, Chan writes, "In 1984 I was conductor of a community choir, the Council of Chinese Canadians Choir. The founding members of this choir belong to a human-rights organization with the same name. One member had told me that Chinese women were not permitted to immigrate to Canada in the old days. I was quite taken by the fact." This information was confirmed by the composer in a private interview with the author on 10 September 2005 and in the unpublished, unattributed Tapestry New Opera Works study guide for *Iron Road* (p. 17), which also references the details of the Norwegian ship of immigrants described here. Tapestry New Opera's *Study Guide for Iron Road* is now available online through the Canadian Music Centre at <http://musiccentre.ca/node/61165> (accessed July 2016).

5. In his discussion of interculturality, Richard Schechner cites Patrice Pavis's definition of "intercultural theater" as "creat[ing] hybrid forms drawing upon a more or less conscious and voluntary mixing of performance traditions traceable to distinct cultural areas. The hybridization is very often such that the original forms can no longer be distinguished" (Pavis, *Introduction: Towards a Theory of Interculturalism in Theater*, cited in Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. [New York: Routledge, 2006], 305).

6. Schechner, *Performance Studies*, 56.

7. For additional information on the chant and its practice in Pure Land and Chan Buddhism, the composer suggests viewing http://www.shaolin.org.cn/templates/EN_T_newS_list/index.aspx?nodeid=297&page=ContentPage&contentid=6715 (accessed July 2016), according to which "Repeating the phrase: Na-mo A-mi-to-fu . . . emphasizes the Buddha Amitabha's promise to cause all faithful beings to be reborn in his pure land."

8. In act 1, scene 5, Manli says to Nichol, "A shallow grave with no proper blessing / His spirit will roam in agony / Unable to return to his ancestors."

9. This description is part of the stage direction in act 1, scene 5, as Lai Gwan says, "The air is filled with spirits / Ghosts of my ancestors / I call on you."

10. Confirmed in personal interviews with the composer and librettist, September 2005.

11. All musical examples in this essay are given as the composer's piano-vocal reductions of the original orchestral score. Where required, indications for specific instrumentation are included in square brackets.

12. Larry Lake, interview with Chan Ka Nin, Mark Brownell, and Wayne Strongman, *Two New Hours*, CBC/Radio-Canada, 1 July 2001.

PART 3

*Chinese-Western Musical Encounters
and Intercultural Compositions*

Chinese Opera Percussion from Model Opera to Tan Dun

Nancy Yunhwa Rao

For commentators and audiences outside China, a synthesis of Western and Chinese traditions marks the defining feature of works by such new-wave Chinese composers as TAN Dun, CHEN Yi, ZHOU Long, CHEN Qigang, and Bright Sheng. As moments of landmark encounters with Western music aesthetics—namely, the “beginning” of a Chinese-Western cultural synthesis—commentators invariably point to these composers’ admissions to conservatories in 1978, notably the Central Conservatory of Music (CCM) in Beijing and the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, as well as their attendance at the seminars given by Chinese American composer CHOU Wen-Chung and British composer Alexander Goehr, who visited the CCM in 1980. Commentators also point to the composers’ arrivals in the United States or Europe during the mid-1980s. Paradoxically, similar narratives were absent among Chinese-language commentators. Rather, in their discussions of the group of composers known as the “Class of ’78,” Chinese critics are primarily concerned with degrees of novelty and originality, aesthetics of avant-garde experiments, values of twentieth-century musical idioms, and distinctiveness of cultural/national identity. To be sure, opportunities to pursue studies in Chinese conservatories, Goehr’s visit to Beijing, and Western courses of study were turning points for the post-Cultural Revolution composers in question. Yet they were not encounters that ignited cultural synthesis in contemporary Chinese music.

That synthesis has had a long history. It began during the nineteenth century and the late Qing dynasty, when modernization efforts were first made. Throughout the twentieth century, it influenced numerous genres, performance situations and practices, music institutions, and ensembles, in both public and

private spaces. Consider a premiere institute in China for traditional Western music education, the Shanghai Conservatory. Established in 1927 and partly modeled on Leipzig's venerable conservatory, the Shanghai school employed a good number of Russian faculty graduated from the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Consider, too, the historical significance of the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra, founded as a brass band in the 1880s.¹ When its interactions with the Chinese community began in the 1920s, the orchestra exerted an immense influence on Chinese composers who came of age prior to and during World War II.²

Also significant were compositional experiments in Chinese-Western stylistic fusion that took place in semicolonial Shanghai from the 1920s to the 1940s. They involved works by German Jewish and Russian composers (Wolfgang Fraenkel and Aaron Avshalomov) that had immeasurable impact on such iconic Chinese composers as NIE Er (1912–35), author of China's national anthem, and XIAN Xinghai (1905–45), composer of the famous *Yellow River Cantata*, as well as composers such as DING Shande (1911–95).³ As Sinologist Barbara Mittler notes, "No longer is the term 'Chinese music' reserved for indigenous Chinese traditions. It now also describes a different type of music which emerged under Western influence."⁴ In other words, so-called East-West cultural synthesis has been integral to Chinese music since the early twentieth century, and its impact can be felt today at many levels.

Particularly relevant to more recent developments is the genre that embodied cultural syntheses on a colossal scale, the "model operas" of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. The unique style of model operas as synthetic compositions exerted immense impact on new-wave Chinese composers, and that style has been germane to their subsequent creative output. During the post-Cultural Revolution era, these young composers responded to changes in China's political-cultural landscape with works that, although distinctively modern, were paradoxically shaped by the musical canon of the years they sought to leave behind—the late 1960s and earlier 1970s. Exploring the paradoxical influences of model opera on new-wave composers and evaluating what constitutes the particular modes of synthesis underpins the present study.

THE CREATION, SIGNIFICANCE, AND STATUS OF MODEL OPERA

Throughout the Cultural Revolution (1967–77), music was both scarce and plentiful in China. The revolution fostered a political climate in which

“culture”—literature, theater, music, and visual art—was inextricably linked to official ideology. This link between art and revolution was powerfully influenced by MAO Zedong’s seminal statement in his talk at the 1942 Yan’an Forum on Literature and Art.

The purpose of our meeting today is precisely to ensure that literature and art fit well into the whole revolutionary machine as a component part, that they operate as powerful weapons for uniting and educating the people and for attacking and destroying the enemy, and that they help the people fight the enemy with one heart and one mind.⁵

These principles effectively dictated the approved style of art and literature in post-1949 China. The Cultural Revolution was itself triggered by a series of fierce condemnations of a newly crafted Chinese opera script based on these principles.⁶ Subsequently, all Chinese musical culture was even more closely scrutinized and controlled, and musical expression was generally limited to revolutionary songs and model operas. The latter works became icons of the Cultural Revolution.

The making of model operas, however, began prior to the onset of the revolution itself. Reforming Chinese opera had been an important activity of the Communist Party during the 1940s; the party attached great importance to the ideological and political education function of the performing arts. The 1950s witnessed a significant and massive effort to revolutionize Chinese opera through the introduction of new scripts and musical/theatrical innovations, as well as through public denunciations of bourgeois or antiproletarian elements in existing opera traditions. A large number of new operas were produced, and an important showcase of thirty-five revolutionary operas took place at the 1964 National Festival of Chinese Contemporary Opera in Beijing. Troupes from Beijing, Shandong, and Shanghai, among others, presented successful works that would later become influential. Particularly notable in these endeavors was a mode of cultural synthesis that combined aspects of Beijing opera with Western functional harmonic language.

After the Cultural Revolution began, this mode of synthesis quickly gained attention. By 1966, with Chairman Mao’s wife JIAN Qing as chief advocate and scrutinizer, a handful of operas produced in this new, synthetic style were elevated to the status of “model operas.” In May 1967, the *People’s Daily*, the organ of the Chinese Community Party, endorsed eight “model operas/works”—five revolutionary operas, two ballets, and a symphony.

Jian gained significant political power through her selection and advocacy of these works, which were regarded as embodying political allegiance. They were listened to everywhere as the acceptable musical glorifications of a true revolutionary ideal. Indeed, the supremacy of the officially approved model operas was such that contrary opinions about them as well as mishaps during performances were inevitably branded “antirevolutionary,” a pronouncement that could lead to tragic consequences.

Although model operas were created as political propaganda and glorified revolutionary heroes, their genesis was anything but straightforward. Rather than being hastily and cheaply put together by lesser talents, they were created collaboratively by large numbers of highly regarded musicians, including singers and instrumentalists associated with the Beijing opera, scholars and practitioners of folk genres, and composers versed in nineteenth-century European music traditions, as well as scriptwriters, stage directors, and dancers. Melodies, musical characterizations, dramatic sequences, orchestral scoring, and so on followed formulas ordained by officials at various levels.

The “three prominences” principle, *san tuchu* (三突出), was used to highlight and contextualize the hero’s positive features. Drafts of individual works were presented for evaluation by Jian, her right-hand man YU Huiyong (an accomplished author of seminal study on Beijing opera and regional folk songs, who later became the minister of culture), and other political leaders. The leaders provided various critiques that sent each work back to its collaborators for improvement.⁷ The process was repeated until a version of each work gained final approval from the highest authorities.⁸ After the approval of the model opera *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy*, a work spearheaded with a score for a Chinese-Western mixed orchestra, subsequent works took up the same form of orchestration. Under close supervision and monitoring, each model opera represented a refined synthesis of Chinese operatic practices, traditional vocal genres, and Western symphonic traditions that the Communist Party proclaimed appropriate as a musical theatricalization of the political.

The results combined carefully selected Beijing opera singers (capable of perfect performances), percussion ensembles (outfitted with additional traditional instruments), and melodic ensembles (limited to just three instruments: the *jinghu*, *jing’erhu*, and *yueqin*) with full-scale Western orchestras. Performers in other parts of China imitated these groups, and many other spinoffs and regional opera adaptations emerged.⁹ As the original cast mem-

bers of each model opera were immortalized in films, phonograph recordings, librettos, and even children's storybooks, the principal characters they portrayed became iconic revolutionary figures, irrevocably ingrained in the cultural memory of the Cultural Revolution's citizens. Similar works were created to add to the canon of model opera.

Model operas brought together disparate audiences and listeners, through live performances as well as loudspeakers, radio broadcasts, and films. Youngsters identified with characters from model opera, gesticulating and posturing in the characters' heroic and theatrical ways. For many years, as scholar WANG Ban put it, the operas and their derivatives "were the only entertainment available" within the People's Republic of China.¹⁰ Artist GU Xiong, who, like many urban youth, was sent to rural areas to "learn from the peasants," wrote of his experience of joining a regional troupe that put on local production of model opera, "We toured and performed in various villages. Although the peasants knew more than we did about farming, we distinguished ourselves with our superior artistic talent and earned their respect."¹¹ The novelty of the new style of opera proved a local hit for many villages.¹² As one musician who was twenty-four years old when the Cultural Revolution began recalls, "My generation likes the model works; they are our youth. Yes, there are people who dislike them, too, but really we do like them. Indeed, when I was young, eighteen or so, I needed art so much, we all did. And then there were just the model works as our food, and we actually thought they were quite great."¹³

MODES OF CULTURAL SYNTHESIS IN MODEL OPERA

Musically, the modes of cultural synthesis in model operas continued to resonate long after the Cultural Revolution came to an end. In recent interviews, many veterans who participated as collaborators in constructing model operas maintained that, despite political meddling and formulaic principles, the music represented a pinnacle of artistic creation in contemporary China. Composers have also praised the excellence of the dramatic professionals they worked with, the selfless contributions of experts in folk vocal traditions, and the precision of performances (preserved in films and sound recordings) that remain unequaled to this day.¹⁴ Moreover, due to the popularity of model operas during the Cultural Revolution and the eagerness of children of that decade to act out the various numbers or characters,

the melodies of those operas remain popular today in karaoke versions and jubilee editions. The political propaganda inherent in these works did not stop people from enjoying them, performing them, and embracing them as symbols of China's superiority. As Wang explains, BA Jin, a writer denounced by the Red Guard, "sincerely believed he was inferior to his persecutors and envied them their right to sing the songs of the Model Operas—a prerogative preserved for the revolutionaries."¹⁵ Mittler has put it somewhat differently: "Consumers of Cultural Revolution propaganda derived pleasure even from . . . text[s] whose ideological message[s] they did not share or accept."¹⁶

To the generation that grew up with them, model operas educated Chinese men and woman about music, song, dance, and drama. Ample opportunities were available for further merging with regional musical practices. Performing troupes wrote new works based on sanctioned models in a variety of regional genres, such as the genre of song-dance duet, *errenzhuan* (二人轉), which they tailored to local taste. As historian Paul Clark documented, one example was the 1975 regional performance festival of Liaoning, where "over half a million people watched the 357 performances."¹⁷ At the same time, the national fervor for opera performances created an extraordinary need for musicians who could play Western instruments and perform in certain Western ways.

Many youngsters, with or without prior musical training, learned how to compose, conduct, and perform as members of burgeoning local troupes. Classically trained composers previously unfamiliar with Beijing opera or folk vocal traditions gained a working knowledge of those traditions through exposure to and direct participation in performances. Traditional Beijing opera companies were inundated with nineteenth-century European symphonic practices that included the use of Western orchestral instruments; the inclusion of overtures, interludes, leitmotifs, and other Western operatic gestures; functional harmony; motivic connections; and melodic development. Cultural synthesis in music had long been the pursuit of twentieth-century China. Through model opera, its many experiments and separate initiatives were distilled and even canonized in terms of semantic units, performance practices, and norms of music structure.

Several aspects of cultural synthesis in model opera are particularly significant for contemporary Chinese music. The first is instrumentation. Example 1 reproduces a page from the score of the first model opera, *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy*. Although the score was a Western orchestral one in format, this page includes staves for traditional Chinese instruments.

Category by origin	Instrument name (Chinese)	Instrument name	Quantity
Instruments for the orchestra of Beijing opera			
Primary strings	京胡	<i>Jinghu</i> (high-pitched fiddle)	1
三大件/文場 (<i>Wenchang</i>)	京二胡	<i>Jing'erhu</i> (opera fiddle)	1
	月琴	<i>Yueqin</i> (lute)	1
Percussions	板、鼓、小堂鼓	<i>Ban, Gu, Xiao tang gu</i> (drums)	3
武場 (<i>Wuchang</i>)	武鑼、大鑼 (高、中、低音) 、大鑼鑼	<i>Daluo</i> family (5 large gongs)	5
	小鑼	<i>Xiaoluo</i> (small gong)	1
	小鈸、啞鈸、鏡鈸、大帽鈸	<i>Naobo</i> family (4 cymbals)	4
Additional Chinese instruments			
Winds and strings	板胡	<i>Banhu</i> (coconut-resonator fiddle)	1
	琵琶	<i>Pipa</i>	1
	鍵盤排笙	<i>Paisheng</i> (free reed mouth organ)	1
	曲笛	<i>Qudi</i> (transverse bamboo flute)	1
	海笛	<i>Haidi</i> (small <i>suona</i>)	1
	噴呐	<i>Suona</i> (double-reed wind intr.)	1
Instruments for symphony orchestra of the European tradition			
Winds	短笛	Piccolo	1
	長笛	Flute	1
	雙簧管	Oboe	1
	單簧管	Clarinet	1
	圓號	Horn	2
	小號	Trumpet	2
	長號	Trombone	1
Percussions	鈸板鐘琴	Glockenspiel	1
	定音鼓	Timpani	2
	大鈸	Cymbal	1
	吊鈸	Suspended cymbals	1
Strings	第一小提琴	First violin	4
	第二小提琴	Second violin	3
	中提琴	Viola	2
	大提琴	Cello	1
	低音提琴	Double bass	1

Example 2: Table of instrumentation for *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy*

It also includes a characteristically Chinese percussion pattern, written in both Western notation and Chinese characters. The page exemplifies one form of cultural fusion in the 1960s. Example 2 lists the Western and Chinese instruments employed in the orchestra of *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy*. Chinese instruments, especially percussion instruments, added a remarkable palette of colors to those of Western orchestras. The resulting fusion provided accompaniments that far exceeded those of traditional ensembles associated with Beijing opera.

Traditionally, Beijing opera accompaniments included no more than eight

to ten musicians, playing exclusively Chinese instruments. The orchestra for *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy* calls for around thirty instruments, combined in interesting ways. Several musicians playing Western instruments are expected to double on Chinese instruments: violinists on the *banhu*, flutists on the *quid*, oboists on the *haidi* and *suona*, and clarinetists on the *shudi*. In fact, performers of Western instruments were required by Yu Huiyong to learn these traditional Chinese instruments in order to gain a better handle on their feel, color, and inflection. The so-called 4-3-2-1-1 principle was devised to keep control of the number of Western string instruments in the orchestra, with four first violins, three second violins, two violas, and so on. It worked to ensure the balance of the orchestral sonority, because three melodic instruments were emphasized—the *jinghu*, *jing'erhu*, and *yueqin*.

These combinations of Western and Chinese instruments had an important and possibly unintended consequence: they transformed the oral legacy of Beijing opera. Practices traditionally transmitted in person from one generation of musicians to another—traditions that included nuanced details of inflection, ornamentation, melismatic passagework, and timbre—were mostly but not entirely transliterated in Western notation. Nevertheless, this transliteration was supplemented by the inclusion of *luogu jing* (鑼鼓經, “rote for drum and gong music”), a notational system that uses Chinese characters to identify combinations of instruments, modes of articulation, timbres, and so on for traditional percussion accompaniments.

Luogu jing not only preserved an important tradition but made it accessible to traditional performers even in Western scores, formalizing its significance even as it transformed its mode of transmission. *Luogu jing* quickly became part of the musical knowledge required of all musicians. In practice, it introduced a new generation of Western classical musicians to their nation's oral traditions. Composer Chen Yi has confessed that her familiarity with *luogu jing* has been essential for her work as concert master of her orchestra; without it, she would be unable to provide proper cues.¹⁸ Her generation's familiarity with *luogu jing* was such that she and Tan Dun both adopted recitation in that style in their work, moving the recitation from rehearsal room or coaching sessions where it is typically used to front and center on the concert stage. Similarly, vocal lines also became a “fixed melody,” noted on the score rather than transmitted by oral tradition.

Also significant in model opera was the merging of dramatic roles and their markers, a fundamental change in Chinese opera. In traditional operas, the distinctive features and music for different kinds of characters constitute a fundamental form of expression; a middle-aged warrior's singing style, vo-

cal characteristic, and movement, for example, are quite different from those of a young scholar's. In model opera, traditional opera roles and their markers, as well as different schools of operatic singing styles, were fused together to portray individual characters. As a result, the rigid boundaries and unique characteristics of role types were dissolved. A given character might draw on any form of expression suitable for given dramatic situations. Musically, this allowed an unprecedented merging of singing styles and vocal expression. In turn, these "merged" modes of expression were further enhanced by an orchestral accompaniment that provided unprecedented weight, volume, timbre, range, and even a leitmotif identified with each character in a model opera.

The composition of instrumental overtures and interludes for model operas also incorporated European operatic traditions. In traditional Beijing opera, formulaic instrumental interludes known as *qu pai* (曲牌, "fixed melody") or *guo men* (過門, "bridge") are used to fill sonic gaps between scenes. This practice, however, was abandoned in model operas in favor of newly composed, fully scored orchestral episodes. These episodes were designed to depict psychological dimensions of individual characters, particular moods of individual scenes, and so on. The significance given to these interludes points to the increased expressive content and dramatic role of the accompanying orchestra in this cultural synthesis.

While the use of the European symphonic orchestra in contemporary Chinese music was no longer novel by the time model operas emerged in the 1960s, the use of Western compositional traditions in the operas themselves represents the culmination of a half century of change. After all, the creative teams that produced these operas included composers who had been students and, later, faculty members at Chinese music conservatories. Some of these composers were well known for pre-Cultural Revolution symphonic works that combined Chinese folk songs with techniques such as functional harmony and motivic development. LUO Zhongrong, for example, was a contributor to the creation of the model work *Shajiabang*. He studied at the Shanghai Conservatory during the 1940s with Yale-trained TAN Xiaolin (a student of Paul Hindemith's) and later taught harmony there. In 1956, Luo became a resident composer with the Central Symphony Orchestra when it was founded. His First Symphony (1959) received critical acclaim, and his Second Symphony (1964) was completed shortly before the Cultural Revolution began. WU Zuqiang, a key contributor to *The Red Detachment of Women*, studied at the Nanjing Conservatory, at CCM, and, later (in the 1950s), at Moscow's Tchaikovsky Conservatory. Wu's orchestral composi-

tions included a symphonic poem entitled *On the Soil of the Fatherland* (1957) and a three-act ballet entitled *The Mermaid* (1959), both admired for their merging of orchestral traditions. Both Luo and Wu are important figures in China's contemporary music and were primary teachers for famous composers of the Class of '78, such as Zhou Long, Chen Yi, and Chen Qigang.

The fusing of orchestral traditions in model operas differed significantly from earlier endeavors, mainly because the fusion of Western symphonic practices with Beijing opera traditions allowed Chinese percussion instruments to play roles they had never played in pre-Cultural Revolution symphonic scores. Indeed, perhaps the most influential aspect of model opera as cultural synthesis was a new sense of sonority and rhythm derived from the unprecedented significance accorded to Chinese percussion. The unique sonorities of traditional percussion instruments are characteristic of these operas.

THE ROLE OF LUOGU DIANZI IN MODEL OPERAS

That the *wu chang* (武場, "percussion consort"), the ensemble associated with traditional Chinese opera, became the backbone of the model opera orchestra was scarcely surprising. In Beijing opera, the battery, also known collectively as *luogu* (鑼鼓, "gong and drum"), plays a key role in punctuating music, story, and stage action. Without percussion, Beijing opera would sound "shapeless" to learned ears. The role of the *wu chang* in model opera takes several interesting forms. First, *luogu dianzi* (鑼鼓點子, "percussion musical patterns")—familiar rhythmic patterns, notated in *luogu jing* and played by traditional instruments—are used throughout. Second, these patterns are emulated by other instruments, augmenting traditional rhythmic figures and projecting percussive effects by way of other instruments.

Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy contains three long percussion interludes scored for traditional Chinese instruments and employing traditional performing styles. Standing alone, these interludes stay close to Chinese opera conventions. However, a juxtaposition of different cultural conventions marks a different synthesis at the beginning of the fourth scene. In that scene, the orchestral accompaniment introduces a recitative similar in style to that of European opera. The passage in question ends with two simple violin pizzicati, a gesture that anticipates the entry of the voice in terms of both sonority and timing.¹⁹ Following this passage, however, the accompaniment shifts to *luogu dianzi*, and a drum and small gong begin an aria intro-

The musical score for Example 3 is written in 2/4 time. It consists of four staves, each representing a different percussion instrument. The top staff is for the Danpi Gu (Wood Block), the second for the Small Gong, the third for the Naobo (Chinese Cymbal), and the bottom for the Large Gong. The score is divided into four measures by vertical bar lines. The first measure shows the instruments starting at a slower tempo. The second and third measures show a gradual increase in tempo, with the instruments playing a steady, repetitive rhythmic pattern. The fourth measure shows the instruments playing at a faster tempo, with the Naobo and Large Gong playing a steady, repetitive rhythmic pattern.

Example 3: *Jijifeng* percussion pattern

duction/accompaniment, typical of Beijing opera. This juxtaposition, which switches swiftly from one opera practice to another, may sound jarring to unexpected listeners. Nevertheless, it was characteristic of the new genre of cultural synthesis that was model opera.

Another example of cross-cultural synthesis was less obvious. It involved a percussion pattern known as *jijifeng* (急急风, “speedy wind”). Example 3 reproduces a basic *jijifeng* pattern. As a rhythmic topic, *jijifeng* suggests the rapid and intense ambience typically associated with scenes of hasty entry onto the stage, fighting scenes, fast marches, chase or military scenes, and so on. The *jijifeng* pattern starts at a slower speed and moves on to gradual acceleration. The smoothness of this acceleration is one of its key characteristics.

In the famous fifth scene from *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy*, *jijifeng* forms the basis of an instrumental interlude (see example 4). The rhythmic pattern is expressed first by pitched instruments, then with the addition of the *wu chang*. The *jijifeng* pattern is marked by the quick steadfast drumbeats, but it is also expressed through repetitions of melodic figures played by various other instruments. As a whole, the animated *jijifeng* effect provides significant momentum in this passage.

When the voice enters, it is accompanied by *jinda manchang* (紧打慢唱, “hasty strokes with slow singing”), a characteristic gesture of Beijing opera, involving two different but simultaneously presented tempi. Depending on context, *jinda manchang* is used traditionally to suggest either a leisurely paced ambience or a swiftly escalating emotion. Over a fast continuous rhythmic pattern, *liushui* (流水, “water stream”) provides a long, arching, flexible phrase in a slower tempo. The contrast between the two rhythms creates the expressive effect of *jinda manchang*. In example 5, however, the effect differs from that associated with Beijing opera sonority; instead, it suggests emotional intensity. Clearly, the composition team that produced the 1972 version of *Taking Tiger*

Example 4: Interlude
of scene 5 in *Taking
Tiger Mountain by
Strategy*

Mountain by Strategy considered it important to refer to this tradition, and the words *jinla manchang* (緊拉慢唱, “hasty bowing with slow singing”) appear in the score above the string instruments that execute the rhythm in question. In similar passages, the unique rhythmic shape and pace of traditional percussion are transferred to Western instruments, suggesting that the full orchestra has adopted the traditions of Beijing opera. This type of seamless synthesis constituted an important characteristic of model opera, a familiar sonority during the Cultural Revolution.

LUOGU DIANZI IN CONTEMPORARY CHINESE MUSIC

There were many approaches to cultural synthesis in model operas; the present discussion has merely scratched the surface of them. In the post-

The image shows a page of a musical score, page 144, for the piece 'Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy'. The score is written in Western staff notation with multiple staves. At the top, there is a circled annotation that reads "hasty bowing with slow singing" with an arrow pointing to a specific section of the music. Several other parts of the score are circled, highlighting specific musical passages. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Example 5: *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy*

Cultural Revolution era, when a new generation sought to chart paths that departed from their immediate pasts, many composers moved away from the merging—common in model operas—of Chinese opera traditions with Western harmonies and symphonic style. After 1976, that type of cultural synthesis seemed outdated for those individuals who sought other means to express themselves. They appeared to have turned away from the previous generation. Yet certain aspects and sonorities of model opera's cultural synthesis remain in their works. These innovations are deep-rooted and had significant impact on the musical taste of the generation that came of age during the Cultural Revolution. The incorporation of traditional percussion *luogu dianzi* in contemporary music is certainly one of them, unlike operatic arias that largely disappeared in the post-Cultural Revolution era.

Explicit or implicit traces of *luogu* percussion patterns are used frequently in the work of the Class of '78 composers. I have elsewhere writ-

ten about the use of *jijifeng* in both Chen Qigang's *Poème lyrique* and Chen Yi's Second Symphony, as well as the use of *choungtou* in Chen Yi's Second Symphony.²⁰ Examples 6 and 7 reproduce the first two examples of *jijifeng* I have discussed in my previous works. In addition, the powerful presence and shaping force of Chinese percussion in contemporary Chinese compositions are appreciated not only by listeners familiar with that tradition but also by people who may never have been previously exposed to either model opera or Beijing opera. Joël Bons, artistic director of the Nieuw Ensemble in Amsterdam—an ensemble that was pivotal in providing Chinese new-wave composers with international exposure during the early 1990s—observed in a 2003 interview, “Chinese contemporary music is currently exploring its uncharted path. One of the significant characteristics of this music is its unique temporality, rhythm and its marvelous timing of pauses.”²¹ This comment, coming from a leading Amsterdam musician in contemporary music, reveals the aurally vivid distinctiveness of the rhythmic characteristics of these post-Cultural Revolution Chinese compositions.

Consider the use of the *jinda manchang* pattern in model opera, which would certainly have been familiar to students of Chen Qigang's work. An example can be found in *Yi* (1987), a composition scored for clarinet and string quartet and dedicated to Chen's teacher Olivier Messiaen. In example 8, short melodic figures or cells played by the string instruments suggest a swift rhythmic pattern. Against this pattern, the clarinet presents a compound melody that rises into that instrument's higher register, accompanied by steady, fast-moving cells in the strings. Similar juxtapositions of melodic and rhythmic gesture are featured elsewhere in the piece.

In a great interview by his student LIEN Xiansheng that touched on many details of Chen Qigang's compositional style, Chen acknowledged his use of *jinda manchang* in *Yi*.

STUDENT (LIEN): I feel the basic musical language of *Yi* is very close to György Ligeti. Yet the work, after the oboe is added, is suddenly infused with another type of rich musical effect. It is akin to the aesthetics of *jinda manchang* that appears often in your work, namely, the juxtaposition of a sustained, elongated, and leisurely paced melodic line with an abundance of complicated, tight-knit, minute, mobile, and fragmented sonority in a forward-moving motion.

CHEN: Yes. A person's sense of balance [分寸, “proportion, limit”], I think, stays pretty much the same; it doesn't change much. But in

The image displays a complex musical score for percussion, likely for a Chinese opera. It consists of three systems of staves. The top system features a vocal line with lyrics in Chinese characters and a corresponding melodic line. Below this are three staves labeled 'percussion sound', each containing intricate rhythmic patterns. The middle system continues the vocal and melodic lines, with the percussion staves showing more complex, dense rhythmic textures. The bottom system, marked with a '5' in a box, shows a continuation of the rhythmic patterns, with some staves featuring a 'p' (piano) dynamic marking. The score is written in Western musical notation, including treble and bass clefs, time signatures, and various rhythmic values and ornaments.

Example 8: Chen Qigang, *Yi*

the actual composing of sonority, and in the choosing of vertical harmony and timbre, adjustment would be inevitable. So in *Yi* there are of course elements that are organic. And it also has that kind of impulse [衝動, “urge, drive”], which is used in other works as well. When Messiaen first saw this work, he liked it especially; this was before he heard it played, just from reading the score.²²

This exchange reveals much about Chen’s attention to rhythmic nuances and subtle changes in timbres over long stretches of time. *Jinda manchang* itself seems to support all of *Yi*, together with long lyrical phrases. *Jinda manchang* is also used prominently at the climax of Chen’s *Poème lyrique* (1992), when the singer expresses an outpouring of melancholy: “When would the moon be bright again?” (明月幾時有把酒問青天).

In a quite different but equally powerful manner, GUO Wenjing employs *luogu dianzi* in his chamber opera *The Wolf Village* (1994). Guo’s music

here suggests the grotesque rather than the lyrical: it is edgy and unflinching in the face of true darkness and madness. In *The Wolf Village*, a scene set in the madman's study is filled with percussive sonorities and sparse melodic lines (see example 9). The guitar begins with a stroke in imitation of the *pipa*; then, as the melody enters, a tremolo on the gong rapidly becomes louder; these gestures are followed by brittle and percussive plucked chords played by the harp, guitar, and piano, suggesting a wicked mood. The composer specified the use of fingernails or finger knuckles to achieve this effect. Next, the flute enters with a glissando, followed by emphatic downbeats in two successive measures that introduce the vocal line. These two downbeats suggest a typical opening percussion statement in Beijing opera that introduces an aria. Later still, successive entries of brief *jijifeng*-like accelerations are assigned to various instruments, and the voice accentuates the feel of inner restlessness.

The scene in question from *The Wolf Village* also possesses a subtle, almost abstract, connection to *luogu dianzi*. In Beijing opera, the composite rhythms of *luogu dianzi* are quite simple, yet the different combinations of timbres produced by four percussion instruments give each pattern a characteristic sound, whether played by the instruments themselves or as an accompaniment to an opera melody. The notation of *luogu jing* reflects a host of timbres derived from the different combinations of instruments. For example, the *naobo* (small cymbal) often marks the upbeat alone with an "onomatopoeic word," *cai* (才) sound, a flourish that adds a decorative effect. The *xiao luo* (small gong) often plays alone, producing a *tai* (台) sound, a timbre often associated with upbeats. Example 10 provides an example in which the vocal line and words, "Pitch dark, no moonlight" (黑漆漆的 / 不見月光), are accompanied by a spout of percussive gestures that suggest a ghostly mood. Many of these gestures can be heard as juxtaposed entries of individual and unsettling *cai* and *tai* statements. This use of percussive accompaniment both supports the vocal lines and provides expressive gestures in this scene. The rich timbral palette and textures created through such syntheses generate unusual moods that are key to this powerful opera. The percussive effects and figures seem also to suggest *luogu*, and that suggestion creates a sense of tradition as well as expressive depth.

Albeit brief and selective, these few examples from the works of prolific Chinese composers demonstrate that *luogu dianzi* is not only ubiquitous but deeply ingrained, aesthetically and culturally, in their music. *Luogu dianzi*

Fl. head joint (♯) (♮)
 Cl.
 Gtr. near the bridge with nail sul. E ***
 Harp
 Perc. f p f
 Perc. I Tam - Tam p
 Perc. II Xiao Luo (with Timp. soft stick) p Ban Gu p f
 Perc. III (Ban Gu, a percussion for Beijing Opera) p f
 Perc. IV (with Jing Lao stick) pp mf p
 Tenor yue moonlight g * u * a * ng (Gradually open the mouth.) *** Flick the string with the fingernail of the right hand
 Va. pp
 Vc. ***
 Cb. p f

* strike the body of the instrument with fingertips. ** strike the body of the instrument with the knuckle.

Example 9: Guo Wenjing, *The Wolf Village*, scoring of the *jijifeng* pattern

has long been considered the soul of Beijing opera music, a tradition carried on in model opera. The prominent role of *luogu dianzi* has been transferred to contemporary Chinese orchestral music, although in a more complex, abstract, and innovative fashion. I argue that this deep-rooted sense of tradition and new forms of cultural synthesis stem from the immense power that model opera exerted in shaping Chinese musical culture throughout a special historical period. In discussing the effects that model operas produced on Chinese audiences, Wang Ban noted their omnipresence: the operas “resituated the viewers’ taste, penetrated their feelings, and shaped their aesthetic judgments.” The relevance of this statement to works by the composers under discussion is especially pertinent.

Especially for the young in their formative and impressionable years, the figures and images of the plays delivered a heartfelt experience. . . . The

Fl. *p* *normal*

Gtr. *p* *normal*

Harp *p* *pp*

Pno. *pizz.* *p*

Perc. I *Temple-Block (lowest)* *p* *pp*

Tenor *p* *mf* *mf* *pp* *falsetto*

he? // // qi qi de bu // jian

Pitch dark.

The voice trembles in a lingering fear

The "de" resembles that of a temple block.

no

Example 10: Guo Wenjing, *The Wolf Village*, scene 2, night, in the study of the mad-man, "Pitch dark, no moonlight" (黑漆漆的, 不見月光)

endless streams of images and scenes of the model plays were deposited subliminally . . . in the audience as unconscious imprints: they bypassed the audience's intellect and penetrated the deepest recesses of their unconscious mind.²³

EPILOGUE

Alex Ross of the *New Yorker* calls Guo Wenjing, Chen Qigang, and Tan Dun children of the Cultural Revolution.²⁴ Musically, they are, to be sure, children of model opera, as illustrated by a scene at a 2007 rehearsal of Tan Dun's *First Emperor* at New York's Metropolitan Opera House. The performance was a week away, and the work had already been proclaimed a breakthrough in the history of opera itself and even in Chinese-Western relations. Yet changes were still being made to the opera, and communication between cultures was sometimes difficult. Morale was deteriorating, and a break was called. To console himself, TIAN Hao Jiang, a regular cast member of the Met and a bass assigned the role of general in Tan's opera, sat down on the piano. Under his fingers, "The East Is Red," a song that was China's de facto anthem during the Cultural Revolution, emerged. Soon the Chinese per-

formers and production team gathered around him and sang and danced to character pieces of model opera.²⁵

Undoubtedly, model opera was intimately connected to the creative energy of this post-Cultural Revolution generation of artists. Their distinguishing styles of cultural synthesis stem from the important genre, though each style developed in different ways, both from each other and from the genre itself. This was poignantly described by the artists' contemporaries. The June 1986 special issue of *The People's Music*, devoted to new-wave composers, included an essay with the expressive title "Generation of Initiation, Generation of Transformation, and Generation of Quandary: Young Composers' Creation, Predicament, and Ambivalence." Under the pen name Liang Xi, the author of the article wrote,

In essence the younger generation continued their teachers' path of pursuit for nationalism in their compositions. Their distinguishing characteristic is not only that, in terms of compositional techniques, rather than borrowing of 19th-century Romantic style of the Western European tradition as their teachers did, they face directly at the 20th century. It is also that they did not just learn from the beautiful melodies of folk music, but also cast their eye wider on the incredible breadth and depth of Chinese culture as a whole.²⁶

Notes

1. Hon-Lun Yang, "From Global Modernity to Global Identity: The Transculturation of the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra" (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Musicological Society/Society of Ethnomusicology /Society for Music Theory, New Orleans, November 2012).

2. See Hon-Lun Yang's essay on the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra in the present volume.

3. See Christian Utz, "Cultural Accommodation and Exchange in the Refugee Experience: A German-Jewish Musician in Shanghai," *Ethnomusicology Forum* 13, no. 1 (2004): 120; John Winzenburg, "Aaron Avshalomov and New Chinese Music in Shanghai, 1931-1947," *Twentieth-Century China* 37, no. 1 (2012): 50-72.

4. Barbara Mittler, *Dangerous Tunes: The Politics of Chinese Music in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China since 1949* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997), 8.

5. Mao Zedong, "Talks at the Yen'an Forum on Literature and Art (May 1942),"

in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), 3:70. See also LI Song, *A Chronicle of Model Opera of Chinese Cultural Revolution*, 2 vols. (Taipei Shi: Xiu wei zi xun ke ji gu fen you xian gong si, 2011–12).

6. See Li Song, *A Chronicle of Model Opera of Chinese Cultural Revolution*, vol. 1, 1963–1966 (Taipei Shi: Xiu wei zi xun ke ji gu fen you xian gong si, 2011).

7. See Yawen Ludden, “Making Politics Serve Music: Yu Huiyong, Composer and Minister of Culture,” *TDR: The Drama Review* 56, no. 2 (2012): 152–68.

8. This process has been confirmed by many musicians involved in the creative effort. It is documented in great detail in both volumes of Li, *Chronicle of Model Opera*.

9. See, for example, Bell Yung, “Model Opera as Model: From Shajiabang to Sagabong,” in *Popular Chinese Literature and Performing Arts in the People’s Republic of China, 1949–1979*, ed. Bonnie S. McDougall and Paul Clark (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 144–64.

10. WANG Ban, *The Sublime Figure of History Aesthetics and Politics in Twentieth-Century China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 194–228.

11. Gu Xiong, “When We Were Yang,” in *Art in Turmoil: The Chinese Cultural Revolution, 1966–76*, ed. Richard King (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2010), 114–15.

12. Paul Clark documented this phenomenon well in his *Youth Culture in China: From Red Guards to Netizens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 29–37.

13. Quoted in Barbara Mittler, “Popular Propaganda? Art and Culture in Revolutionary China,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 152, no. 4 (2008): 482.

14. During the fall of 2004, I conducted interviews with several composers and musicians who were involved in the creation of the model opera, including LUO Zhongrong, WU Zuqiang, and SU Xia.

15. Wang, *Sublime Figure*, 194–228.

16. Mittler, “Popular Propaganda?,” 481.

17. Clark, *Youth Culture in China*, 32.

18. Chen Yi, private conversation with author, February 2007.

19. *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy*, arranged by the Shanghai shi Jingjutuan Zuqiweihushan juzu [Shanghai Municipal Troupe of Peking Opera] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1970), 71.

20. Nancy Rao, “The Tradition of *Luogu Dianzi* (Percussion Classics) and Its Signification in Contemporary Music,” *Contemporary Music Review* 5–6 (2007): 511–27.

21. Interview of Joël Bons, quoted in “The Difference and Similarity between Chinese and Western Contemporary Music,” *International Herald Leader*, 29 August 2003.

22. Chen Qigang, interview by Lian Xiansheng, 1 April 2001, published in *Philharmonic Magazine [Aiyue Zazhi]*, 2002, 6–9: 連：我覺得《易》的基本音樂語言是非常接近李給替(Gyorgy Ligeti)的。但是你在加了單簧管之後，卻有了另一種豐富的音樂效果。就像你後來在作品裡經常出現的「緊打慢唱」的想法，也就是，由一個持續的、時間感比較悠長的聲部，跟一群複雜、細碎，動態而緊密的音響的橫向並置或縱向疊置的進行。陳：對。人的分寸感，對時間的感覺我覺得是不會有太大改變的。但是在寫作具體的音響，還有就是和聲縱向的關係、音色的選擇，是會又一些改變。所以《易》裡邊有許多東西當然還是自己天生的。還有那種衝動的感覺，在其他作品裡還是有的。當初梅湘看這個作品時他就特別喜歡。在沒有聽之前，完全是看譜子。

23. Wang, *Sublime Figure*, 194–228.

24. Alex Ross, *The Rest Is Noise* (New York: Picador, 2008), 518.

25. See Tian Hao Jiang, *Along the Roaring River: My Wild Ride from Mao to the Met* (New York: John Wiley, 2008), 9–10.

26. Liang Xi, “Generation of Initiation, Generation of Transformation, and Generation of Quandary: Young Composers’ Creation, Predicament, and Ambivalence,” *People’s Music* 6 (1986): 6–8.

Spanning the Timbral Divide

Insiders, Outsiders, and Novelty in Chinese-Western Fusion Concertos

John Winzenburg

The same timbral orgy that transports this listener with a rush of ecstasy strikes another as a painful attack on the ears.¹

—ALFRED KAUDERS, 1907

When Chinese composer GAO Weijie wrote *Dreams of Meeting* in 1993, it was not by coincidence that he scored the work for solo *dizi* (Chinese bamboo flute), Western flute, and orchestra or that he quoted extensively from Debussy's *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* from a century earlier. Gao had received separate requests from soloists in China and France for new compositions, and he decided to use their contrasting national identities to create a metaphor of superimposed sonic worlds contained within the concerto framework. The composer de-emphasized Debussy's programmatic setting of Stéphane Mallarmé's poem and focused, instead, on the transnational importance of tone colors as a structural element. In this process, he created a dialogue of timbres among the solo instruments and between soloists and orchestra. In Gao's conception, these timbres could only interact within "a dreamy experience of the cultural encounter between China and the West"² (see example 1).

Gao's mystical description reveals both illusory and real elements in his cross-cultural timbral encounter. The interplay of Western flute and Chinese *dizi* in a solo concerto is only "fantastic" when one insists on perpetuating older—and, in many ways, obsolete—cultural markers in creating musical imagery.³ Gao's piece exemplifies the growing body of compositions in which Chinese and Western musical elements overlap. Within this repertory, an

The image shows a page of a musical score for Gao Weijie's *Dreams of Meeting* (缘梦), measures 18–22. The score is written for a Western orchestra with a Chinese soloist. At the top, there are staves for Flute solo and Dizi solo. Below them are staves for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Horns (Hn.), Flute solo (Fl. solo), and Dizi solo (Dizi solo). The woodwind section includes Flute, Oboe, and Horns. The string section includes Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Cello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.). The score is marked with a tempo of Moderato, a ritardando (rit.) section, and a Tosto section at 360 bpm. Dynamics include piano (p), mezzo-forte (mf), and fortissimo (ff). The score is in 2/4 time and features complex rhythmic patterns and melodic lines.

Example 1: Gao Weijie, *Dreams of Meeting* (缘梦), measures 18–22

emerging subgenre of over four hundred “fusion concertos” for Chinese solo instrument and Western orchestra is noteworthy because it highlights timbral combinations rarely, if ever, heard during Debussy’s lifetime.⁴

Theodor Adorno has shown how newness of timbral events in musical compositions can reflect the social milieu of an era.⁵ Adorno concentrated on the orchestral works of Gustav Mahler, a contemporary of Debussy’s, in whose music novel timbral scoring assumes a deeper structural significance and reflects notions of the cultural “outsider” within fin de siècle Europe. Adorno also identified a dialectical balance between surface and depth, in which, as recounted by John Sheinbaum, “timbre retains something of its outsider status, marked as different, even as it functions as an insider.”⁶ According to Sheinbaum, this dialectic has wider sociocultural implications. Sheinbaum states that “Adorno’s discussions of timbre and structure easily

map onto (and represent a critique of) important aspects of the *fin de siècle*, namely the notion that a formerly pure and whole society was threatened by intrusions of sinister, suspect cultural outsiders.”⁷

Timbral exploration in more recent works, including Gao’s, exhibits similar metaphorical implications in the form of Chinese-Western cultural interplay. An entire subgenre of late twentieth-century Chinese-Western fusion concertos embodies an increasing tension between insiders and outsiders in terms of cultural-timbral novelty. This occurs metaphorically when the Western concerto is infused with Eastern elements, seemingly reflecting a new sociohistorical reality. The present essay begins by summarizing the evolution of the Western orchestra through the late nineteenth century. It continues with an examination of nonstandardized orchestral tone colors explored by both Easterners and Westerners, in order to show how an aesthetic tension between timbral insiders and outsiders has been established and managed. Finally, it concludes with a discussion of ways in which once merely “novel” Chinese timbres have become cross-cultural markers in fusion concertos, specifically in terms of the redistribution of orchestral families, greater instrumental diversity, and novel combinations of individual and ensemble sounds. By strengthening its position as “timbral outsider” in the Western concerto tradition, the collective body of Chinese instruments has claimed an insider’s position within the repertory of fusion concertos. This transformation of timbral possibilities represents an important step toward a new Chinese-Western cultural balance.

TIMBRE AND THE ORCHESTRAL TRAJECTORY: GALVANIZING THE INSIDE-OUTSIDE POLARITY

In the physical sense, timbre refers to the distinguishing character of a sound, apart from, but in relation to, its pitch, volume or intensity, and duration, as perceived in terms of the relative strengths of its harmonics, the rise and decay times of its component partials, and the possible presence within it of inharmonic components. However, there is an increasing awareness of the perceptual shaping of timbres, in terms of either the physical properties of individual instruments or other, nonphysical properties that somehow mold our timbral cognition. “The brain’s auditory mechanisms,” Harold Fiske maintains,

convert sound vibrations into chemic-electrical signals and analyze these for interpretable cues. How the brain identifies these cues is both genetically determined (e.g., pitch extraction) and culturally determined (e.g., deciding whether the signal is speech-intended, music-intended, or noise). An auditory signal is necessary, but not sufficient, for directing musical *understanding*.⁸

In relation to this cognitive process, Cornelia Fales argues that “perceived timbre exists in a very real sense only in the mind of the listener, not in the objective world.”⁹ At one level, humans perceive timbre in relation to pitch, intensity, and duration as these factors interact with other sonic elements—content (individual notes), harmony, melody, rhythm, texture, and so on. This mode of perception has been fundamental to the musical practices in every civilization.

Among the various world traditions, Western instrumental music has exhibited a marked trajectory of timbral preferences over the past four centuries.¹⁰ This has involved standardization with a view toward greater range and projection, regulated tuning, and homogeneous yet flexible functionality. Out of this general development, the Western orchestra emerged in the late seventeenth century as a preeminent ensemble built around the violin family. Perhaps the most distinctive of the violin’s attributes was its perceived versatility, especially in view of its sustainable tone, immediately adjustable pitch, and strong sonority—a combination that enables it both to blend with and to stand apart from other instruments.¹¹ All this made the violin suitable for large theatrical ensembles and concert performance as both a solo and sectional instrument; it also formed the basis for the Italian “singing *allegro*,” which became the ideal orchestral sound precisely because of the perception that “no other instrument [than the violin] could imitate the expressive nuances of the human voice so closely.”¹²

As the orchestra expanded during the eighteenth century and incorporated its divisions into string, woodwind, brass, and percussion sections, orchestral timbres acquired a greater variety of musical roles. This variety was influenced by seventeenth-century and early eighteenth-century practices in which nonstringed instruments were primarily employed to color and punctuate string sounds.¹³ During the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the increasingly expressive character of musical ideas called for timbral as well as melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic representations. By the

late Romantic era, the orchestra had grown to its maximum “standard” size: it featured large string sections; winds and brasses in threes and fours; a percussion battery that included cymbals, chimes, and xylophones; harps; and, very occasionally, pianos or organs. This instrumental template became sacrosanct—save, perhaps, for occasional noisemakers (the wind machine identified in the score for Richard Strauss’s *Don Quixote* is one example).

As the Romantic era gave way to modernism at the beginning of the twentieth century, the exploration of orchestral tone colors became a musical goal unto itself. Mahler and Debussy, for example, incited controversy when they employed timbre as a structural device in orchestral compositions. At the same time, Western musicians after Mahler came gradually to resent instrumental standardization. They searched for new sounds, including those produced by unusual percussion instruments, and they occasionally employed prerecorded natural sounds (e.g., the nightingale in Respighi’s *Pines of Rome*). These explorations also involved “extensions outward to other cultures and backwards in time.”¹⁴ By the mid-twentieth century, the “standard” orchestra had experienced a “reopening,” and outsider instruments included exotic, ancient, and electronic sources of previously unexplored sonic possibilities.

The search for new timbres marked a major step at legitimizing outsider voices. However, the standard orchestra remained the norm. Curt Sachs, for instance, explained how the “reserved” sound of viols was replaced by the more powerful, flexible, and “distinctive rich tone” of violins.¹⁵ His evolutionary theory justifies the accurate pitch, equalized timbres, limited overtones, and overall improvements characteristic of the modern flute as an improvement on the ancient flute, which he marginalized as a “shrill military instrument.”¹⁶ Many previously excluded timbral sources were long believed to possess a “motley” range of unfavorable folk sounds—nasal, shrill, piercing, earsplitting, buzzing, brittle, thin, and muddy.¹⁷ Sounds that had gained early acceptance were esteemed as “well-ordered and cultivated”—refined, eloquent, pleasant, bright, brilliant, rich, full, warm, and agreeable (see table 1).¹⁸ These positions—the one expansive and enthusiastic about new sounds, the other exclusive and conservative as far as familiar sounds were and are concerned—have lasted into our own late twentieth-century and early twenty-first-century era of globalization and multiculturalism, even as unconventional timbres have appeared in greater quantity.¹⁹

The sudden profusion of Chinese-Western fusion concertos exemplifies this seeming conflict. Many of the terms previously used to describe “unfa-

avorable” Western instruments and their timbres are now used to describe some of the Chinese solo instruments most often employed in fusion concertos. In a review of the British premiere of Guo Wenjing’s *Chou Kong Shan* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, for example, a critic for the Classical Source website complimented soloist TANG Jun Qiao for playing “not one dizi (bamboo flute) but three, each with the distinctive catch of overtones that creates a buzzing accompaniment to her instruments’ main notes.”²⁰

The *erhu*, a two-stringed fiddle, is perhaps the most frequently employed Chinese solo instrument in fusion concertos. It merits close attention because it spans the insider-outsider boundary line as an exotic yet bowed string instrument, and it has become prominent in fusion concertos largely because musicians and audiences often consider it the Chinese violin. Consequently, it has achieved the importance of the Western violin in Chinese orchestras and has also gained popularity as a virtuoso instrument. “Organologically,” states YU Siu Wah, “the building up a full range of instruments, such as treble, alto, and bass bowed lutes of the *erhu* type, is obviously under the influence of the Western consort concept.”²¹ The *erhu*’s very popularity in China has led to questions about its usefulness.²² Its snakeskin resonator gives it a unique timbre with which Chinese audiences identify closely, yet it

TABLE 1. Descriptive Terminology Used in Relation to Orchestral Timbres

Outside Qualities: “Motley” Variety of Folk Sounds	Inside Qualities: “Well-Ordered and Cultivated”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Nasal ♦ Shrill ♦ Piercing ♦ Ear-splitting ♦ Buzzing ♦ Brittle ♦ Thin ♦ Muddy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Refined ♦ Eloquent ♦ Pleasant ♦ Bright ♦ Brilliant ♦ Rich ♦ Full ♦ Warm ♦ Agreeable
Applied to “Outside” Timbres:	Applied to “Inside” Timbres:
<i>Pre-Common Practice</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Excluded ancient Western instruments 	<i>Common Practice</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Standardized orchestral instruments
<i>Post-Common Practice</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Expanded function of standard orchestral instruments ♦ Newly invented instruments ♦ Chinese instruments now used in fusion concertos 	

sounds “thin and veiled”²³ next to Western strings. Unlike the violin, which possesses four strings of varying ranges and timbres as well as a fingerboard, the *erhu* possesses only two strings and lacks a fingerboard. Furthermore, as prominent Chinese instrumental composer LIU Wenjin observes, the *erhu*’s sound is weaker in its upper range,²⁴ severely limiting its capacity to execute climactic passages even when amplified. In measures 115–18 of WANG Jianmin’s *First Erhu Rhapsody* (1988), the solo instrument is gradually drowned out by the accompanying orchestra (see example 2). *Arizona Republic* reviewer Richard Nilsen perceived this technical discrepancy when viewing a 2010 Phoenix Symphony performance of TAN Dun’s *Crouching Tiger* Concerto in its *erhu* version, stating

the substitution of the *erhu* added some Chinese atmosphere, but also an audio problem: The *erhu* is so tiny and small-voiced that it had to be amplified, and while we watched [the soloist] center stage, the sound of her instrument came from up top of the side of the stage from giant hanging speakers, while the orchestra sounded live and centered, creating an aural cognitive dissonance that interfered with the ability to hear the music as a unified whole.²⁵

The *erhu* thus occupies a paradoxical cultural and musical position: it serves as a counterpart to the violin in Chinese orchestras and provides welcome new sounds in Western compositions even as its physical and timbral properties have prevented it from assuming full insider status.

Tension has also resulted from differences between Chinese and Western instruments in manners of tone production. In Western orchestras that traditionally exclude plucked instruments such as the “very limited”²⁶ lute and banjo, the metallic sound of the reformed *pipa* (Chinese lute)—another popular solo instrument in fusion concertos—suggests another insider-outsider dilemma. Some scholars have called the Western lute a “dying instrument”²⁷ and have complained that the banjo is folklike and amateur;²⁸ others consider all plucked instruments appropriate only for “vulgar, clownish songs.”²⁹ Slow and sustained banjo and lute chords do not often “work well” in ensemble settings.³⁰ Furthermore, lutes of various sizes declined during the Baroque period even as continuo instruments, all but disappearing “under the pressure of the harpsichord,” which was itself eventually replaced by the piano.³¹ It is no wonder that the *pipa* is treated as an outsider by Westerners who dislike its “drumlike percussion”³² sounds, its timbral

Ad lib.
(116)

The musical score shows the Erhu part in measure 115, marked 'Ad lib.' and '(116)'. The Erhu part is in G major and 2/4 time, with a melodic line that is sustained through measures 116-18. The rest of the orchestra (Flutes, Oboes, Clarinets, Bassoons, Timpani, Violins, Violas, Cellos, and Double Basses) provides harmonic support with sustained chords and textures in measures 116-18.

Example 2: Wang Jianmin, *First Erhu Rhapsody*, measures 115–18

resemblance to the “Appalachian mountain style banjo,”³³ and, as François Couture proclaims, its “special Oriental twang.”³⁴ Like many of the Chinese instruments described below, the *pipa*’s frequent appearance in fusion concertos follows a century of timbral exploration on the part of Western composers, even as the instrument itself has been excluded for its problematic ensemble tone colors.

CHINESE TIMBRAL INSERTION: A NEWLY (RE-)CREATED INTERNATIONAL REPERTOIRE

The examples of the *erhu* and *pipa* point to the importance of timbral aesthetics in the contemporary orchestral repertoire and its constituent genres, with

novelty presuming a polarity of acceptability and exclusivity as its precondition. The insider-outsider tension further informs how cross-cultural elements metaphorically reshape notions of the Western concerto in Chinese-Western fusion concertos. Timbral duality has been an innate part of the Western concerto since the Baroque period. Furthermore, all concertos hold a metaphorical fascination for musicians and audiences alike, in that they symbolize relationships between individuals (soloists) and the group (the orchestra)—sometimes as contenders, sometimes as collaborators.³⁵

Adorno's insider-outsider concept is applicable to concerto timbres for two reasons. First, the individual-group dynamic inherent in the concerto genre corresponds to Adorno's contention that, within human social structures, "the particular individual—mapped onto particulars in the music like timbre—can stand up to the universal, that free expression can still exist."³⁶ Second, Adorno's metaphor of timbral foreignness in orchestral scoring was directed at actual group identities involving German-European national majorities and others through the early twentieth century: specifically, in Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*, the "Orient" is a "pseudomorphous . . . cover for Mahler's Jewish element."³⁷

I consider Chinese-Western fusion concertos to be late twentieth-century outgrowths of these fundamental identity relationships. Mary Remnant has noted the importance of the concerto for its solo timbre property in Western instrumental development, stating that "it could be said that an instrument comes of age when a concerto is written for it."³⁸ In contrast to other solo and chamber instrumental genres, the concerto is significant in its combination of several features: (1) the highlighting of soloists in contrast to the Western orchestral ensemble, which itself carries the image of prestige; (2) the potential function in developing and displaying virtuosity; and (3) the opportunity to develop metaphorical dialogue between soloists and orchestras, with the individual soloist assuming significance as both venerated virtuoso and metaphorical outsider.

As an orchestral genre, the concerto and its constituent timbres represent cultural attributes. Whereas the concerto evolved over hundreds of years in the West, only since the early twentieth century has China begun to adopt Western music on a large scale. Although many Chinese musicians quickly developed concerto-level virtuosity on Western instruments, Western concertos offered few opportunities, until later in the century, for musicians playing traditional Chinese instruments. Now, as Yu Siu Wah observes, performing a concerto with a Western symphony orchestra is regarded as "the most dignified occasion of most Chinese instrumentalists."³⁹

A macroscopic view of fusion concertos illuminates the rapid expansion of the subgenre over the past twenty years. Table 2 outlines the recent increase in compositions of fusion concertos, following a half century during which only a small number of such works were written. This sudden growth is tied to China's "modernization" over the past century and to modernism's emphasis on individualism.⁴⁰ Earlier Chinese instrumentalists relied on an oral tradition of passing down standard pieces from generation to generation, without the likelihood of gaining immediate fame or prominence. The new concerto repertory has provided a contemporary vehicle for twentieth-century and twenty-first-century conservatory-trained soloists to find their musical voices, in conjunction with composers, orchestras, and audiences hungry for new material. With this repertory, so closely modeled on Western concertos, solo Chinese timbres function as individual, often venerated voices set apart from the ensembles that accompany them. It is a small wonder that fusion concertos have recently become an important pedagogical repertory for Chinese instrumentalists. Works such as Wang Jianmin's *First Erhu Rhapsody* (cited above) now form the staples of the repertoire for conservatory students.

Rapid development of the fusion concerto has also been tied to group identity. The Chinese adoption of Western musical practices constitutes a conscious, century-long effort at national empowerment. From the Chinese standpoint, the timbral perspectives of insider and outsider are significant. As Yu candidly observes, the sight and sound of reformed Chinese instruments featured on an equal footing with the Western orchestra can enhance collective esteem.

Most Western-educated middle class [Chinese] have been obsessed with the canons of Western classical music and would try their best to "develop" and "elevate" Chinese music up to the "same" or even "higher" level of achievement and sophistication of Western music. What is hidden underneath such mentality is in fact the desire to defeat the West

TABLE 2. Chinese-Western Fusion Concerto Development by Period

Period of Distribution	Worldwide
Pre-1949	≥ 8
1949–1979	≥ 18
1980–1989	≥ 40
1989–2010	≥ 300

culturally, if not militarily. However, they have simplistically equated sheer increase in volume, brightness, virtuosity, speed, and size of performing forces with achievement and sophistication.⁴¹

With these things in mind, fusion concertos can be understood as vehicles for promoting national identity as well as individual accomplishments. They re-create the Western concerto scheme by featuring visually and aurally identifiable Chinese solo instruments. To support these instruments, Chinese percussion is frequently added to the Western orchestral battery, contributing additional Chinese timbres to the orchestral accompaniment, metaphorically claiming the concerto as part of its own musical tradition. In a similar manner, as the new repertory has grown, various Chinese instruments have supplemented standard Western orchestral sounds. Thus, although China has adopted the Western orchestral medium and its concerto tradition, fusion concertos possess powerful global appeal. In the process, Chinese timbres magnify the aforementioned insider-outside tension through cross-cultural representation.

The Western orchestra has already become commonplace throughout China. Even as this has happened, an indigenous, Chinese orchestra has also become commonplace. Based on four distinct registers analogous to the SATB voicing of a Western chorus, the Chinese orchestra utilizes mostly Chinese instruments and serves as a representation of China itself. The cultural insider-outsider relationship is maintained in Chinese-orchestral compositions but has been modified as new families of instruments continue to be included. Table 3 illustrates how the inclusion of Chinese instruments presents a novel alternative distribution of families within even Chinese orchestras. The selection of solo instruments for fusion concertos allows for an

TABLE 3. Acoustical Novelty via Redistribution of Orchestral Families

Western Orchestra:	Chinese Instruments:
1. Bowed strings (+/- plucked harp) (+/- struck piano)	1. Strings in great variety Bowed Plucked
2. Woodwinds & brass	Struck
3. Percussion Pitched timpani Non-keyboard (Membranophone/idiophone) Keyboard	2. Winds without brass 3. Percussion Non-keyboard (Membranophone/idiophone)

extended variety of interaction between the two sides, Chinese and Western, especially in terms of plucked and struck string instruments.

The kinds of Chinese instruments employed in both East Asian and Western orchestras are themselves significant. Adorno focused on an expanded use of existing winds, especially brass instruments, in Mahler's works; the new fusion concertos are more likely to include seemingly "alien" sounds—those of plucked and struck strings, clay ocarinas and flutes with membranes, mouth organs, bitonal bell chimes, gongs with rising and falling pitches, and woodwinds, such as the *suona*, played with double reeds and projected by detachable metal bells. Within any single work, Chinese timbres may or may not outweigh Western timbres; when considered in terms of fusion concertos as a genre, the diversity of new timbres increases the insider-outsider tension by adding weight to the status of non-Western outsiders. Table 4 shows the solo instruments most commonly scored in fusion concertos, grouped by families. A growing number of percussion concertos are particularly colorful in their utilization of Chinese percussion instruments, such as *datanggu* drums, hand cymbals, temple bells, and gongs, often in conjunction with percussion instruments from different continents.

In tandem with overall instrumental diversity, composers have increasingly employed new combinations of solo and orchestral instruments, in which ensembles of various sizes—some of them consisting of mixed Chinese and Western instruments—interact with one or more soloists to produce novel visual-aural experiences. CHONG Kee Yong's 2008 *Shui Mo* (Water Ink) combines a wind instrument (the *sheng*), a bowed string instrument (the *erhu*), and plucked strings (the *pipa* and *guzheng*)—all Chinese—with a large Western orchestra divided into different "choirs" on and off stage. CHUNG Il-Ryun's 2005 Double Concerto for Sheng, Bassoon, and Chamber Ensemble combines Chinese and Western wind instruments, while QIN Wenchen's 2004 *Feng Yue Song Xiang* (Wind-Moon Consonance) combines Western recorder and Chinese *sheng*. In the cases described above, the persistence of the Western orchestral model in opposition to novel solo timbres resulting from alternative instrumental families contributes to insider-outsider tension.

The incorporation of new technology and synthetic timbres is stretching this tension even further. Anthony P. De Ritis scored the 2000 single-movement *Plum Blossoms* for *pipa*, strings, glockenspiel, triggered keyboard, and electronics (see example 3). De Ritis's orchestra plays continuous, interlocking fragments of a *pipa* melody, while the *pipa* soloist and electronic

TABLE 4. Diversity in Chinese-Western Fusion Concerto Solo Instrumentation

<i>Solo instrument classification:</i>	
Strings	≥ 220
Plucked	≥ 130
Pipa	≥ 66
Zheng	≥ 49
Guqin	≥ 5
Others = Sanxian, Liuqin, Yueqin, Zhongruan	
Bowed	≥ 90
Erhu	≥ 70
Others = Banhu, Gaoju, Sihou, Jinghu, Zhonghu, Matouqin	
Struck	≥ 4 (Yangqin)
Winds	≥ 100
Non-Reed	≥ 45
Dizi/Xiao	≥ 35
Others = Xun, Leaf, Lushe	
Reed	≥ 55
Sheng	≥ 43
Suona	≥ 8
Guanzi	≥ 3
Percussion	≥ 21
Multiple solo instruments	≥ 35
<i>Voices included:</i>	
Solo	≥ 20
Chorus	≥ 12
Orchestra	≥ 3
<i>Multimedia incorporation:</i>	
Includes audio recording, video recording, computer	≥ 5

instruments together form an integrated texture. Here, live Chinese instrumentalists interact with the timbres of Western strings and the prerecorded *pipa*-based sounds triggered “live” by the orchestral keyboardist. Sonic integration is only achieved in the performance space by a skilled audio engineer, who must blend the amplified *pipa* with an acoustic orchestra and electronically generated sounds. A sense of sonic ambiguity is created because listeners remain uncertain whether what they are hearing is live or prerecorded. In this way, multiple timbral boundaries are crossed on cultural and technological planes.

A musical score for Example 3, consisting of ten staves. The top five staves are for strings (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, and Double Bass), each with a treble clef. The bottom five staves are for electronics (top two), pipa (middle two), and another instrument (bottom one), each with a treble clef. The score shows a complex, multi-layered texture with various rhythmic patterns and melodic lines.

Example 3: Anthony P. De Ritis, *Plum Blossoms* for pipa, strings, and electronics, measures 38–43

TIMBRAL OUTSIDERS VERSUS GENERIC INSIDERS: A NEW CHINESE-WESTERN PARITY

In this essay, I have focused on the process of timbral-cultural expansion—from that of insider soloist during the Western eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, toward new representations of outsiders in twentieth-century and twenty-first-century Chinese-themed fusion concertos. Within these last works, the roles played by solo and orchestral instruments have expanded as a result of China’s increasing adoption of Western musical practices. Fusion concertos exemplify the extent to which insider-outsider social and musical tensions have increased over the past century; they also signal how shifting social forces have been reflected in the blurring of timbral boundaries. As nations around the world strengthen themselves economically, politically, and culturally during the present postcolonial era, a new global balance has begun to replace former dichotomies with complex parameters that redefine notions of cultural insiders and outsiders. Today, non-Western instruments added to works otherwise scored for Western ensembles serve multiple purposes, as agents of exoticism, acts of multicultural inclusion, and new forms of political and social affirmation.

Consider the December 2012 “Music for Cultural Harmony” concert held in Shenzhen, China, and sponsored by UNESCO and the Melody for Dialogue among Civilizations Association. The finale featured a row of soloists situated above and behind the Shenzhen Philharmonic Orchestra. As part of a rescored performance of Modest Mussorgsky’s *Pictures at an*

Exhibition, these soloists played instruments from China, India, Iran, Japan, Macedonia, Mongolia, Syria, Turkey, and Vietnam. The performance featured call-and-response passages between the orchestra, playing Maurice Ravel's orchestral arrangement, and different groupings of folk instrumentalists, all of them dressed in traditional garb and playing variations on Musorgsky's music. The performance concluded with all instruments sounding together.⁴² In this scenario, the Western orchestra was momentarily "pulled" into alignment with non-Western traditions, and indigenous Chinese instruments counterbalanced Western instruments to suggest an alternative insider of equal status.

In Chinese-Western fusion concertos, the relocation of timbral boundaries has been directly tied to issues of nationalism. Sue Tuohy has observed that local sounds in these concertos, as well as the meanings associated with them, have systematically become part of Chinese national identity.⁴³ Instrumental, vocal, and theatrical forms that were part of different regional traditions assumed new national meaning through the twentieth century due to changing sociopolitical circumstances. Initially, this resulted from China's attempts to overcome numerous indignities at the hands of other nations. As the century progressed, the Chinese preference for both older traditional instruments and Western instrumental forms became part of a nation-(re)building phenomenon.⁴⁴ These predilections have also served symbolic external or international functions. When China engaged in post-Cultural Revolution diplomacy with the United States in 1977–78, *Little Sisters of the Grassland* (1973)—a concerto for *pipa* and Western orchestra—received performances by Seiji Ozawa with the Central Philharmonic in Beijing and by the Boston Symphony Orchestra. When China celebrated both the handover of Hong Kong in 1997 and the Beijing Olympics in 2008, Tan Dun called for *bianzhong*, a set of ancient bitonal bells, as audio-visual-temporal signifiers of Chinese grandeur both at home and, with reference to Hong Kong's former British leaseholders, abroad.⁴⁵

Beyond ceremonial occasions, the explosion of post-1989 fusion concertos reflects new patterns of domestic and global consumption. In turn, fusion concertos written by both Chinese and non-Chinese composers are being performed around the world, by youth and community orchestras as well as major professional ensembles. *Plum Blossoms*, for instance, was composed by Boston-based De Ritis and commissioned by the San Diego Symphony Orchestra for a premiere performance by *pipa* soloist MIN Xiao-Fen, who currently lives in New York.

It is tempting to argue that current insider-outsider polarities soon may be mitigated as an old-fashioned East-West dialogue (represented by, e.g., Gao's *Dreams of Meeting*) is replaced with a more pluralistic, global dialogue in which China plays ever-expanding roles. Older boundaries and ideas remain tenacious, however, and the ideal of a timbral melting pot remains unfulfilled as long as combinations of solo instruments from multiple traditions are perceived as random sounds or merely "politically correct" gestures. Giovanni Battista Doni was only being candid when, more than three hundred years ago, he referred to a mixture of strings and winds in a single ensemble as "Spanish porridge."⁴⁶ Doni's opinion reflected a contemporaneous cultural and aesthetic prejudice that favored strings over winds. Twenty-first-century Hong Kong composer CHAN Hing-Yan has been equally frank. "On one hand," he reminds us, "fusion concertos blend timbres, but on the other hand, they [the timbres] are unblendable."⁴⁷

To deal with musical and cross-cultural tensions of these and other kinds, both Western and Chinese orchestras will need to continue exploring China's mixed musical traditions. Moreover, the long-standing debate over soloist-ensemble balance within concertos of all kinds needs to be reopened now that additional national and cultural elements have come into play. Perhaps the very economic, political, social, and cultural forces that originally propelled the development of the Western orchestra and concertos of all kinds may reappear and continue to inspire fusion concertos that reflect the twenty-first century's "post-East/West" relationship.

Notes

1. Alfred Kauders, *FremdenBlatt* (Vienna), 5 January 1907, quoted in Karen Painter, "The Sensuality of Timbre: Responses to Mahler and Modernity at the 'Fin de siècle,'" *19th-Century Music* 18, no. 3 (1995): 255.

2. GAO Weijie, "Dreams of Meeting for Dizi, Flute, and Orchestra," liner notes in *Enigmas of the Moon*, Hugo Productions HRP 7205-2, 1999, 19.

3. The "exotic" harmonic language and texture of Debussy's original work is accentuated here by images of the "natural" bamboo *dizi* versus the "manufactured" metallic flute, as well as by differing degrees in regulating intonation and by a residual geographic-ideological divide in which Chinese and Western cultures are mutually alien, as if still "discovering" each other.

4. This study defines the term *concerto* in its broadest sense, as "an instrumental work that maintains contrast between an orchestral ensemble and a smaller group or a solo instrument or among various groups of an undivided orchestra" (Arthur

Hutchings et al., "Concerto," in *Grove Music Online*, Oxford Music Online, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40737> [accessed 2 August 2010]). For narrative purposes, I also refer to individual movements and extended passages that include Chinese solo instruments as part of the fusion concerto repertory.

5. See Theodor W. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmond Jehphcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992). See also John J. Sheinbaum, "Adorno's Mahler and the Timbral Outsider," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 131, no. 1 (2006): 38–82.

6. Sheinbaum, "Adorno's Mahler," 41.

7. *Ibid.*, 42.

8. Harold E. Fiske, *Understanding Musical Understanding: The Philosophy, Psychology, and Sociology of the Musical Experience* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 2008), 223.

9. Cornelia Fales, "The Paradox of Timbre," *Ethnomusicology* 46, no. 1 (2002): 62.

10. In *The Orchestra: Origins and Transformations*, ed. Joan Peyser (New York: Billboard, 2000), see George G. Butler, "Instruments and Their Use: Early Times to the Rise of the Orchestra," 73–100; George B. Stauffer, "The Modern Orchestra: A Creation of the Late Eighteenth Century," 41–72; Robert L. Weaver, "The Consolidation of the Main Elements of the Orchestra: 1470–1768," 7–40.

11. See Mary Remnant, *Musical Instruments: An Illustrated History from Antiquity to the Present* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1989), 61.

12. Stauffer, "Modern Orchestra," 46. The "singing allegro" is also a musical topic transferrable to the piano and other instruments. See Leonard Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer, 1980), 21–24.

13. See Weaver, "Consolidation," 29.

14. Glenn Watkins, *Soundings: Music in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Schirmer, 1988), 634.

15. Curt Sachs, *The History of Musical Instruments* (London: Dent, 1968), 353–55.

16. *Ibid.*, 380, 381, 408.

17. Heinz Becker, *History of Instrumentation* (Cologne: Arno Volk, 1964), 10, 14.

18. *Ibid.*, 10.

19. See n. 47 below.

20. Nick Breckenfield, "Beyond the Wall—TAN Dun The Map," http://www.classicalsource.com/db_control/db_concert_review.php?id=6912 (accessed 8 April 2009). Breckenfield does not acknowledge the added membrane of the *dizi* that creates the buzzing effect.

21. Yu Siu Wah, "Identity as a Problem of Hong Kong Composers," *World New Music Magazine* 12 (2002): 18.

22. See LIU Wenjin, "Minzu Guanxianyue Jiaoxiangxing de Shiyan" [Symphon-

ic Experiments in Chinese Orchestral Music], in *Zhongguo Minzu Guanxianyue Fazhan de Fangxiang yu Zhanwang: Zhongyue Fazhan Guoji Yantaohui Wenji* [The Direction and Future of Chinese Orchestral Music Development: Proceedings of the International Symposium on Chinese Music Development], ed. Yu Siu Wah (Hong Kong: Provisional Urban Council, 1997), 22–31.

23. Anthony Baines, “Ancient and Folk Backgrounds,” in *Musical Instruments through the Ages*, ed. Anthony Baines (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), 217.

24. Liu, “Minzu Guanxianyue,” 25.

25. Richard Nilsen, “Fill-in Rous Is Rousing in Conducting Debut with Phoenix Symphony,” *Arizona Republic*, 16 May 2010, <http://archive.azcentral.com/arizona-republic/ae/articles/20100516ben-rous-conductor-phoenix-symphony-concert-review.html> (accessed 28 April 2015).

26. Hans Gal, *Directions for Score Reading* (Vienna: Vienna Philharmonic, 1924), 17. The harp is exceptional in this respect, and the guitar and harpsichord have been limited orchestral members; this is also true of string pizzicati. Gal notes that the harp is louder than lute-like instruments.

27. Michael W. Prynne, “The Fretted Instruments: The Lute,” in Baine, *Musical Instruments through the Ages*, 164.

28. See Albert Birch, “The Fretted Instruments: The Guitar and Other Fretted Instruments,” in Baine, *Musical Instruments through the Ages*, 181.

29. Remnant, *Musical Instruments*, 42.

30. Paul O’Dette, “Plucked Instruments,” in *A Performer’s Guide to Renaissance Music*, ed. Jeffery Kite-Powell (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 143.

31. Sachs, *History*, 374.

32. *Ibid.*, 191.

33. Charlie Gillett, “The Sound of the World Playlist,” BBC London 94.9 FM, 8 November 2003, http://liufangmusic.net/English/press/bbc08_11_03.html (accessed 26 July 2010).

34. François Couture, review of Liu Fang, *All Music Guide*, 2003, quoted at <http://liufangmusic.net/English/index.html> (accessed 26 July 2010).

35. See Simon Keefe, “Theories of the Concerto from the Eighteenth Century to the Present Day,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Concerto*, ed. Simon Keefe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 7–10.

36. Sheinbaum, “Adorno’s Mahler,” 43.

37. Adorno, *Mahler*, 149.

38. Remnant, *Musical Instruments*, 210.

39. Yu, “Identity as a Problem,” 17.

40. The concerto in Europe emerged in tandem with the rise of individualism and the middle class in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These social conditions also emerged in China in the twentieth century, which had some bearing on the appearance of concertos within the Chinese cultural context.

41. Yu, *Such are the Fading Sounds* (Hong Kong: International Association of Theatre Critics, 2005), 238. In addition to the individual and nationalistic motivations, the perceived need for an individual instrument to project above the symphony orchestra may itself be regarded as a driving force for instrumental reform. Because they serve reformist and traditionalist objectives, fusion concertos may be viewed as a reference point for a great deal of debate on cultural modernization in Chinese music.

42. Despite being amplified, many of the folk instruments were inaudible in this passage. Visually, they were still “heard” by virtue of instrumental appearance and traditional attire.

43. Sue Tuohy, “The Sonic Dimensions of Nationalism in Modern China: Musical Representation and Transformation,” *Ethnomusicology* 45, no. 1 (2001): 109.

44. See HE Luting, “Guanyu Yinyue Jiaoyude Yifeng Xin” [A Letter Regarding Music Education], in *He Luting Yinyue Lunwen Xuanji* [Collection of He Luting’s Musical Writings], ed. ZHAO Weiqing (Shanghai: Wenyi chubanshe, 1981), 138–63.

45. See Yu, “Two Practices Confused in One Composition: Tan Dun’s *Symphony 1997: Heaven, Earth, Man*,” in *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, ed. Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau (Middletown: Wesleyan University, 2004), 56–71.

46. See Weaver, “Consolidation,” 11.

47. Chan Hing-yan, interview by author, 17 January 2005. Chan has been one of the more proactive composers in mixing Chinese solo instruments with Western orchestra.

Combinations of the Familiar and the Strange

Aspects of Asian-Dutch Encounters in Recent Music History

Emile Wennekes

In heaven, the language spoken is Chinese—at least according to the messianistic figure HONG Xiuquan (1814–64), who considered himself the younger brother of Jesus Christ. In 1853, Hong established a New Jerusalem in the earthly paradise of Nanjing. A predecessor of MAO Zedong, Hong led his own followers in an uprising against the Manchu Qing dynasty. In 1959, a Hong museum was established in his birthplace, Hong Renkun. Yet not until the end of the last century did a Dutch librettist, Friso Haverkamp (born 1942), happen upon this amazing character. In writing the plot and text of the opera *Hier*^o (2000),¹ Haverkamp incorporated Hong's intriguing vision of heaven: in the Dutch opera text, the language changes to Chinese when the scene changes from earthly Amsterdam to a heavenly afterlife. In *Hier*^o, three soloists of the Beijing opera present Haverkamp's text in Chinese, in newly composed, Chinese-sounding passages by Guus Janssen (born 1951).

Friso Haverkamp has had a lifelong fascination with Chinese culture and history. In 2008, he provided the libretto for a second Chinese-themed opera, called *Hôtel de Pékin: Dreams for a Dragon Queen*, with music by another Dutch composer, Willem Jeths (born 1959).² The central character in *Hôtel de Pékin* is the empress dowager Cixi, whose death in 1911 ended the Qing dynasty. In *Hôtel de Pékin*, Cixi succumbs to a *Liebestod* together with QIN Shi Huangdi, China's legendary founding emperor, thus bridging more than two thousand years of imperial history. These two reception sites (to allude to the terminology of Hans Robert Jauss)³ of Chinese culture—sites fore-

grounding the work of an ironically sensitive librettist and two subsequently receptive and creative composers of the same nationality but somewhat different ages and backgrounds—together represent a late twentieth-century perception of the East-West relationship and exemplify a transcultural attitude in Dutch composing. At the same time, *Hier*° and *Hôtel de Pékin* seem to reanimate a phrase attributed to Qing dynasty official ZHANG Zhi-dong: *Zhong(xue) wei ti, xi(xue) yong*, means “Chinese as substance, Western for (technical) usage.”⁴

A characteristically Asian-Dutch dualism between substance and surface in recent music history is the principal subject of this essay. In their combinations of musical and cultural elements at once “familiar” and “strange” from Asian and Western perspectives, recent works by Dutch composers such as Janssen, Jeths, Ton de Leeuw, and Peter Schat embody essential aspects of late twentieth-century and emerging twenty-first-century East-West musical relationships. Dutch perceptions of Asian culture did not appear out of the blue. Already in the 1950s, Guus Janssens’s composition teacher Ton de Leeuw (1926–96) expressed his conviction that the arts and philosophies of the West should merge with their counterparts from the East. In turn, de Leeuw has paid tribute to Jaap Kunst (1891–1960), his renowned professor of ethnomusicology. One could argue that this pedigree of perception reaches even farther back into the musical life of the Netherlands.⁵ Indeed, throughout Western Europe, creative crossbreeding and confrontations between Eastern and Western musical idioms have had an extended and intriguing history. Holland—a small country that has had commercial ties with Asia for more than four hundred years, longer than most of its neighbors—offers a remarkable case study in this respect.

Although the first contacts between Dutch sailors and the East can be traced back to the mid-sixteenth century, not until 1595 did the Dutch fleet first appear off the coast of Java. In 1600, a Dutch ship called *De Liefde* (Love) found its way into the Bay of Usuki, Kyushu, Japan, after a dreadful trip and the loss of most of its crew. The survivors made careers for themselves as advisors to the shogun; in the process, they helped create a more or less stable basis for a relationship between Japan and the Dutch United Provinces. The Dutch also acted as a go-between in establishing regular trade relations between Japan and China as of 1633, while colonizing Taiwan themselves.⁶

Despite the extensive economic developments and the profound cultural knowledge that necessarily resulted from these and other encounters,

little was known for centuries in Holland about Chinese music. In 1883, for example, the otherwise well-informed author and conductor Henri Viotta (1848–1933) wrote, in his three-volume lexicon, about “the mysteries of Chinese music.” Viotta tells us that, as early as the days of Confucius, the Chinese were said to have a fixed tone system, one with the power to “satisfy the heart.” He also hints at the pentatonic basis of Chinese melody and mentions the use of smaller intervals than those of the semitone. Western scholars, he observes, have “tried in vain to attribute these intervals of a quarter or a third tone and even more complicated proportions to inaccurate observations, to aural illusion or to abstract mathematical calculations. . . . We are confronted with a riddle, one that can only be solved by a musical expedition.”⁷ Here Viotta expresses an early and honest call for ethnomusicology.

That the answer to Viotta’s enigma might lie in the fact that Chinese scales are not tempered and that what Westerners call “major” and “minor” scales are mingled in Chinese music were some of the conclusions drawn by a certain J. A. Van Aalst, in an eighty-four-page English-language pamphlet published a year later in Shanghai. Van Aalst (1858–after 1914) was an administrator for the Chinese imperial government of the Qing dynasty.⁸ His text, inferior though it may be from a contemporary perspective, rapidly became a major European resource for Chinese music—not only in the Low Countries but elsewhere as well. It was even used by Puccini on behalf of the chinoiserie in his opera *Turandot*.⁹

More than half a century later, an administrator for the Dutch Foreign Service did a much better job in terms of musical scholarship, although his work tickled the fancies of few, if any, composers. The groundbreaking book *The Lore of the Chinese Lute* (1940), by diplomat and novelist Robert van Gulik (1910–67), is still considered “the best introduction in Western languages to the important ch’in tradition,” to quote Chinese American composer CHOU Wen-chung.¹⁰ In fact, van Gulik’s volume was recently listed in China among the most influential foreign books on Chinese culture.¹¹ Incidentally, van Gulik was also the *spiritus rex* of the Judge Dee mysteries, in which he adopted traditional aspects of Chinese detective fiction.

Much more can be said about Dutch perceptions of Asian music overall.¹² One could cite the reception accorded the work of Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore, the intellectual influences of Sufi teacher Hazrat Inayat Kahn, and the popularity of sitar player Pandit Ravi Shankar.¹³ In 1970, Ton de Leeuw expressed concern about the pervading perceptions of Asian music in his time.

The drama playing out today is that Western expansion—especially in its negative, materialistic manifestations—has long suppressed those individuals that could call themselves authentic heirs of an Eastern tradition. . . . *Essential* contacts remain scarce. Our recent composers have—at most—a tourist type of interest; in this, they have the same attitude as their predecessors of the *fin de siècle* In short, we still fully live in an era of cultural colonialism.¹⁴

Much has since been written about cultural colonialism, transcultural understanding and misunderstanding, and the difficulties of distinguishing superficial influences from anything more substantial. The last issue is not uncommonly referred to as making the distinction between a “cosmetic” exoticism or “pentatonic romanticism,”¹⁵ on the one hand, and an underlying or “structural” inspiration, in musical form, as a means of grappling with the Eastern “spirit” (whatever that may mean), on the other. Attempts to distinguish between binary opposites of these and other kinds usually go hand in hand with either ethical value judgments or opinions about artistic profundity.

In terms of a more profound interest and subsequent creative reception of “the East,” de Leeuw remains exemplary even today. In his *weltanschauung*, the contrast between East and West was central. To an extent, for him, the contrast of East versus West came down to spiritualism, on the one hand, and materialism, on the other. It pained de Leeuw to observe that the cultures of both worlds were being increasingly eroded, stripped of their defining characteristics, as history progressed. In his music, de Leeuw strove to achieve a synthesis between these contrasts. He visited India in the early 1960s to study its musical culture on behalf of the Dutch government, and he traveled in later years to Japan, Indonesia, and Iran (to name but a few of the nations he visited). At the Asian Composers’ Conference in Hong Kong in 1981, de Leeuw gave a lecture entitled “The Adaptations of Asian Forms in Contemporary Music,” in which he presented his personal creed.

I am . . . a Western composer, and I have no ambition to be a non-Western composer, or to imitate Asian music. . . . In my opinion, the composer is a sort of living sounding box. He does not create out of nothing, but he is reacting on all sources coming from outside. My sources have been from the beginning Western music as well as Asian music. This is part of

today's cultural conditions. Deep inside myself, I feel a constant and continuous awareness of all that has been created by mankind in the past.¹⁶

De Leeuw also observed,

Various aspects related to Asian Music have been determinant in my approach to musical form, e.g. the sense of timing. As an example—the slow start of an Indian classical raga . . . far from being monotonous, focuses the attention on a different and more subtle level. Even a single tone needs time to come into being, to develop, to die out. . . . The act of composition, to me, is a spiritual experience, far more than anything else.¹⁷

Exemplary of de Leeuw's approach is *Car nos Vignes sont en Fleur*, a choral composition also written in 1981. In this work, we hear a sort of "tone growth" at the very beginning, as if a sitar player were plucking more and more notes from the available universe of tones. In contrast to these Eastern elements, the text is unmistakably Western, the *Song of Songs*. In fact, *Car nos Vignes* is the first part of a trilogy based entirely on biblical texts. *Car nos Vignes* itself consists of seven tightly knit movements. After an exploration of tone A, the first movement opens with a text relating how, at night, in her sleep, the bride seeks the one for whom her heart yearns. In the last movement, a hymnlike conclusion takes as its starting point a sort of Gregorian melody, which is gradually adopted by the entire choir.

Car nos Vignes exemplifies essential aspects of East-West musical relationships. In it, de Leeuw attempts to synthesize Eastern and Western influences. The resulting music "does not EVOLVE, it IS," to borrow the words of Jaap Kunst describing Indonesian music.¹⁸ The music of *Car nos Vignes* suggests an Eastern vernacular in its static harmony, its modest counterpoint and slow rhythmic motion, its use of modality, its subjective aim, and its search for a close relationship between the macrocosmic and microcosmic levels—characteristics that, in de Leeuw's opinion, defined Asian music. Nevertheless, this composition is certainly Western music in the end. Ton de Leeuw's oeuvre offers many other examples of this kind of merging. A substantial part of his work was inspired by haiku, for example, and he wrote a piece called *Gending* that is "a Western homage to the musician of the gamelan."¹⁹ In other words, his approach was a personal search for accul-

turation, and his book about twentieth-century music, originally published in 1964, makes all this clear.²⁰

Although de Leeuw once used (an English translation of) a poem by Shi-t'ao as a text,²¹ his "Asian" music was more often defined by Indian, Indonesian, and Japanese influences. Concrete Chinese influences are less prominent in his work. Another Dutch composer of de Leeuw's generation, however, turned to China for inspiration. In 1980, the Year of the Ape, Peter Schat (1935–2003) introduced his so-called cartoon opera *Monkey Subdues the White-Bone Demon*. Schat's opera was inspired by WU Cheng-en and WANG Hsing-pei's popular sixteenth-century novel *Journey to the West*, which features the character of Mr. Monkey. The episode with the White-Bone Demon was also beautifully depicted during the seventeenth century in a total of 110 drawings by CHAO Hung-pen and CHIEN Hsiao-tai.

Through a facsimile reproduction of Wu and Wang's "graphic novel," published in Beijing in 1964, the West became acquainted with the adventures of Monkey, "who hatched from a stone egg that was fertilized by the wind."²² Monkey lives for at least a thousand years. It takes him five hundred years to learn all sorts of magical arts, like moving through space at the speed of light. After many adventures and battles with the Kingdom of Heaven, he is imprisoned for five hundred years, until he is finally released by the monk Hsuan-tsang. Together, monk and Monkey undertake a pilgrimage of penance, following the light westward.

Schat's opera, a chamber work based on a Dutch-language libretto by the composer himself, relates the confrontations between the White-Bone Demon (coloratura soprano) and the monk Hsuan-tsang (countertenor) and his retinue: Monkey (tenor), Pigsy (baritone), and Sandy (bass-baritone). Schat's title explicates the story's outcome: Monkey finally overcomes his nemesis. In his "creative reception" of this ancient story, Schat not only used the original Chinese protagonists and story but also employed Chinese music as a source of inspiration. Although his "reception" of Chinese musical style extended only to the pentatonic scale, the way Schat dealt with that scale as a stylistic departure point reveals an interesting adaptation of its atmospheric and inherent musical possibilities. Nevertheless, Chinese music functions merely as a catalyst for Schat's artistic ideas and for the craftsmanship of this Western and, more specifically, Dutch composer.

Monkey Subdues the White-Bone Demon is scored for a Western ensemble of woodwinds (flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon), horn, percussion, strings, and harpsichord. Each protagonist has his or her own instrumental conno-

tations and specific musical motives, and, to quote the composer, it is with these chess pieces that “the game must be played in the twelve-note field.”²³ Despite the fact that Schat never employs the term *leitmotif* while referring to his characters, each character does undergo a composed, psychological development as the opera progresses.

Schat begins by constructing a motive that is based on the open-string notes of the violin—as was used, for instance, by Alban Berg in his Violin Concerto—and that also contains four of the five pentatonic tones. In transposing this four-note group twice at intervals of a major third, Schat chromatically fills in the octave. Schat explains that “the order of the notes within these groups can be free, thus making it possible to investigate ever-new relations within the same ‘tonality,’” as the composer defines it.²⁴ The introductory violin solo presents the motive, in a twelve-tone pentatonic environment, as well as within an instrumental context that illustrates the character of the monk Hsuan-tsang. The White-Bone Demon is instrumentally represented by broken chords on the harpsichord that are repeatedly interrupted by a tremolo on the marimba. Pigsy is characterized by a series of two-note chords, melodically performed by a duet between horn and bassoon. Finally, Monkey is represented by a flute playing a row of notes. In the opening measures of the opera, appropriately called “Parade,” some of these characteristics are introduced.

Space prohibits delving more deeply here into the intriguing manner in which Schat interweaves the various forms of these motives throughout his opera, but one additional example is important: Hsuan-tsang’s appearances are accompanied by chorales, “whose mild, consonant twelve-note tonality,” as Schat explains,

is brought about by a harmonic elaboration of the violin melody from the introduction. . . . In this harmonization, the different voices themselves acquire a strongly chromatic character, whilst the chords [in four-note groups] remain pentatonic, i.e. non-chromatic. . . . During the whole first act, this manner of writing does not change, just as Hsuan-tsang does not change his standpoint. . . . Not until he gets into difficulties in the second act do complications arise.²⁵

It goes without saying that the pentatonic scale is a prominent—probably the most prominent—feature of Chinese music for many Western composers, performers, and listeners. Illustrated in Viotta’s nineteenth-century

encyclopedia, it is audible in every Dutch opera, past and present, that incorporates Chinese references. Nevertheless, every composer has his or her own approach to the pentatonic, be it a “picturesque deviation from the [Western] norm” (to paraphrase Carl Dahlhaus)²⁶ or something more associative (as it was for Peter Schat). Other composers, including Guus Janssen and Willem Jeths, have incorporated pentatonic elements into their own idioms. In these cases, the results have proven themselves neither typically Western nor altogether Chinese. Instead, they collectively comprise a hybrid musical-cultural framework.

Whereas the libretto of *Monkey Subdues the White-Bone Demon* generally follows the lines of a preexisting story, Haverkamp’s operas *Hier°* and *Hôtel de Pékin* were both based on newly invented stories. “It is a libretto made by a mad man,” wrote one critic of *Hier°*, who added, “It is nevertheless a stroke of genius.”²⁷ It is hard to recount in a few words what the hermetical opera *Hier°* is all about. Its narrative layers turn somersaults, combining morality with blasphemy in a warning against hubris: that whoever arrogantly messes around with immortality and divinity is doomed to fall. In *Hier°*, the historical character of Hong is conflated with two additional historical characters representing the Middle East and the West: Floris van Hall, the major shareholder of Amsterdam’s lost Crystal Palace²⁸ (the “Memory Palace” in Janssen’s opera), and the Jerusalem-based Rabbi B[enjamin] Hier. Hong, Hier, and van Hall together serve as inspirational alter egos or prefigurations of the opera’s complex protagonist.

Three Chinese sopranos symbolize the Holy Trinity in *Hier°*. Their appearances act as mirrors, reflecting “real” time, slowed time, and accelerated time. The sopranos also symbolize other trinities: past, present, and future; body, soul, and spirit. Since each soprano performs different functions at different times, Janssen has each of them sing in different tempi—except, that is, at one crucial moment. When Hier attempts his jump from earth to heaven, the Holy Trinity sings in unison to represent heavenly harmony.

If the libretto of *Hier°* qualifies as a madman’s creation, the opera’s music possesses an eclectic weirdness. In his score, Janssen, a stylistic omnivore, makes no distinctions between crooning and bel canto, between Viennese operetta and Chinese opera, between the harmonium and the *erhu*, between yodeling and free jazz. Instead, he combines every possible kind of music, using individual stylistic elements for slightly ironic surprises. Furthermore, Janssen divides his attention between improvised and composed musical statements, combining a warmhearted interest in other musical cultures

with his original yet firmly Western compositional stance. Elsewhere too, as in the pieces for music theater that Janssen has created in collaboration with librettist Friso Haverkamp, stylistic eclecticism predominates. In *Noach* (1994), another opera, Tuvan singers produce overtones full of heavenly fluting and hellish roaring; recordings of humpback whales accompany live vocalists, while wind instruments imitate heartrending animal noises; and so on.

Hier° calls for singers from the Beijing opera to be flown in to tell an absurdist story about an Amsterdam that yearns for immortality. Janssen himself traveled to China to develop his musical concept. There he invited performers from the Dalian Beijing Opera Troupe to join his project, in which the West and East would not only meet musically but collaborate intensively, challenging each other in order to break down conventional walls of prejudice. Parts of *Hier°* consist of actual cultural dialogues, combining composed passages with improvisations. To accentuate the work's Chinese atmosphere, Janssen incorporates the *dizi*, *pipa*, *jingerhu*, and *gu*. These instruments merge with Western instruments that are anything but traditionally operatic, including a (virtuoso) harmonium. The pentatonic scale dominates those scenes in which the sopranos symbolizing the Holy Trinity appear, but the newly constructed melodies in these same scenes are interwoven with jazz riffs and other typically Western musical material. The sopranos themselves are challenged to perform undiluted Chinese rap and an Everly Brothers look-alike song. In a furious stylistic quasi fugue, East chases West throughout *Hier°*, each culture alternately taking the lead in a bizarre musical discourse. In *Hier°*, the Chinese is Dutchified—or, more precisely, “Janssenfied.”

In an interview, Janssen—who affirmed his ambition to work with Chinese musicians at all costs—acknowledged, “If you step into that adventure, you first get the impression that you are dealing with Martians; Chinese culture and its music are that far away from us.”²⁹ To blend cultural differences, Janssen immediately set out to build stylistic bridges. He began by composing short vocal pieces, which he himself recorded on tape. In reaction to Janssen's pieces, the Chinese sopranos recorded their own interpretations and returned them to the composer, after which Janssen created new samples that were more difficult and—especially—more polyphonic.

Scene 27, entitled “HALMA,” exemplifies the eclectic mix of styles and genres that characterize *Hier°*. In this scene, the music moves in a swinging pace, established primarily by a jazzy rhythm section, augmented by several

keyboard instruments, and featuring a slide trombone. The Chinese instruments provide sustained, unchanging notes. The text consists of a list of Amsterdam street and canal names, recited in Dutch and echoed by the Holy Trinity in Chinese. The coda to this scene consists of an accelerating tremolo performed in unison by Western and Chinese percussion instruments, which leads, in turn, to a pentatonic improvisation provided by the harmonium and the pianos and accompanied by twittering birds. In this passage, as elsewhere, the pentatonic is deliberately foregrounded as ironic, superficial chinoiserie.

The opera *Hôtel de Pékin* is also scored for a combination of classical symphonic-orchestral and traditional Chinese instruments, including the *erhu*, *jinghu*, and *suona*. Composer Willem Jeths employs eight percussion players who perform on such unconventional noisemakers as crystal glasses, rain sticks, stones, and whistles; section members are also called on to tear apart pieces of paper and silk. Perhaps the world's largest tam-tam joins forces with six Chinese drums, two anvils, tuned water gongs, and *cencerros* (cowbells tuned a minor second apart; the bells are swung through the air after being struck). Finally, Jeths quotes canonical Western works, including the love duet from *Tristan und Isolde* and Messiaen's *Turangalila* symphony, as well as pieces by Berg, Franz Lehár, and Maurice Ravel. A brilliant orchestrator, Jeths is able to forge this combination of familiar and strange instruments, old and new works, and East-meets-West styles into a highly individual score.

Hôtel de Pékin was the first opera composed by Jeths but was not his first composition inspired by the East. In *Fas/Nefas* (1997), a concerto for harp and orchestra, the solo instrument is sardonically hammered with sticks and treated as if it were a Japanese koto. Jeths later reworked *Fas/Nefas* into a concerto for partially prepared piano; in that version of the work, the piano's innards are struck with sticks. In *TIM/BA* (2000), Jeths combines Western percussion instruments and piano with a gamelan. The title is illustrative: *TIM/BA* is short for *Timor/Barat*, Indonesian for "East/West." *TIM/BA* combines the limited (and, to most Western ears, out-of-tune) sounds of the gamelan ensemble with the chromaticism of Western instruments. In *Hôtel de Pékin*, Chinese and Western instruments are combined in a similar way.

Like *Hier*,^o *Hôtel de Pékin* presents a cluster of story lines too complicated to summarize here. Jeths called the opera "a tribute to CHINA! certainly, but no less an homage to an exceptional woman: imperious, cruel, ruthless,

as well as thoughtful, elegant, charming and sophisticated Empress Dowager Cixi." He further explained,

Basically a stream of consciousness or interior monologue of Cixi's, articulated in 18 scenes or "DREAMS," the opera stages a kaleidoscopic range of images and flashes-back as Cixi [age seventy-three, dying in 1908, the opera's actual setting] rethinks and reenacts some key experiences, relationships and events in her life, scenes all converging on her last and deepest wish: to die for and in her immortal dream of a new CHINA.³⁰

Some critics have argued, mainly from a Western point of view, that Cixi, by means of her extraordinary gifts for subtle leadership, kept the Qing dynasty in power longer than might have been expected in an era of turmoil, increasing internationalization, the Boxer Rebellion, and so on.³¹ Others have adopted the Chinese point of view concluding that she hastened the dynasty's collapse.³² This latter position is defended in *Hôtel de Pékin*.

Each character in this "Peking" opera by Jeths is linked with a specific instrument. Dramatic soprano Cixi is accompanied by the *erhu*, while countertenor Anzi, her eunich, is coupled with the clarinet. QIN Shi Haungdi, a part for basso profundo, has the tenor trombone as his instrumental counterpart. Within a compositional framework of this kind, other telling combinations exist, as episode 6 of *Hôtel de Pékin* illustrates. In this scene, Cixi commissions Anzi to strangle those mandarins that (might have) deserted to the Western enemy. Then she points to what she considers the real threat to China: her nephew, the Emperor Guangxu. In the opera, Guangxu is completely Westernized: he passes his time surfing the Internet, hanging around in the virtual world of Second Life, and playing computer games. The mandarins are killed to rescue the ancient empire, a task previously given to Cixi by Qin. With all the mandarins dead, Qin's tenor trombone is amalgamated with Cixi's *erhu*.

As in *Hier°*, an all-ladies vocal trio, the Versaces, appears in *Hôtel de Pékin*. This trio is partnered by an onstage band that plays pentatonic jazz on Chinese instruments. Throughout the 2008 production of *Hôtel de Pékin*, Chinese local color was provided by a troupe of some forty singers, dancers, and players, flown in from Nanjing.

In *Hôtel de Pékin*, Jeths calls for his singers to perform in a typically Western manner, although the use of minor seconds in singers' high registers could be interpreted as a reference to the Beijing opera. In fact, the

most important interval in *Hôtel de Pékin* is the minor second B–C, which symbolizes the choice Cixi must ultimately make: does she choose for Qin and imperial China, represented by the note C, or for the people, for the new China, for herself, represented by the note B? The final consequence of choosing the latter would be the end of empire. Cixi's dilemma is spelled out as early as the opera's opening measures: out of the first orchestral chord, the *erhu* ascends a half step from B to C, and the tenor trombone ascends a major seventh from C to B. In a similar manner, huge leaps in Cixi's vocal part represent her own ambiguity.

Jeths creates an interesting stylistic tension by conflating pentatonic passages and minor seconds. But since the Chinese pentatonic scale is anhemitonic (i.e., without half-step intervals), he could not actually have combined the two in any self-consistent way. The alternative he chose was the incorporation of the Japanese hemitonal pentatonic scale, which led to at least one inadvertently humorous observation: during a rehearsal of *Hôtel de Pékin*, one embarrassed Chinese musician observed, "This is golly Japanese pentatonic."³³ The deliberately kitschy chinoiserie introduced in scenes 5 and 10, for which Jeths did write Chinese pentatonic *pur sang*, is intended to show that Western attitudes toward China remain clichéd.

Hier° and *Hôtel de Pékin* must be understood as part of an overarching international trend, not only in terms of the way composers and librettists have dealt and continue to deal with Chinese (and other Asian) musical tradition, but also in terms of the historical narrative itself as a source of inspiration, irony, and limitation. The rise and fall of empires has influenced artists from all cultures and disciplines. Whereas dozens of previously powerful nations and rulers nowadays tend to play only marginal roles within the creative musical receptions of both Asia and the West, Chinese dynasties of the past remain inspiring for composers, librettists, playwrights, and moviemakers alike. Bernardo Bertolucci's groundbreaking feature film *The Last Emperor* (1987) incorporated music by a trio of Academy Award-winning composers (David Byrne, Ryuichi Sakamoto, and SU Cong). TAN Dun's opera *The First Emperor* has been staged several times: in 2006 and 2008 at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City (with Plácido Domingo in the title role) and in 2008 at the Staatstheater Saarbrücken (with Jevgenij Taruntson as Emperor Qin). *Iron Road* (2001) by Canadian composer CHAN Ka Nin inspired director David Wu to make a movie with the same name in 2008 (with Peter O'Toole). Stewart Wallace based *The Bonesetter's Daughter* (2008) on Amy Tan's novel of the same name. In 2008, Monkey from

Journey to the West was rediscovered by British composer Damon Albarn and designer Jamie Hewlitt, who turned the story of Monkey's adventures into an East-meets-West pop opera. They produced an animation sequence under the original title *Journey to the West*, which was used by the BBC to introduce coverage of the Beijing 2008 Summer Olympics.

In analyzing recent Dutch compositions that draw on some form of Eastern musical tradition or inspiration, we see a gradual shift away from a more substantial—or, in terms of form, a more structural—reception of Asian music. In its place, we discover a reception that might be described, albeit unfairly, as less substantial, more “superficial.” Those words do not do justice to the conscientious manner in which composers such as Janssen and Jeths have dealt with their material. If we compare de Leeuw's intrinsic approach with that of Janssen and Jeths, we discover that theirs is finally more “extrinsic,” more figurative—an approach that reflects specific artistic goals. Theirs is a “teleotean” way of dealing with “foreign” material.

Janssen and Jeths sometimes treat a Chinese-oriented idiom as *corpus alienum*, as *l'est pour l'est*, as chinoiserie for its own sake. Superficial musical orientalisms include the pentatonic improvisations in *Hier*^o and aspects of scenes 5 and 10 in *Hôtel de Pékin*. In these cases, as Edward Said observed in a somewhat different context, the West is presented as and functions as traditionally “dominant . . . restructuring and having authority over the Orient.”³⁴ At other moments in *Hier*^o, *Hôtel de Pékin*, and other Dutch works, however, Chinese musical elements are fully incorporated within composers' own Western idioms, producing eclectic and uniquely blended styles. Dramatic works composed in such styles call to mind Tan Dun's remark that opera will one day “no longer be a Western form, as it is no longer an Italian form.”³⁵

Blended styles are the result either of a musical dialogue (in the work of Guus Janssen) or of something like a monologue (in the sense that Willem Jeths himself prescribed the characteristics of his own eclectic idiom). Without consulting them, Jeths upset at least a few of the Chinese musicians involved with his treatment of the pentatonic. Of course, Chinese music is much more and far richer than pentatonicism. Besides its timbral aspects, consider its linear structures, principles of recomposition, cyclical interactions, ethnic and regional pluralities, *Klangfarben* differentiations, virtuosity, and theatricality. These and other facets are still in need of analysis.³⁶

Another feature of recent Asian-Dutch works also deserves discussion. Said remarked about the orientalist of the nineteenth century that none

of them “seem[ed] to have intended an Oriental as reader.”³⁷ From the very beginning, however, Jeths and Haverkamp have targeted Eastern as well as Western audiences and performers. Auditions in Nanjing for the featured role in *Hôtel de Pékin*, arguments with the Chinese censor, a delegation of Chinese officials present at the premiere, and plans for staging the opera in Beijing are evidence of a bicultural orientation, a focus on Western as well as Eastern performers and listeners. If *Hôtel de Pékin* is ever produced in China, the results would unquestionably provide another fascinating “reception site” within the emerging Sino-Dutch musical relationship and repertory.³⁸

Notes

1. *Hier*° premiered on 21 January 2000 in Amsterdam at the Stadsschouwburg, where it was presented by De Nederlandse Opera and directed by Pierre Audi.

2. *Hôtel de Pékin* premiered on 21 November 2008 in Enschede at the Nationaal Muziekkwartier, where it was directed by Amir Hosseinpour et al.

3. H. R. Jauss, *Literaturgeschichte als Provokation* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970).

4. Quoted in Christian Utz, *Neue Musik und Interkulturalität: Von John Cage bis Tan Dun* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2002), 25.

5. For an overview of postwar Dutch musical life, see Emile Wennekes, “Music and Musical Life,” in *Dutch Culture in a European Perspective*, vol. 5, *Accounting for the Past: 1650–2000*, ed. D. W. Fokkema and F. Grijzenhout (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 253–27; Wennekes, “Yinyue He Yinyue Shenghuo,” in *Ouzhou Shiye Zhong De Helan Wenhua, 1650–2000: Chanshi Lishi*, ed. Douwe Fokkema and Frans Grijzenhout, trans. Wang Hao, Zhang Xiaohong, and Xie Yongxiang (Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2007), 235–54.

6. See Leonard Blussé, Willem Rimmelink, and Ivo Smits, *Bewogen Betrekingen, 400 jaar Nedeland-Japan* (Hilversum: Educatieve Omroep Teleac, 2000), 130–33.

7. Henri Viotta, *Lexicon der Toonkunst*, vol. 2 (Amsterdam: P. N. van Kampen und zoon, 1883), 631–32. This and all subsequent translations from the Dutch are my translations.

8. Van Aalst was a Belgian citizen. An 1886 book review in the *New York Times* suggested that he was a German, a mistake repeated by Krystyn R. Moon in *Yellowface: Creating the Chinese in American Popular Music and Performance, 1850s–1920s* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2005).

9. See William Ashbrook and Harold Powers, *Puccini’s “Turandot”: The End of the Great Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 94–96.

10. CHOU Wen-chung, “Excerpts from ‘Chinese Historiography and Music: Some Observations,’” *Musical Quarterly* 62, no. 2 (1976): 218–40.

11. Information provided by Shawn Xiaoqiang Gong, Institute of African Studies, Zhejiang Normal University.

12. So-called world music focuses especially on African and Latin American music styles. Chinese music is not a prominent feature.

13. See Rokus de Groot, "Rabindranath Tagore and the Netherlands," in *Rabindranath Tagore, a Creative Unity*, ed. A. Biswas and Ch. Gordon-Graham (London: Tagore Centre UK, 2006), 47–59; de Groot, "Van Eeden en Tagore: Ethiek en muziek," *Tijdschrift van de Koninklijke Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* 49, no. 2 (1999): 98–147; de Groot, "Rabindranath Tagore and Frederik van Eeden: Reception of a Poet-King in the Netherlands," in *Hindustani Music: Thirteenth to Twentieth Centuries*, ed. Joep Bor et al. (Delhi: Manohar; Rotterdam: Codarts, 2010), 521–76.

14. Ton de Leeuw, "Muzikale confrontatie Oost–West," *Mens en Melodie (Muzikaal Eeuwkwartaal)* 25, no. 12 (1970): 48.

15. For "pentatonic romanticism," see Barbara Mittler, *Dangerous Tunes: The Politics of Chinese Music in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China since 1949* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997), 33.

16. Quoted in Rokus de Groot, *Compositie en intentie van Ton de Leeuws muziek: Van een evolutionair naar een cyclisch paradigma* (PhD diss., Utrecht University, 1991), 325.

17. Quoted in *ibid.*, 331.

18. Jaap Kunst, *Music in Java: Its History, Its Theory and Its Technique*, 3rd ed. (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973), 1 (capitalization in the original). See also de Groot, *Compositie en intentie*, 309.

19. *Gending: A Western Homage to the Musicians of the Gamelan* (Amsterdam: Donemus, 1975).

20. See Ton de Leeuw, *Muziek van de Twintigste Eeuw: Een Onderzoek naar haar Elementen en Structuur* (Utrecht: Bohn, Scheltema and Holkema, 1964).

21. His brief but exalted hymn to the fascinating process of artistic creation, *Cloudy Forms* (1970), a composition for four-part male chorus, begins, "Where the brush and ink blend, cloudy forms are produced" (Emile Wennekes, booklet accompanying Netherlands Chamber Choir, *Ton de Leeuw: Choral Works*, Muziekgroep Nederland NM Classics 92102, 2000, compact disc).

22. The information presented in this discussion of Schat's opera and its inspiration is based on Peter Schat, "Monkey Subdues the White Bone Demon," in *The Tone Clock* (Chur: Harwood, 1993), 32–56.

23. *Ibid.*, 37.

24. *Ibid.*

25. *Ibid.*, 37–38.

26. Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 306.

27. Roland de Beer, *de Volkskrant* (Amsterdam), 24 January 2000.

28. See Emile Wennekes, *Het Paleis voor Volksvljijt* (1864–1929): “Edele Uiting eener stoute Gedachte!” (The Hague: Sdu Uitgevers, 1999), 105–8, 277–78.
29. Wennekes, *NRC Handelsblad* (Rotterdam), 1 December 1999.
30. Friso Haverkamp, unpublished libretto, supplied to the author by the librettist (capitalization in the original).
31. See Sterling Seagrave, *Dragon Lady: The Life and Legend of the Last Empress of China* (New York: Vintage, 1992), 440–64.
32. See Edward Behr, *The Last Emperor* (London: Futura, 1987), 50–55.
33. Guido van Oorschoot, *de Volkskrant*, 20 November 2008.
34. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (London: Penguin, 1997), 3.
35. Quoted in Lois B. Morris and Robert Lipsyte, “For Tan Dun’s ‘First Emperor,’ the Met Does a Way-Out-of-Town Tryout,” *New York Times*, 16 May 2006.
36. See Utz, *Neue Musik*.
37. Said, *Orientalism*, 336.
38. For their help in the realization of this essay, I thank the former Research Institute for History and Culture (Utrecht University), Friso Haverkamp, Willem Jeths, Guus Janssen, Michael Nieuwenhuizen, Davo van Peursen, Donemus, Hans “Hema” van den Pol (†), Michael Saffle, and Cynthia Wilson.

PART 4

*Ideological Encounters and the Reception of
Chinese Music and Ensembles in the West*

The Shanghai Quartet's Chinasong

A Musical Counterpart to English-Language Cultural Revolution Memoirs?

Eric Hung

During the past three decades, English-language memoirs by survivors of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution have shaped many Americans' image of contemporary China. These "memoirs of exile" narrate how the persecution of individuals, closings of universities, forced relocations to the countryside, scenes of students beating teachers, and violent Red Guard raids changed the authors' views of Mao and communism; they also explore how these events reshaped their thinking about traditional Chinese culture and history as well as Western ideologies and religion. The motivations for writing these autobiographical accounts and their central foci vary. While some authors use writing to deal with their personal traumas, others see the Cultural Revolution as a launching pad for their literary careers. While some focus on the persecution, imprisonment, and death of family members, others create coming-of-age narratives that explain how each author found her or his identity in the midst of social and political upheaval.

Since their appearance in the mid-1980s, these memoirs—particularly LIANG Heng and Judith Shapiro's *Son of the Revolution*, Nien Cheng's *Life and Death in Shanghai*, Jung Chang's *Wild Swans*, and Anchee Min's *Red Azalea*—have become best sellers.¹ They are widely discussed at book clubs and taught in high school and college courses; they have also been used by politicians to justify their positions and by pastors to discuss the dangers of atheistic societies.² In short, these books have helped to create what sociologists call a "cultural trauma"—a dominant interpretation of a catastrophic event that can be used for various political, social, or religious purposes.³

Although there is mounting evidence that the interpretations presented by these memoirs are too narrow and monolithic, this particular cultural trauma has proven to be quite resilient in American thinking about China.⁴ As we shall see later in the present essay, books and artworks that contradict this cultural trauma are largely neglected in the United States.

In this environment, the Shanghai Quartet—an ensemble formed at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music in 1983 but based in the United States since 1985—released *Chinasong* in 2002 (see fig. 1). *Chinasong* contains twenty-four arrangements of Chinese folk, concert, and political pieces for string quartet, by the group's second violinist JIANG Yiwen (see fig. 2). Although many of *Chinasong's* tracks are based on works written before 1966, Jiang nonetheless emphasizes the connections between the music on this CD and his own experiences during the Cultural Revolution. In his extended liner notes, he explains that he “grew up with many of the traditional Chinese folk songs and popular music on this album, and played some of these pieces on the violin during the difficult days of the Chinese Cultural Revolution.”⁵

In this essay, I argue that *Chinasong* can be read as a musical memoir of exile. I begin by outlining what I call the “American cultural trauma of the Chinese Cultural Revolution.” In focusing on American (mis)understandings and oversimplifications of the Cultural Revolution, I by no means dismiss the tremendous hardships that hundreds of millions of Chinese experienced during that revolution's chaotic decade. I simply want to point out how narrowly many people in the United States interpret contemporary China. Next, I examine Jiang's biography and arrangements and discuss how they relate to the dominant American interpretation of the Cultural Revolution. As effective instrumental music, these works are open to multiple readings. Consequently, I conclude this essay by speculating about how Jiang's life as a voluntary exile might have influenced these arrangements and about why the reception of *Chinasong* seems to be quite different in China.

THE AMERICAN CULTURAL TRAUMA OF THE CHINESE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

The concept of “cultural trauma” was developed by a group of sociologists in the past two decades. It refers not to the suffering of individuals but to that of a collective that feels its members have “been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking



Fig. 1: Cover art of the *Chinasong* album. The folk charm insures prosperity and long life.

their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways.”⁶ The “cultural trauma process” begins when survivors or other members of the collective promulgate personal testimonies about and alternate interpretations of a catastrophic event through speeches, memoirs, scholarly research, and so on.⁷ These testimonies can be used to create new group identities, question existing explanations of events, and do political or religious work. A cultural trauma is, however, only established when the “new” personal testimonies and interpretations become widely accepted both within and outside the collective. Once this occurs, the collective generally attempts to maintain and reinforce the cultural trauma rather than to overcome it. Building and upholding cultural trauma is difficult and

CHINASONG - SHANGHAI QUARTET



I grew up with many of the traditional Chinese folk songs and popular music on this album, and played some of these pieces on the violin during the difficult days of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. The themes speak to the individual listener because they are expressive, direct and easily understood. I asked myself "Why not arrange them for the string quartet, which is the form I love the most? That way I can play beautiful Chinese music again and also bring it to a wider audience with my group, the Shanghai Quartet." – *Yi-Wen Jiang*

①	Miao Mountain Morning	⑬-⑭	Two Pieces from Temple Fair
②-④	Five Yunnan Folk Songs	⑮	Yao Dance
⑤-⑯	Reflections of the Moon in the Er-Quan Spring / Caprice / Shepherd's Song / Harvest Celebration / Liuyang River / Young Soldier's Joy	⑰-⑳	Pictures from Bashu-6 Sichuan Folk Songs*
		㉑-㉒	Two Shandong Folk Songs
		㉓	Red Flowers in Bloom

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 68:56

all arrangements by Yi-Wen Jiang



Weigang Li, violin
Yi-Wen Jiang, violin
Honggang Li, viola
Nicholas Tzavaras, cello
with Eugenia Zukerman, flute *

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Fig. 2: The tray card of the *Chinasong* album. It contains track listings and a statement by arranger Jiang Yiwen that emphasizes the importance of this music during the Chinese Cultural Revolution.

time-consuming and can fail because the collective lacks resources or interest in the matter or because it is unwilling to open old wounds. Successfully consolidating cultural trauma can take decades, but achieving political goals based on such trauma might require a significantly longer time. Witness the extended and continuing fight for aboriginal rights in North America. Although Native Americans have largely established cultural traumas based on their loss of land, people, and culture, they continue to struggle with unequal treaties, resolution of land claims, and the lack of environmental legislation needed to insure their well-being and traditions.⁸

The authors of post-Cultural Revolution Chinese memoirs of exile began emigrating to the United States, Canada, and Britain in the early 1980s. At that time, people in Western countries knew little about China; nevertheless, they held wildly fluctuating images of that nation. By the late

1970s, America's euphoria over Richard Nixon's visit to Beijing had vanished along with his reputation. As newspapers and television news began providing more in-depth coverage of China, the reputation of that nation fell. Between 1975 and 1978, only 21 to 28 percent of Americans polled by Gallup had a favorable perception of China.⁹ But as Jimmy Carter moved forward with normalization in late 1978 and as reports of DENG Xiaoping's market reforms began surfacing in Western media in the early 1980s, New World views of China improved, with between 43 and 72 percent of American men and women reporting favorable perceptions between 1979 and the Tiananmen Massacre of 1989. The English-language Cultural Revolution memoirs identified above initially found their audiences within this increasingly positive environment of fast-changing Sino-American relations and perceptions.

Since the 1980s, these memoirs and others like them have sold extremely well in North America. They provide an easy way to personalize events and trends that people read or hear about in newspapers and on television.¹⁰ In the age of globalization, when knowledge of foreign places and people is often treated as an important form of human capital, memoirs by those who have lived through almost unintelligible obstacles in other countries become particularly attractive. As Vivian Gornick writes, "Everyone senses the world is becoming more and more connected; interests in other parts of the world and people's lives there grow. Reading memoirs is certainly a way to peek through the language and cultural barriers."¹¹

A general lack of reliable and accessible sources of information about contemporary China, combined with increasing interest in that nation, allowed memoirs of exile to play a significant role in forming Americans' opinions about Chinese culture, history, and politics. Although the authors had different reasons for penning these volumes, the end result is that, as a group, the memoirs helped construct a specifically American cultural trauma associated with China's Cultural Revolution. A brief examination of the two most popular memoirs of exile will provide some insight into the creation and maintenance of this particular cultural trauma.

Published in 1986, Nien Cheng's *Life and Death in Shanghai* tells the story of a smart and driven woman who grew up in one of the wealthiest families in Shanghai.¹² At twenty, she enrolled in a master's program at the London School of Economics, where she fell in love with Kang-chi Cheng, whom she married in 1939. Through marriage, Nien converted to Christianity. From 1949 until his death from cancer in 1957, Kang-chi was the general manager at Shell Petroleum's Shanghai office. After his death, Nien became a senior advisor to

Shell until 1966, when political pressures forced the company to relocate its offices to Hong Kong. In August 1966, Red Guards raided her house and put her under house arrest. A month later, she was taken to a denunciation meeting. Falsely accused of being a British spy, Nien drew on her religious convictions and said that she had nothing to confess. This landed her in solitary confinement for six and a half years. Afraid for Meiping, her only daughter, throughout her imprisonment, Nien found her worst fears confirmed when she was released. For refusing to denounce her mother, Meiping was beaten to death and thrown out a window to feign suicide.

The early reception of Cheng's book was extremely positive. In December 1986, the *New York Times* chose *Life and Death in Shanghai* as the main selection for its Book-of-the-Month Club. In June 1987, *Time* magazine ran a fourteen-thousand-word digest of the book and featured it as its cover story. This publicity pushed *Life and Death in Shanghai* onto the best seller lists of both the *New York Times*, for thirteen weeks, and *Publishers Weekly*, for nine. What made Cheng's book so compelling to so many Americans was not only its survivor narrative and its assertion of Christian courage but also the fact that her tale meshed perfectly both with Gulag literature by Soviet and Eastern European émigrés and with that literature's anticommunist rhetoric. Cheng's book thus lent support to those who always feared the worst from all communist nations. Ron Kriss, one of *Time's* executive editors when Cheng's story was identified on the magazine's cover, was quoted in the introduction of that issue as saying, "Many of those responsible for the abuses of the Cultural Revolution 21 years ago are still in positions of power and authority. I'm concerned that the pendulum may be swinging back to the bad old days."¹³

Even more popular than Cheng's memoir has been Jung Chang's *Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China*. Originally published in Great Britain in 1991, this book has sold over thirteen million copies and been translated into thirty-seven languages.¹⁴ Among the honors it has received are the 1992 NCR Book Award and the 1993 British Book of the Year Award. The basic premise of Chang's extended but entertaining volume is the contrast it presents between her happiness and the frustration and sadness of her elders. The reason for this difference is, in one word, China. While her elders were oppressed by traditional Chinese mores, the corruption of the Kuomintang, and especially the treachery of the Chinese Communist Party, Chang was able to leave China and took advantage of that opportunity. She is completely unsparing in her discussion of Mao and his policies: "In bringing

out and nourishing the worst in people, Mao had created a moral wasteland and a land of hatred." For Chang, the "other hallmark of Maoism . . . was the reign of ignorance."¹⁵

In the United States, books by Cheng, Chang, and several other English-language Cultural Revolution memoirists fed negative information about China to a curious but skeptical country. They bolstered the beliefs of readers who did not question orientalist stereotypes and who already felt that Western ways of life were superior. In short, these authors presented the Cultural Revolution as a cultural trauma that permanently changed the worldview and identity of Chinese people. They interpreted that decade as a catastrophe that revealed the shortcomings of Chinese tradition. Over the past three decades, many Americans bought into this analysis. As Peter Zarrow states,

The premise . . . is that Maoist China was nothing more than a totalitarian nightmare, even though the memoirists themselves did not realize it at the time. This simplification is in part an authorial solution to the difficulty of representing complex Chinese reality to Western readers largely ignorant of China. The tropes of Oriental despotism and Cold War struggle immediately give Western readers a familiar way to understand China, to identify sympathetically with the authors.¹⁶

Literature and biography are not the only genres that employed memoirs of exile narratives to explain China's recent history. Of particular relevance to *Chinasong* are two Oscar-winning North American films. The documentary *From Mao to Mozart* (1980) tells the story of Isaac Stern and David Golub's 1979 tour of China. The feature film *The Red Violin* (1998) explores musical life in China during and after the Cultural Revolution.

Ultimately, America's cultural trauma over China was maintained not so much by the broad Chinese American community, a diverse group with widely varying views of Chinese culture and the Chinese Communist Party, as by ardent anticommunists, evangelical Christians who find Cheng's story especially inspiring, and politicians who support a hard line against China. The cultural trauma's maintenance has hindered more nuanced understandings of contemporary China. In the final chapter of her excellent dissertation on memoirs of exile, Zhihui Geng examines books that do not conform to the dominant narrative, and she laments the lack of attention paid to these volumes. Geng points out not only that there are few reviews of these

books but that “some of [the reviews] completely miss the focal point of these alternative memoirs.”¹⁷

In terms of music, Barbara Mittler strongly criticizes the lack of any qualifications or exceptions in published studies of the Cultural Revolution. Contrary to the notion that the only music available in China during the Cultural Revolution were the eight model operas, Mittler explains that “it is obvious, even from these few examples, that traditional and foreign music continued to play a significant role during the Cultural Revolution, that people did listen to, practice, and perform music other than the model works.”¹⁸ One young musician who played a few of these other works is Jiang Yiwen, a violinist who eventually became a member of the Shanghai Quartet and made string quartet arrangements of songs he learned on the violin as a youth.

CHINASONG AND THE AMERICAN CULTURAL TRAUMA OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

Jiang began the *Chinasong* project in 1999. To learn how to use the software he purchased for music notation, he began making string quartet arrangements of Chinese violin and piano music that he learned in his youth. Jiang thought that these arrangements were “pretty good” and showed them to the other members of the Shanghai Quartet. The ensemble enjoyed playing them and performed them initially as encores. Within a couple of years, the ensemble had recorded twenty-four of these arrangements and had begun featuring them on its printed programs. Although some critics consider the arrangements insubstantial, clichéd, and sentimental, Jiang’s transcriptions have mostly been very well received.¹⁹ For years, sales of the *Chinasong* album have exceeded the combined sales of some twenty other CDs that the Shanghai Quartet has recorded. In a 2008 interview, Jiang hinted that a second *Chinasong* album might be forthcoming.²⁰

The quartet has come to call these arrangements “erasers.” In a 2005 interview, Jiang explained, “Last year in China we did the entire Beethoven cycle, but the encores of *Chinasong* erased . . . whole concert[s]. Afterwards, people only wanted to talk about *Chinasong* while we were wanting to ask, ‘What about our Beethoven?’”²¹ In a similar vein, the quartet’s first violinist LI Weigang told *Tulsa World*, “We call [Jiang’s arrangements] ‘The Eraser.’ We have to be careful about where we place it in the program, because audi-

ences respond so strongly to this music. It makes them forget everything we might play during the concert."²²

In America, chamber music fans tend to be older, deeply devoted to the classical canon, and well educated.²³ For this group, *Chinasong* works on two levels. First, Jiang's efforts to clothe the Chinese melodies in Western garb provide American listeners with a sense of safety and familiarity. In the liner notes he wrote for the *Chinasong* CD, he says, "I didn't want simply to imitate traditional Chinese instruments when we play those pieces. I tried to make the harmony and the structure closer to traditional western styles."²⁴ This statement is an oversimplification: many of the original violin and piano pieces include passages that imitate the sounds of Chinese instruments—especially the *erhu*, which is famous for imitating the sounds of animals.

It is clear, however, that Jiang wants listeners to focus less on the potentially "exotic" qualities of the music and more on his ability to present Chinese melodies with fitting accompanimental figures and textures. When I asked Jiang to elaborate on his compositional approach, he stated that when he arranged the *Chinasong* pieces, he constantly considered what great composers of string quartets would have done with these melodies, then began adding gestures that Beethoven and Bartók used to generate greater interest and excitement in their quartets.

A good example of Jiang's approach is the opening number of *Chinasong*, his arrangement of CHEN Gang's "Miao Mountain Morning."²⁵ Composed between 1973 and 1975, toward the end of the Cultural Revolution, Chen's work became extremely popular; there are arrangements for many solo instruments with piano or *yangqin* accompaniment, as well as for chamber ensembles of various instrumental combinations, for Chinese orchestras, and for Western orchestras. The original "Miao Mountain Morning" opens and closes with small, seemingly improvised sections that include imitations of several different birdcalls. In between these sections is a dance cast in ternary form, with a lighter and more carefree initial A section and a somewhat heavier B section featuring a drone. Typical of his approach, Jiang's arrangement of "Miao Mountain Morning" does not alter the form of Chen's original. Instead, Jiang's compositional voice is most apparent in such details as variations in melodic registers, added contrapuntal lines, changes in accompaniment patterns, and different string textures and timbres. When Jiang alters the original, it is almost always because he wants to bring the Chinese piece closer to Western conventions.

One example of such alteration occurs at the very beginning of the arrangement. In Chen's original, the violin enters alone in the upper register, while the piano plays arpeggios only at punctuation points in the phrases. This solo violin entrance portrays the isolation of the rural landscape inhabited by the Miao people, but within the context of Western chamber music, Chen's texture is unusual and sounds rather remote. To make this opening sound warmer, Jiang adds a major-chord tremolo played by the second violin, viola, and cello throughout the opening solo by the first violin. This seemingly small change brings an exotic-sounding work closer to Western art music. In other words, the harmonies, counterpoint, rhythms, and textures of Jiang's transcriptions remain largely within the expectations of Western audiences of chamber music. One critic wrote that *Chinasong* "featured beguiling melodies and echoes of Chinese instruments, but Jiang's ingenious arrangements, with their rich harmonies reminiscent of nineteenth-century central European chamber music, made them sound wholly suited to the quartet idiom."²⁶

For American enthusiasts of chamber music, many of whom are well read, Jiang's arrangements seem intriguing, especially in light of America's cultural trauma in response to China's Cultural Revolution. Jiang himself does not shy away from discussing that chaotic decade in either his liner notes or his published biographies. In the former, he states, "I grew up with many of these pieces, and played some as solo works for violin and piano during the difficult days of the Cultural Revolution."²⁷ In several versions of his publicity biography, Jiang foregrounds the Cultural Revolution so completely that he barely has room to mention his own recent achievements. In fact, he sometimes duplicates the narrative sequence—of innocence, tragedy, and triumph/freedom—found in many coming-of-age memoirs of exile, including Liang and Shapiro's *Son of the Revolution*, Min's *Red Azalea*, and LUO Ziping's *A Generation Lost: China under the Cultural Revolution*.²⁸

This strategy is most obvious in the biography posted to the website of Bard College, where Jiang serves as artist in residence. The first paragraph discusses a relatively idyllic childhood for an aspiring musician.

Violinist Yi-wen Jiang was born into a musical family in Beijing. . . . After hearing Beethoven's violin concerto . . . at the age of three, Jiang was committed to becoming a world-class violinist. This western influence framed Jiang's passion for composition and performance, and still follows him today.²⁹

The biography then explains that China fell into a tragic period, when pursuing his dreams might well have landed Jiang, his family, and his teacher in serious trouble.

Jiang is a true product of the Chinese Cultural Revolution in the 1960s and 70s. One particular memory . . . happened when he was 11 years old. Chaperoned by his father, Jiang auditioned for a prominent violin professor at the Central Conservatory of Music. . . . As Jiang began to play the Mozart A Major Concerto, the Professor abruptly stopped him and swiftly left the room. The Professor returned with a heavy metal mute which he placed on Jiang's violin with great caution for fear anyone outside would hear the non-Chinese music. At a time when families could be severely punished with imprisonment or sentencing to hard labor for such a bold act, this behavior was considered as rebellious and kept secret from Chinese government authorities.³⁰

The conclusion of the second paragraph reveals Jiang's sense of triumph at the end of the Cultural Revolution.

After a couple more years of practicing only Chinese repertoire strongly influenced by his smoldering passion for western influences in classical music, China had reached a time when censorship of the arts was being phased out, [and] Jiang was finally able to make his debut at the Conservatory.³¹

Finally, the third paragraph recounts how Jiang achieved his freedom and fulfilled his dream after leaving China.

After receiving a full scholarship from McDonnell-Douglas at the St. Louis Conservatory, Jiang came to the U.S. in 1985 to study with Taras Gabora and Michael Tree. . . . [H]e appeared as a soloist with the Victoria Symphony and Montreal Symphony. Jiang had appeared at many international music festivals by the age of 22.³²

Like many English-language Cultural Revolution memoirs, Jiang's biography says little about his life in exile. Only the brief fourth paragraph reveals that he joined the Shanghai Quartet in 1994 and that he composes; it also names the schools at which he teaches, the maker of his violin, and his nonmusic hobbies. In short, Jiang's posted life leaves no space for the

details that grace the body of most performer biographies—the famous places where he has performed, the accomplished musicians he has collaborated with, his favorite works, or the other recordings he has made. By placing such emphasis on the role of the Cultural Revolution on the formation of his identity, Jiang's biography inevitably invites audiences who have read Chang, Cheng, Min, and others—as well as those who have not—to hear his arrangements as musical counterparts to English-language Cultural Revolution memoirs.

In both his *Chinasong* liner notes and the Bard biography, Jiang also emphasizes another key element in almost all memoirs of exile: the superiority of Western culture. The biography reiterates his preference for Western music on several occasions. In the liner notes, he writes, “The idea [of *Chinasong*] is that Chinese music can be played on western instruments and thus can be enjoyed internationally.”³³ Jiang does not elaborate on this statement, but he does write elsewhere in the liner notes that the Chinese pieces on which his arrangements are based are “not structured or sophisticated”; rather, they “seem to be accessible and enjoyable for a general audience.”³⁴ Taken together, these two statements strongly recall the thinking of 1920s and 1930s Chinese intellectuals who not only believed in the universality of Western ideas but also thought that Chinese music and theory were in such primitive states that they needed to be Westernized and thereby “improved” before they were fit for cultivated audiences, such as American enthusiasts of chamber music.³⁵

“Red Flower in Bloom,” the final track of *Chinasong*, is an arrangement that evokes the narrative of the memoir of exile in musical form. In his liner note, Jiang acknowledges the original intent of the song.

The popular Shanbei folk song “Red Flowers in Bloom” has a direct connection with an important event in modern Chinese history. The jubilant atmosphere vividly reflects the Shanbei people's great joy as they give a warm welcome and sing the praises of the Red Army in the 1930s.³⁶

In his interview with me, however, Jiang emphasized an alternate reading of the song. He stated that because the piece was completely in the minor mode, “Red Flower in Bloom” always sounded rather sad to him. He also said that he wanted to do something crazy at the song's end, especially since the Cultural Revolution is over and that Chinese people's lives are better.³⁷ This led him to insert a major chord, elaborated, at the very end, with a Hollywood crescendo on tremolo strings.

Jiang's arrangement follows the standard form of the song, A-B-A with

an introduction. The introduction opens with the lower instruments playing a tremolo, over which the first violin plays an ornamented and unmeasured cadenza. According to the liner note, this solo is meant to evoke a distant *dizi* (bamboo flute), another instrument that frequently imitates birdsongs. Listening to this passage, one can easily conjure up images of a bird freely and innocently soaring in the sky. Traditionally, the melody in the first A section is sung with a sense of defiance and gratitude. In the Shanghai Quartet's recorded performance, a measured tempo and an emphasis on lyricism create a sense of nostalgia, perhaps suggesting that the Red Army was not so bad at first. In most arrangements of this song, the B section is a joyous fast march. In contrast, Jiang's arrangement begins playfully but quickly grows frantic; the downbeat multistop chords toward the section's conclusion sound quite menacing. Overall, this section leaves the impression that although the Red Army might have initially been a liberating force, things went wrong quickly. In the final A section, Jiang's arrangement appears to follow the conventional approach of building toward a grand climax. Just before the final cadence, however, he appends a coda with a subito piano chord. After that, a sorrowful rendition of the first phrase of the melody from the A section enters, again subverting the jubilant nature of the original song. At the end of this seemingly final phrase, the mournful mood is suddenly lifted with the "Hollywood ending."

If we accept Jiang's explanation that this ending represents life getting better after the Cultural Revolution, we might wonder just how much things have improved in China. To my ears, this clichéd conclusion sounds rather out of place and fails to erase the memories of the highly effective, mournful coda.³⁸ Perhaps the coda suggests that we must not forget the Cultural Revolution and need to memorialize it properly. Jiang's rich arrangement is open to multiple interpretations; however, given his statements about how his hearing of this song differs from conventional interpretations, I believe that a plausible reading revolves around the exile memoirs' narrative pattern of innocence, tragedy, and triumph/freedom.

AN ALTERNATE READING OF CHINASONG: AN EXAMPLE OF "DIASPORIC INTIMACY"

Chinasong's connections to both Western music and the American cultural trauma of the Chinese Cultural Revolution provide important contexts that help American aficionados of chamber music make sense of this "exotic" mu-

sic. They are not the only frameworks that matter, however. Equally relevant is Jiang's intimate childhood memories in the context of his exile. Born in 1963, he could not have many (or any) memories of pre-Cultural Revolution China. In contrast to the longer experiences of the authors of the most successful "memoirs of exile"—Cheng was born in 1915, and Chang, Heng, Luo, and Min were born between 1950 and 1957—Jiang's periods of innocence and tragedy are essentially concurrent, a fact that complicates his attempt to imagine the Cultural Revolution as "nothing more than a totalitarian nightmare."³⁹ After all, those were the years when he took his first steps toward fulfilling his dream of becoming a professional violinist and learned the memorable melodies that served as the basis of *Chinasong*.

In thinking about the full complexities of the *Chinasong* album and its reception, I turn to two concepts explored by Svetlana Boym: "reflective nostalgia" and "diasporic intimacy." For Boym, a "reflective nostalgic" is a person who is aware of the "ambivalences of human longing and belonging and does not shy away from the contradictions of modernity"⁴⁰—a definition that seems to fit Jiang's *Chinasong* arrangements perfectly. In these arrangements, he simultaneously promotes the narrative of the memoir of exile and expresses doubt about its absolute truth. If that decade was an unmitigated cultural disaster (as posited by Chang, Cheng, and others), how did composers manage to write such attractive pieces, even if their pieces might not be as "great" or "sophisticated" as the work of canonical Western masters?

Boym's notion of "diasporic intimacy" also helps to explain why these violin pieces continue to exert such fascination for Jiang. In discussing the "mini-museums" that Soviet exiles often keep in their living rooms, she writes, "The object of longing [for people in the diaspora] is not really a place called home but this sense of intimacy with the world; it is not the past in general, but that imaginary moment when we had time and didn't know the temptation of nostalgia."⁴¹ Boym adds that for reflective nostalgics, the "only cure or temporary relief of the symptoms of homesickness can be found in aesthetic therapy" through the "art of intimation, of speaking about the most personal and intimate pain and pleasure through a 'cryptic disguise.'"⁴²

For Jiang, the violin pieces he learned as a youth were the perfect vehicles for his aesthetic therapy. While they symbolize the pleasurable moments of a child who dreams of being a world-class violinist, they also serve as painful reminders of the music composed, arranged, and promoted during the chaotic decade of the Cultural Revolution. The intimacy of the music is both generic and personal. As short character pieces, these works provide hints of

the larger world. While the folk suites are small-scale portraits that intimate China's minority cultures, the more picturesque works paint impressions of nature and invite listeners to ponder life's larger questions. As music that he both grew up with and that (if performed in a too Western way) needed to be partially silenced by his teacher's heavy metal mute, these pieces, particularly through his arrangements, provide "cryptically disguised" glimpses of his spirit and his experience as an exile.

Perhaps the best example of Jiang's aesthetic therapy is his arrangement of "Reflection of the Moon in the Er-Quan Spring." The most famous of the six tunes that the blind, syphilitic, and opium-addicted folk musician HUA Yan-Jun (1893–1950), better known as Abing, recorded just before his death, this melody has been arranged dozens of times and used for a wide variety of political, social, educational, and musical purposes.⁴³ Jiang bases his arrangement of this unaccompanied melody on Wu Zuqiang's transcription for string orchestra, a version notable for its eclecticism. Wu's arrangement begins with lush harmonies reminiscent of the Romantic era and suddenly changes in the middle to a lighthearted oompah pizzicato accompaniment. The final section begins contrapuntally with thick harmonies and gradually simplifies. After the simplest, most folklike rendition of the melody is presented, the work ends ambiguously with a unison on the fifth scale degree. Overall, Wu's arrangement exhibits a trait that characterizes works of "diasporic intimacy"; by staging the same melody through varied textures and harmonies, it suggests "the game of hide-and-seek with memories and hopes."⁴⁴

In making his arrangement, Jiang drastically heightens the heterogeneity and drama of Wu's transcription. In the opening section, he Americanizes the harmonies, adding sevenths, ninths, and thirteenths to the chords used by Wu, thereby treating the melody almost as a jazz standard. After being fairly faithful in the oompah section, Jiang greatly expands the final section. Instead of Wu's gradually simplifying process, Jiang creates an emotional and technical roller coaster. The quartet alternately uses slides and trills that are characteristic of Chinese folk music, on the one hand, and heavy vibratos that are usually associated with performance practice in the late Romantic period, on the other. Meanwhile, the texture changes constantly from thin to thick and from polyphony to homophony. Eventually, it builds into a highly dramatic climax that is reminiscent of the Cultural Revolution's soundtrack of revolutionary operas and ballets. As soon as the grand cadence is achieved, a descending accompanying line, played tremolo,

fizzles away the tension, and the arrangement concludes similarly to Wu's version—with a simple and serene rendering of the melody and an ambiguous unison on the dominant note.

For me, listening to Jiang's arrangement is akin to looking at photos of a person posing exactly the same way in front of different backgrounds. It portrays the life of an immigrant and an exilic—an in-between person who simultaneously has two homes and no homes. It also evokes someone whose memories, affected by traumatic events, are fragmented and full of intrusions and disassociations. As a work of "diasporic intimacy," Jiang's "Reflection of the Moon in the Er-Quan Spring" presents not an "emotional fusion" but "only a precarious affection—no less deep, yet aware of its transience."⁴⁵

Of course, feeling in between and fragmented is not limited to those who left their geographical homeland. Those feelings are central to many who have lived through traumatic circumstances. As Boym argues, we might also consider survivors of major social and political upheavals to be in exile. She writes, "The word *exile* (from *exsalire*) means to leap outside. Exile is both about suffering in banishment and springing into a new life. The leap is also a gap, often an unbridgeable one; it reveals an incommensurability of what is lost and what is found."⁴⁶ This gap might help to explain the reception of *Chinasong* in China. When the Shanghai Quartet performs Jiang's arrangement there, its success is based not so much on its connections to the narratives of memoirs of exile as on the emotions and collective memories these pieces retain for Cultural Revolution survivors. In our interview, Jiang stated that older members of the Shanghai Quartet's audience in China often break into tears when listening to *Chinasong*. Why do so many people react so strongly to these old songs? What do they miss about the Cultural Revolution, a period many view ambivalently?

In her research on the recent reception of *Zhandi Xinge* (New Songs of the Battlefield), Lei Bryant suggests,

The camaraderie, group participation, and energy of the Cultural Revolution are difficult to find in contemporary Chinese society; thus in an attempt to negotiate one's identity in contemporary China, the constructed memory of an energetic youth [recalled through these songs] provides an individual with comfort and thereby trigger waves of nostalgia.⁴⁷

Nostalgia and the triggering of both pleasant and unpleasant childhood memories certainly help to account for Chinese audiences' strong reactions to *Chinasong*. Following Boym's ideas, another reason for those reactions might be that *Chinasong* helps to open a space that allows Cultural Revolution survivors to discuss their personal experiences and thereby to overcome their personal traumas. Although further research is needed before we can fully understand the impact of Jiang's arrangements in China, it is already clear that contrasts between Chinese and Western receptions of *Chinasong* demonstrate the richness of the Shanghai Quartet's album. Once again, instrumental music remains open to multiple and often conflicting readings.⁴⁸

Notes

1. LIANG Heng and Judith Shapiro, *Son of the Revolution* (New York: Knopf, 1983); Nien Cheng, *Life and Death in Shanghai* (New York: Grove Press, 1986); Jung Chang, *Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China* (London: HarperCollins, 1991); Anchee Min, *Red Azalea* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1994). For a fairly comprehensive list of Cultural Revolution "memoirs of exile," see Zhihui Geng, "Cultural Revolution Memoirs Written and Read in English: Image Formation, Reception, and Counternarrative" (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 2008), 18–20.

2. See Geng, "Memoirs," 49–61.

3. See Jeffrey C. Alexander et al., eds., *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Ron Eyerman, *Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Marita Sturken, *Tourists of History: Memory, Kitsch, and Consumerism from Oklahoma City to Ground Zero* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007). For analyses of music that use cultural trauma theory, see Jon Stratton, "Jews, Punk, and the Holocaust: From the Velvet Underground to the Ramones; The Jewish-American Story," *Popular Music* 24 (2005): 79–105; Maria Cizmic, *Performing Pain: Music and Trauma in Eastern Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Eric Hung, "Sounds of Asian American Trauma and Cultural Trauma: Jazz Reflections on the Japanese Internment," *MUSICultures* 39 (2012): 1–29.

4. Recent scholarship, oral histories, and interviews convincingly demonstrate the divergent ways Chinese people experienced the Cultural Revolution and the nostalgic "Mao Fever" that swept China in the 1990s. See Richard Curt Kraus, *The Cultural Revolution: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Geremie R. Barmé, *Shades of Mao: The Posthumous Cult of the Great Leader* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1996); *Some of Us: Chinese Women Growing Up in the Mao Era*, ed. Xueping Zhong, Wang Zheng, and Bai Di (New Brunswick: Rutgers

University Press, 2001); Barbara Mittler, *A Continuous Revolution: Making Sense of Cultural Revolution Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2012).

5. Jiang Yiwen, liner notes to Shanghai Quartet, *Chinasong*, Delos 3308, 2002, compact disc, 4.

6. Jeffrey C. Alexander, "Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma," in Alexander et al., *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, 1.

7. See *ibid.*, 10.

8. See David Wilkins, *American Indian Politics and the American Political System*, 3rd ed. (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007).

9. Poll results on American perceptions of China can be found in Michael G. Kulma, "The Evolution of U.S. Images of China: A Political Psychology Perspective of Sino-American Relations," *World Affairs* 162 (1999): 77–79.

10. See Helen M. Buss, *Representing the World: Reading Memoirs by Contemporary Women* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2002).

11. Vivian Gornick, *The Situation and the Story: The Art of Personal Narrative* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001), 90.

12. Nien Cheng, *Life and Death in Shanghai* (New York: Penguin Books, 1987).

13. Robert L. Miller, "A Letter from the Publisher," *Time*, 8 June 1987, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,964570,00.html> (accessed 1 February 2013).

14. See "Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China," *Jung Chang: The Official Website of the International Best-Selling Author*, http://www.jungchang.net/jungchang_books_wildswans.asp (accessed 25 January 2013).

15. *Ibid.*, 496.

16. Peter Zarrow, "Meanings of China's Cultural Revolution: Memoirs of Exile," *Positions* 7 (1999): 168.

17. Geng, "Memoirs," 135.

18. Mittler, "Eight Stage Works for 800 Million People': The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in Music; A View from Revolutionary Opera," *Opera Quarterly* 26, nos. 2–3 (2010): 387.

19. See, for example, Andrew Druckenbrod, "Concert Review: Shanghai Quartet's Music Translates Well," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 2 April 2008, <http://www.post-gazette.com/stories/ae/music/concert-review-shanghai-quartets-music-translates-well-387582/> (accessed 20 February 2013). See also "Shanghai Quartet and a Taste of China," *Ionarts*, 28 April 2005, http://ionarts.blogspot.com/2005_04_01_archive.html (accessed 20 February 2013). Finally, see Terry McQuilkin, "Shanghai Quartet Adds to China Connection," *Register-Standard* (Eugene, OR), 9 July 2008; Catherine Nelson, CD reviews, *Strad* 114 (2003): 553.

20. Jiang Yiwen, interview by the author, Montclair State University, 11 December 2008.

21. William Dart, "Quartet Pluck at the Heartstrings," *New Zealand Herald*, 22 June 2005, http://www.nzherald.co.nz/lifestyle/news/article.cfm?c_id=6&objectid=10331930 (accessed 15 January 2013).

22. James D. Watts, Jr., "Shanghai Quartet Brings Tulsa Crowd to its Feet," *Tulsa World* (2 October 2007). Accessed 15 January 2013 at http://www.tulsaworld.com/scene/article.aspx?subjectid=70&articleid=071002_8_D3_spanc84204. Also, I have seen on several occasions how postconcert conversations at Shanghai Quartet concerts are dominated by reactions to and questions about *Chinasong* and quartet members' experiences during the Cultural Revolution.

23. For research on chamber music audience, see, for example, Stephanie Pitts and Christopher Spencer, "Loyalty and Longevity in Audience Listening: Investigating Experiences of Attendance at a Chamber Music Festival," *Music & Letters* 89 (2008): 227–38; Stephanie Pitts, "What Makes an Audience? Investigating the Roles and Experiences of Listeners at a Chamber Music Festival," *Music & Letters* 86 (2005): 257–69; Aaron Gervais, "The Indie Rock-ification of Chamber Music," *Musicworks: Explorations in Sound* 113 (2012): 6–7; James Porter, "The Old, the New, and the Postmodern: Kronos and the Transformation of the String Quartet," *Altes im Neuen: Festschrift Theodor Göllner zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Bernd Edelmann and Manfred Hermann Schmidt (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1995), 419–26. Numerous blogs also discuss this issue.

24. Jiang, liner notes, 4.

25. For more information on Chen Gang, see Chen Gang, "Releasing Muse's Arrow to the World," trans. Elaine Chew, *Contemporary Chinese Piano Music*, 2007. Accessed 15 January 2013 at http://www-bcf.usc.edu/~echew/projects/Chinese-Music/composers/chen_gang.html.

26. James McQuillen, "Expressive Shanghai Quartet Mixes Eastern and Western Musical Voices," *Oregonian*, 19 January 2006, http://www.shanghaiquartet.com/reviews/view_review.php?post_id=27 (accessed 12 February 2013).

27. Jiang, liner notes, 4.

28. For more on this narrative structure, see Zarrow, "Meaning of China's Cultural Revolution." For bibliographic references to Liang and Shapiro and to Min, see n. 1 and LUO Ziping, *A Generation Lost* (New York: H. Holt, 1990).

29. "Faculty: Yi-wen Jiang," *Bard College Conservatory of Music*, <http://www.bard.edu/conservatory/faculty/?action=details&id=1953> (accessed 15 November 2012).

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

33. Jiang, liner notes, 4.

34. Ibid.

35. For a discussion of thoughts about Chinese music in the post-May Fourth

era, see Andrew Jones, *Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), chap. 1.

36. Jiang, liner notes, 6.

37. Jiang, interview with author, Montclair State University, 11 December 2008.

38. In our interview (cited in n. 37), Jiang admits that his quartet colleagues were unsure about the ending.

39. Zarrow, "Meaning of China's Cultural Revolution," 68 (quoted with fuller context earlier in this essay).

40. Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), xviii.

41. *Ibid.*, 251.

42. *Ibid.*, 252.

43. See Jonathan P.J. Stock, *Musical Creativity in Twentieth-Century China: Abing, His Music, and Its Changing Meanings* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 1996).

44. Boym, *Future of Nostalgia*, 252.

45. *Ibid.*

46. *Ibid.*, 256.

47. Lei Ouyang Bryant, "Music, Memory, and Nostalgia: Collective Memories of Cultural Revolution Songs in Contemporary China," *China Review* 5 (2005): 171.

48. Earlier versions of this essay were presented both at the "East Meets West" conference at Hong Kong Baptist University in April 2009 and at the Fortieth World Conference of the International Council for Traditional Music, held in Durban, South Africa, in July 2009. I thank attendees who provided feedback during those conferences. I especially thank Dana Gorzelany-Mostak, Mandi Magnuson-Hung, Michael Saffle, Hon-Lun Yang, and the University of Michigan Press's anonymous readers for their close reading of the final drafts.

Contested Imaginaries of Collective Harmony

The Poetics and Politics of “Silk Road” Nostalgia in China and the West

Harm Langenkamp

We now saw the Silk Road at its lowest ebb, with dormant life and dying trade, the connecting towns and villages in ruins, and the population languishing in a state of permanent insecurity and miserable poverty. Only in our imagination did we see the brilliant, many-colored scenes from the past, the unbroken carnival of caravans and travelers. . . . There echoed . . . a melody which had sounded along that road for more than two thousand years.¹

The Swedish explorer Sven Hedin often lost himself in daydreaming during his 1933–35 motorized reconnaissance expedition of Xinjiang, an enterprise he undertook at the behest of the Guomindang government that sought to strengthen its control of the restive, predominantly Muslim province in the northwestern corner of its realm by restoring the ancient Silk Road connection from Kashgar to Beijing. On reading Hedin’s evocative description, quoted in part above, few will fail to imagine camel-driven caravans trudging through sunset-lit desert landscapes, an iconic imagery that has a history stretching back to at least the times of Marco Polo and that continues to be used today to arouse appetite for the promise of mystery, adventure, historical sensations, and exotica. In more recent times, an additional layer of meaning has come to be inscribed on the Silk Road concept. Construed as the achievement of a past age in which peoples of widely divergent cultures exchanged assets, creeds, arts, and knowledge, purportedly unimpeded by the divisive ideologies of nationalism, ethnocentrism, or religious fundamentalism, the ancient Eurasian web of trade routes is now regularly proposed as a model for present-day processes of globalization and mutually

beneficial exchanges outside narrow national interests. In other words, the myth of yesterday's "lost" multicultural civilization has come to be accepted by many as the utopia of today.²

However uniform and predictable Silk Road narratives and imageries may seem, the motives of those who invoke them are diverse and contradictory. Indeed, once we bear in mind Mikhail Bakhtin's observation that any discourse—from its articulation, the "sound image," to "the furthest reaches of abstract meaning"—is the product of social interactions and contestations, today's wealth of Silk Road sound images discloses divisions in what, on the surface, seems to be a shared discourse of transnational dialogue and collaboration.³ Put differently, if, in its demotic use, the Silk Road concept refers to an idealized world for which many wax nostalgic, each discrepancy between that dream world and the real world may be indicative of the way dreamers relate themselves to what or of whom they "forget" to dream.

The present essay considers ways in which the Silk Road (*sichou zhi lu*) is imagined in the People's Republic of China (PRC) and in its sociopolitical other, the West. This approach is meant not to suggest a tedious Chinese-Western divide but to highlight divergences in the way present-day nation-states relate themselves to the Silk Road metaphor. These divergences, in turn, reflect tensions between state-controlled nationalisms and (neo-)liberal cosmopolitanisms that, of course, are not bound to the geographical "East" and "West." Singled out for discussion are the celebration of the Silk Road at the 2002 Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington, DC, and Beijing's investments in promoting the cultural heritages of its ethnic minorities, particularly the Uyghur, the PRC's largest Muslim community, most of which inhabits the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, the (contested) Chinese section of Central Asia. First, however, we must consider how the Silk Road concept acquired the high-profile status it enjoys in today's global discourse and mediascape.

FANTASY AND CONTROL: THE "SILK ROAD" AS EXOTIC CONSTRUCT IN THE MODERN IMAGINATION

Most popular introductions to the ancient network of Eurasian trade routes credit Hedin's teacher, the German geologist and geographer baron Ferdinand von Richthofen for coining the term *Silk Road(s)* (*Seidenstrasse[n]*) in his magnum opus about China (1877–1912).⁴ Usually left unmentioned

is that this five-volume work is not a celebration of “cultural exchange,” as we have come to understand that term, but a report of a series of research expeditions that Richthofen conducted between 1868 and 1872 in China, with a view not only of accomplishing “something meaningful in science” but also of furthering “foreign interests in this most important of the as yet unopened countries of the world.”⁵ The few instances Richthofen and several armchair academics after him used the term “Silk Road” to refer to the system of pathways linking the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE) to India and the Mediterranean area can hardly be seen as the prelude to the soaring career that the term was to experience. Indeed, the popularization of the luminous word combination only started with a series of competitive and widely publicized research campaigns through “Asia’s heartland” following Richthofen’s expedition, when the Qing dynasty (1644–1911 CE) gradually lost ever more control to Great Britain and czarist Russia.⁶

Motivated by various public, private, and corporate interests to disclose the last undiscovered spots of the world, explorers such as Hedin (Sweden), Ōtani Kōzui (Japan), Albert von Le Coq (Germany), Paul Pelliot (France), Nikolay Przhevalsky (Russia), Aurel Stein (Great Britain), and Langdon Warner (United States) published accounts of their own expeditions, ranging from dense scholarly compendiums to thrilling travelogues saturated with descriptions of terrae incognitae, archeological treasures, and personal hardships.⁷ Hedin in particular catered successfully to the tastes of different audiences. Often, while he was still on the road, his experiences appeared in print in Stockholm, Leipzig, London, and New York, relating the many ordeals that he and his crew had to endure to give their fellow countrymen a glimpse of the “wild, perilous regions of darkest Asia.”⁸ The language he employed in his popularizing publications (see the opening quotation) echoed the Orient-inspired poetry of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, James Elroy Flecker, John Keats, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and is typical of how the area into which he ventured was imagined by most Westerners at a time when only a privileged few had the chance to see the real, unfiltered East.

As Central Asia caught the limelight of international attention in the late nineteenth century, it also became inextricably identified with musico-theatrical imagery. Félicien David’s secular oratorio *Le désert* (1844)—an imaginative digestion of impressions garnered by the composer on a two-year journey through Egypt, Syria, and Turkey—became the prototypical orientalist composition. The success of David’s musical depiction of Bedouin life was matched, if not surpassed, by Alexander Borodin’s *In [the Steppes*

of] *Central Asia* (1880) and *Prince Igor* (1869–87), today the best-known musical evocations of the area concerned. As Borodin's original program explains, *In Central Asia* conveys the passing of a native caravan (represented by "the melancholic notes of an Oriental melody") crossing the desert "safely and fearlessly" under the protection of the victor's "formidable military power" (the last represented by "the strains of a peaceful Russian song"). As the procession recedes from the listener in an extended diminuendo, "the tranquil songs of conquerors and conquered merge into a single common harmony, echoes of which linger on as the caravan disappears in the distance."⁹ Characteristic of "orientalism" in the postcolonial sense of that word, this "harmony" reflects the relationship between the powerful and powerless as conceived, of course, by the former (see example 1).

In Central Asia evinces the modal qualities that Borodin and his colleagues in the group of composers known as "the Five" or *Kuchka* (which also included Mily Balakirev, César Cui, Modest Musorgsky, and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov) derived from indigenous folk music and harmonized in a manner they claimed to be fundamentally distinct from Western Europe's common practice harmony. The "Russian" melody (see example 1, upper staff) is brisk, decided, outward-looking, open-ended, and, accordingly, harmonically dynamic, touching on the minor third-related keys of A major (measures 5–12 of the full score), C major (measures 17–24, 91–103 and 123–139) and E-flat major (measures 106–122). In contrast, the "Oriental" melody (see example 1, lower staff) appears melancholic, introverted, lethargic, and—the sinuous, syncopated use of the English horn over a chromatically descending supportive line being a well-established trope of "exotic" sensuality—lascivious.¹⁰ Cast in A minor and following a ternary scheme of organization, the "Oriental" melody (measures 44–71) is confined in its melodic and harmonic development, and incapable of steering its own course. Indeed, rather than completing its cycle at its second appearance (starting at measure 156), the melody shifts to the parallel major as to prepare for its symbiosis with the "Russian" melody (starting at measure 193). That is to say, an unequal symbiosis, since, as the caravan vanishes over the listeners' musical horizon, the "Oriental" melody is drowned out by its "Russian" counterpart.

For those who follow Sergey Dianin, Borodin's Soviet biographer (and Borodin's adopted daughter's son), this "happy synthesis of the two national elements" attests to the composer's resistance to "any national[ist] or imperialist tendencies."¹¹ Perhaps for calculated reasons, Dianin does not take

Example 1: Alexander Borodin, *In Central Asia* (1880), measures 210–18, combined appearance of “Russian” and “Oriental” songs. The chromatically descending supportive line indicated by the stemless notes does not sound here but accompanies the “Oriental” melody when it occurs alone.

into account that *In Central Asia* was part of a series of musical commissions for the silver jubilee celebrations of Czar Alexander II’s reign (which were cancelled following an attempt on the Czar’s life). More specifically, Borodin, Tchaikovsky, and Musorgsky were asked to provide musical accompaniments for a series of *tableaux vivants* that glorified Alexander’s imperial accomplishments in the Caucasus and Central Asia. As Tchaikovsky explained to his brother, none of the composers involved with the project were free to refuse the assignments, let alone to choose how to fulfill them.¹² While Borodin was asked to supply music depicting a “native caravan escorted by a guard of Russian soldiers,” Musorgsky and Tchaikovsky were asked to set two specific moments of Russia’s military history to music: the 1855 capture of the Ottoman fortress of Kars and the 1877 declaration of war on Turkey, respectively. “It goes without saying that I could not write anything but a lot of noise and banging,” Tchaikovsky wrote of his contribution, the whereabouts of which are unknown today.¹³ Musorgsky’s commission survives as the *Capture of Kars*, a march in which a euphoniously arranged Russian *khorovod* melody interspersed with persistent trumpet signals encapsulates a shrill-sounding *alla turca* setting of what Rimsky-Korsakov described as “some Kurdish theme.”¹⁴ Had Borodin also been assigned a moment of fight and subjugation, he might have resorted to “noise and banging” as well. Instead, his task was to translate into music the sense of empire held

by so many empire builders, namely, that of a harmonious whole in which all parties have come to recognize the righteousness of the emperor and his laws of harmony.

Understood in this light, Dianin's anti-imperialist interpretation of Borodin's ode to the czarist empire that the Communists overthrew expresses the Soviet Politburo's conception of socialist federalism as being inherently antihegemonic, egalitarian, and consensual. Indeed, after 1934, when Stalin presented his own vision of Soviet culture and minority integration, Borodin's "harmony" came to serve as the model on which the USSR's artificially constructed non-Russian republics were to modernize their music practices, the results of which were performed at annual festivals held in the center of Soviet power, Moscow.¹⁵ As MAO Zedong's Communist Party (the CCP) consolidated its power over mainland China during the 1950s and adopted most of the Soviet model of multinational state building, non-Han areas were flooded with Han immigrants who imposed economical, administrative, linguistic, and educational reforms on their new neighbors for the sake of socialist-style modernization. Simultaneously, in a move to mark out its ambitions for non-Han minorities from those of its Guomindang predecessor, the CCP sought to create acceptance by recognizing the rights of non-Hans to their own customs, religious beliefs, and performing traditions, at least insofar as they were accepted or remodeled in conformity with the capricious doctrines and aesthetics of Maoist socialism. In August 1956, the first of many annual national music festivals drew around two hundred non-Han performers from across the PRC's domain to Beijing to showcase their musical traditions. Here, they not only experienced the curiosities of Han exoticism but also discovered that their traditions had been appropriated by Han composers for Western-style (which partially means Borodin-style) dances, suites, capriccios, rhapsodies, and fantasies.¹⁶ Today, such state-run exhibitions continue to demonstrate the success of a unified, multiethnic Chinese state (*duo minzu guojia*) in which non-Han minorities (*shaoshu minzu*) constitutionally enjoy economic and political equality even as they remain subjects of Beijing's "civilizing mission."¹⁷

The political dimensions of such artificial demonstrations of collective harmony had and still have little impact on those who are free of alien assimilationist pressures. Those able to live as free consumers continue to enjoy Borodin's depictions of czarist Russia's colonial subjects in *Prince Igor* and *In Central Asia* as pleasant examples of orientalist aesthetics. The success of these depictions appears from the various orientalia they featured

in since their creation. *In Central Asia's* "Oriental" melody, for instance, introduces Rachmaninoff's setting of Pushkin's poem "Ne poy, krasavitsa, pri mne" (1892), and was borrowed both for the musical accompaniment to George Melford's silent movie *The Sheik* (1921) and for the opening song "Sands of Time" in the 1953 Broadway musical *Kismet*.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the legacy of Russia's musical orientalism can still be heard in Peter Breiner's suite for violin and orchestra entitled *Songs and Dances from the Silk Road* (2004), a lushly orchestrated assortment of mostly Uyghur folk songs. It also resonates in TAN Dun's Oscar-winning soundtrack for Ang Lee's widely acclaimed martial arts film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000), in which the flashback scene to the deserts of Xinjiang, where the sympathetic tribal chief Luo Xiao Hu captures the heart of the otherwise unswayable Manchu heroine Jen Yu, is introduced by an undulating English horn that anticipates the *Lawrence of Arabia*-echoing passages during the fighting scene to come. Later in the same scene, while Jen chases Luo for the comb he snatched out of her hand, the soundtrack switches from Western to Han Chinese orientalism as it plays an excerpt from *Camel Bells along the Silk Road* (*Si lu tuo ling*) (1982), a selection of Uyghur songs arranged for *zhongruan* lute and frame drum by the *ruan* master NING Yong that attests to a fascination for cyclic rhythmic patterns and augmented seconds.¹⁸

The continuity of the visual imagery through which *In Central Asia* has been marketed is equally remarkable. When packaging scores and arrangements of *In Central Asia* for amateur consumption, Borodin's German publisher chose desert imagery typical of nineteenth-century adventure literature (see fig. 1a), imagery that goes back as far as the famous illustration of Marco Polo's caravan in Abraham Cresque's *Catalan Atlas* (ca. 1375) and that is synonymous today with all for which the Silk Road stands. In 2002, the same imagery appeared on the cover of an anthology of (mainly Russian) standard compositions inspired by the imaginary Orient, including *In Central Asia* (see fig. 1b). A year later, the British label ARC Music, specializing in world and folk music, used the image to market music from the real Orient, so to speak, conflating traditions from Turkey through the Middle East and Central Asia into China (see fig. 1c).

Thus the Silk Road, historically the major conduit for transmitting commodities across the Eurasian continent, had itself—to the dismay of many a scholar—become a commodity.¹⁹ Indeed, especially since the counter-cultural 1960s and 1970s, the imagined Silk Road has been branded as

A Franz Liszt.

DANS LES STEPPES DE L'ASIE CENTRALE.

(Eine Steppenskizze aus Mittel-Asien.)

Esquisse symphonique d'Alexandre Borodine.



Transcrite pour PIANO
par
Théodore Jadoul.

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Leipzig, Fr. Kistner.

2756.

Fig. 1a: Cover of Borodin's *In the Steppes of Central Asia*, piano transcription by Théodore Jadoul (Leipzig: Kistner, 1887).

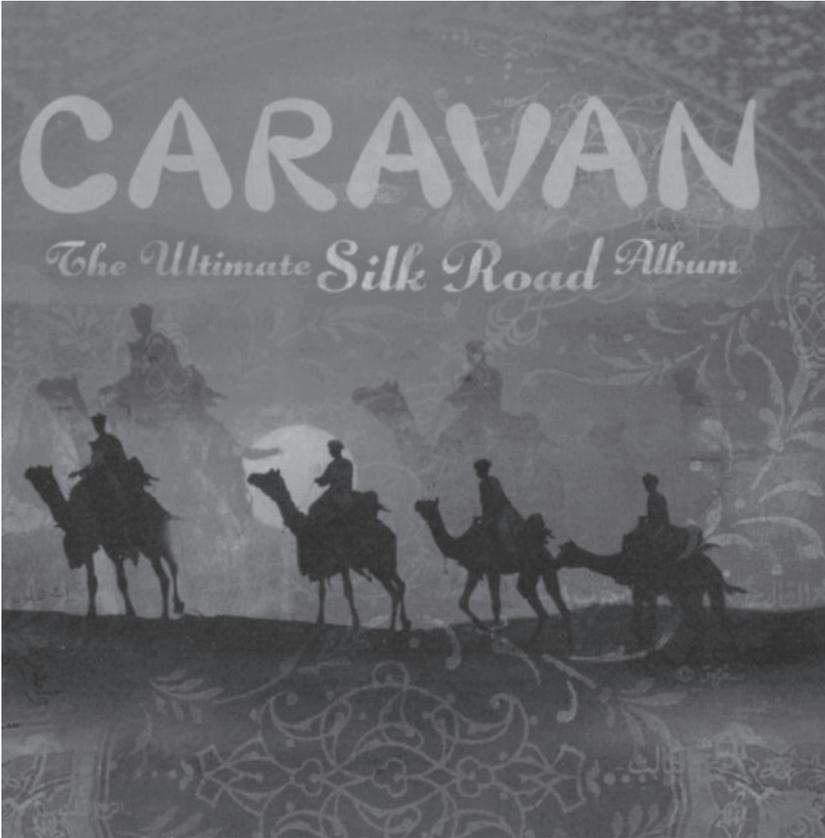


Fig. 1b: Cover of *Caravan: The Ultimate Silk Road Album* (2002). Courtesy of Universal Classics Group.

an oasis for cosmopolitan-minded city dwellers, a place of refuge from the buzz of modern life, whether visited physically or imaginatively.²⁰ Indulging in romantic imagery and phraseology, suppliers of Silk Road products and services as varied as computer games, fashions, lifestyle products, movies, museum exhibitions, tourist attractions, and examples of so-called world music promise to transport consumers back to—as the blurb text of the aforementioned 2002 anthology reads—“the days of Marco Polo’s adventures in the Far East,” a chimerical past that is “fabled,” “exotic,” “mysterious,” and, above all, undisturbed by mundane affairs.

Needless to say, looking at the actual Silk Road region without rose-

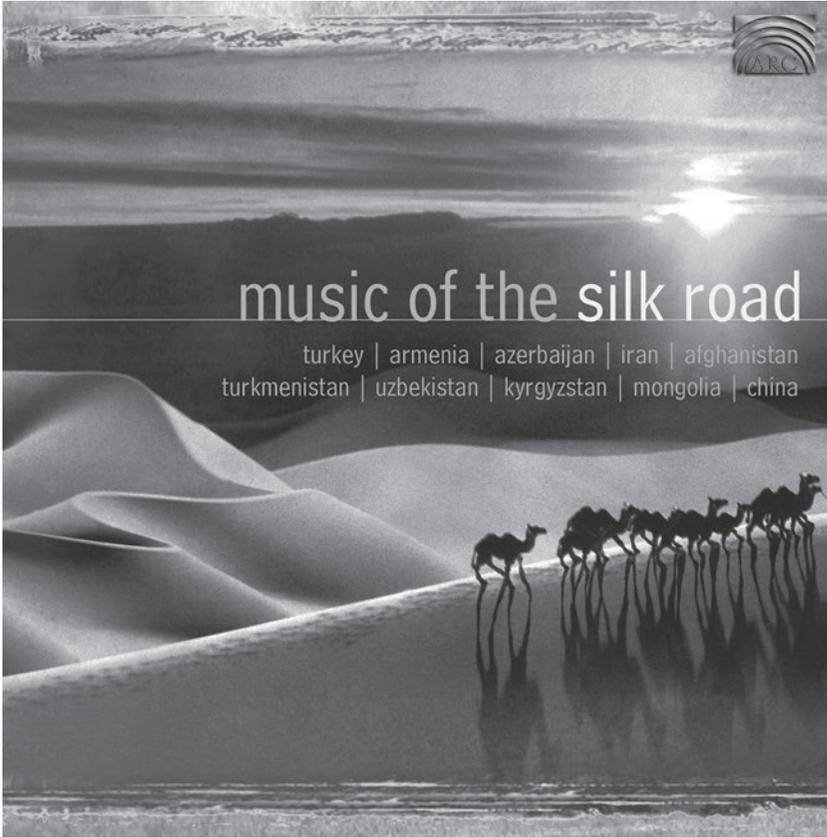


Fig. 1c: Cover of *Music of the Silk Road* (2003). Courtesy of ARC Music.

colored spectacles reveals precisely mundane affairs breaking the charm of the illusion today as they always have. The region remains subject to the political maneuverings of local and global powers vying for hegemony over its markets and resources. In the years since the collapse of the Soviet Union, various bi- and multilateral alliances have been established among key players interested in the region, including Russia, China, Japan, the European Union, the United States, Saudi Arabia, India, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, the Caucasian and Central Asian republics, and, more recently, post-Taliban Afghanistan. On the surface, these alliances serve to enhance regional stability through joint investments in economic and military infrastructures. Behind these common goals, however, lie self-interests that

conflict in ways reminiscent of the Great Game once played by the British and Russian/Soviet empires. Today, however, the game has become so multifaceted that none of the major contestants can dictate outcomes as imperial powers did a century ago.²¹

INCONGRUOUS HARMONIES: THE “SILK ROAD” AS IDEALIST MODEL FOR THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

As the Cold War defrosted during the 1980s and early 1990s, the Silk Road became a metaphor of cultural rapprochement and mutual exchange, a symbolic alternative to inequitable modes of exchange associated with colonialism and imperialism. In 1988, UNESCO initiated an ambitious research project about the ancient trade routes, a project that, in the words of then director-general Federico Mayor, “forcefully disproved those concepts and visions that today stand as obstacles to the harmonious coexistence of peoples.”²² Needless to say, even though the experiences of UNESCO expedition members at times suggested otherwise, no other conclusion could have been drawn from a project whose ultimate objective was defined as “fostering intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding” (see fig. 2).²³ Underwritten by the belief that study, preservation, and revitalization will make cultural traditions in isolation more resilient in the face of segregating forces, projects such as those undertaken by UNESCO are presented as vital to securing world peace and unity.²⁴

Similar ecumenical aspirations inspire the Silk Road Project, a highly acclaimed East-meets-West enterprise launched in 1998 by the cellist Yo-Yo Ma to familiarize audiences around the globe with the legacy and symbolic power of the ancient trade routes. Turning words into deeds, Ma teamed up with the Smithsonian Institution and the US State Department to transform American’s National Mall, for ten days around Independence Day 2002, into a bazaar where visitors and nearly four hundred artists, actors, cooks, craftsmen, merchants, and musicians hailing from “Silk Road countries” could explore their cultural commonality. The solidarity and interchange that actually arose among participating groups whose relations are politically strained—for example, Armenians, Azerbaijanis, and Turks; Indians and Pakistanis; and Muslims and Jews—exceeded everyone’s expectations and gave concrete meaning to the festival’s motto, “Connecting Cultures, Creating Trust.”²⁵ As then secretary of state Colin Powell observed at

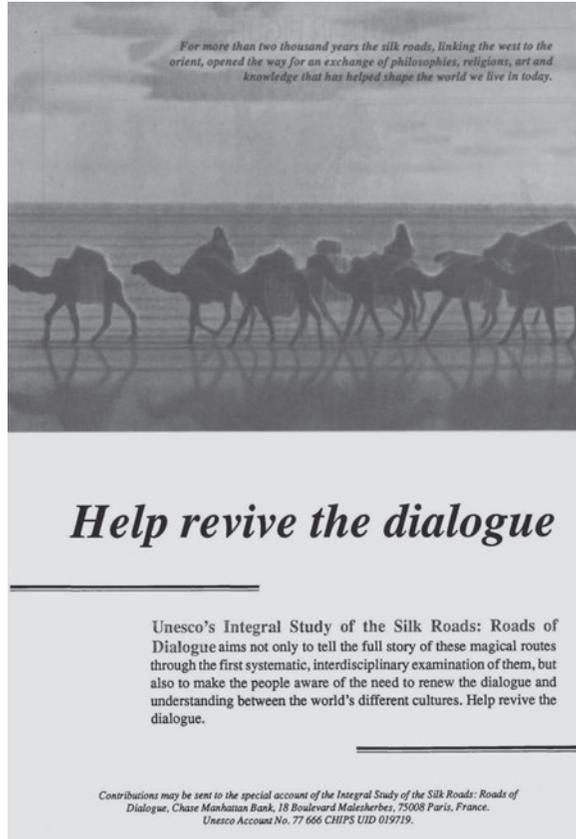


Fig. 2: Advertisement for UNESCO's Silk Roads Project in *UNESCO Sources* 18 (1990).

the festival's opening ceremony to an audience composed of representatives of nations with whom he had just forged "War on Terror" alliances, including Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Pakistan, "Once again the nations of Central Asia are joining the nations at either end . . . on a path to a better future to all."²⁶

One wonders, however, whether China, for one, would have allowed its citizens to participate in America's Silk Road celebration had its leaders read the festival's political subtext. Whereas Powell was diplomatic enough not to explain who was responsible for breaking East-West connections in the first place, Richard Kennedy, the festival's curator, did not shy away from attributing the prospect of a restored Silk Road to "the modest victories of democracy and capitalism" at the end of the second millennium. "If oil is the new silk, and democracy the new religion," Kennedy commented, the festival

was to demonstrate how “the old cultural traditions of the Silk Road . . . have withstood the onslaught of the Mongols, the seafaring European capitalists, and the more recent Russian and Chinese communists.”²⁷ In this light, images of Tibetan monks in a promotional video accompanying the voice-over’s explanation of the 2002 Smithsonian Folklife Festival as a “rite of cultural democracy” embody a message that must have been at odds with Beijing’s conception of cultural diversity. In what is, until today, China’s most famous staging of the Silk Road myth, the 1979 ballet *Rain of Flowers along the Silk Road* (*Silu Huayu*), non-Han characters express their blind faith in the Han conception of “cultural harmony” (*wenming de hexie*) through sinicized versions of their musical traditions.²⁸

Indeed, as much as the 2002 Smithsonian Folklife Festival enacted post-Cold War dreams of an integrated world based on exchange and trust, the world outside this scene of conviviality demonstrated how far humankind was from achieving this ideal. Less than a year earlier, the festival’s message of intercultural reciprocity was overtaken by al-Qaeda’s attacks on the United States, America’s retaliatory campaign in Afghanistan, and the swelling enthusiasm for an invasion of Iraq. Small wonder, then, that the festival came to bear more political overtones than intended. As if it were an answer to Hedin’s call, expressed sixty-six years earlier, that everything should be done to “bring different peoples together, to connect and unite them . . . at a time when suspicion and envy keep the nations asunder,”²⁹ the festival provided—in the words of the *New York Times*—“the ideal place to find the meaning of America during the nation’s time of trial and terrorist threats.”³⁰

Indeed, the East-West encounter in America’s capital provided an opportunity for the Bush administration to awaken interest in a part of the world with which the United States had become involved despite itself and in which allies had to be sought for the War on Terror.³¹ No opportunity was lost to press on visitors’ minds that after the events of 9/11, “we cannot afford not to know what other people are thinking and feeling, particularly in the vast and strategic regions of Asia that were linked to the Silk Road.”³² Accordingly, generous support from the State Department toward the participation of artists and artisans from Muslim countries (Afghanistan in particular) was intended to demonstrate America’s commitment to protecting the heritage of moderate Muslims against threats from their fundamentalist counterparts. As such, Muslim participants in the festival represented a civilized, peaceful, creative, and human alternative to an uncivilized, violent, destructive, and inhuman Islam, as represented by twenty-foot-tall

images of the Bamiyan Buddhas demolished by the Taliban a year earlier, an act that provoked worldwide condemnation as a crime against humanity.³³

Although the State Department's concern not to discredit Islam in toto was, in itself, commendable, one cannot help but see how the good/bad Islam dichotomy excluded other conceptions of a nonviolent Islam that might be less acceptable to Western secular elites.³⁴ The dubiousness of this bifurcated view of Islam also appears in the ways in which major Eurasian powers, including Russia, India, and China, used the US-led War on Terror to legitimize their intensified repression of separatist sentiments within their own (contested) borders. The American campaign meshed, for instance, with Beijing's attempts to silence the Uyghurs' ever-louder call (since the collapse of the Soviet Empire) for greater autonomy or full independence.³⁵ True, since the post-Mao administration announced its Open Door policy, the PRC's five Autonomous Regions have gained greater autonomy in dealing with investors, trading partners, foreign tourists, and (non)governmental agencies, and the freedoms for cultural and even religious expression have been considerably extended. At the same time, however, attempts to use these liberties for subversive activities have been met with severe measures, including capital punishment. As such, the PRC's leadership, fearful of the scenario that led to the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc, attempts both to relax and reinforce control in order to win the loyalty of its quasi-autonomous subjects and prevent the spark of dissent from igniting.

As part of this attempt to stabilize the situation in China's peripheral areas, the central government has increased its support of minority economies and traditions. Over the years, Beijing has managed to accumulate considerable international funding for the preservation of archeological sites and traditions (i.e., tangible and intangible forms of heritage) deemed important for the history of mankind as a whole. For instance, since UNESCO implemented its Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity program in 2001, the Chinese Ministry of Culture successfully applied for funding on behalf of the Mongolian *urtiin duu*, Tibetan opera, and the Uyghur *muqam* and *māshrāp* traditions. In addition, Beijing joined international efforts to nominate major Silk Road landmarks located in the PRC for UNESCO's World Heritage List.³⁶ However, this enthusiasm for cultural preservation on the part of Chinese authorities goes beyond UNESCO's agenda of sustaining local communities, traditions, and cultural diversity. Critical observers have noted how the UNESCO concept of universal heritage has enabled Chinese

officials to demonstrate an engagement with the pre-1949 past that appears empowering and constructive (rather than disempowering and destructive, as it was most of the time under Mao) while in effect maintaining tight control over the boundaries within which minorities are allowed to define, preserve, and express their identities.³⁷

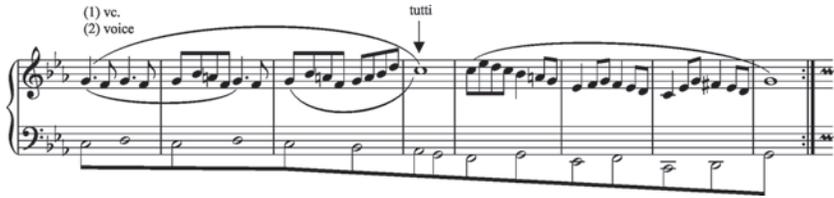
Today, as in the early 1950s, the PRC's leadership considers the protection of cultural heritage essential for—as one Politburo member put it in 2006—“enhancing cohesion of the nation, boosting the national unity, invigorating the national spirit, and safeguarding the national unification.”³⁸ In practice, this means that Beijing's investment in (in)tangible cultural heritages continues a long-standing strategy of “folklorizing” and sinicizing non-Han traditions, exhibiting and historicizing them as inalienable parts of China itself, and, as a consequence, weakening their potential use on behalf of seditious causes. While minority traditions may only be presented to the international community as part of a program to demonstrate the government's respect for ethnic diversity and commitment to universal harmony (as during the 2008 opening ceremony of the Olympic Games), major cultural sites in Xinjiang and other areas have been hastily transformed into Silk Road tourist venues, supplemented with Han-style facilities and monuments commemorating Chinese presence in the region as long ago as the Han and Tang dynasties.³⁹

At the time the present essay was drafted, Beijing's efforts to shape the national perception of how the PRC's peoples (*minzu*) relate to one another seemed successful. Outbursts of contestation such as the 2008–9 protests in Xinjiang, Tibet, and Mongolia notwithstanding, most members of China's minority communities seemed to have acquiesced in the political reality as it is. During the decade since the 1997 Ghulja/Yining Uprising, for example, the musical preference of the majority of Xinjiang's urban youth—partly due to censorship imposed on the local music industry, partly through official support for musicians promoting politically correct messages—has shifted from songs expressing dissent and resistance (like those performed by rock singer Askar Mamat) to apolitical songs embracing the virtues of modern life (like those performed by pop singer Arken Abdulla). This is not to imply that affirmations of ethnic identity are no longer of concern to young Uyghurs. However, the modes through which such affirmations are expressed have become more closely aligned with China's model of collective harmony than with the militant mood of resistance that dominated much of 1990s Xinjiang.⁴⁰

Han Chinese perceptions of the PRC's minorities, for that matter, seem to have remained constant through the ages. Using the language of colonialism, China's official media represent minorities both as curiosities delighted to be "civilized" by their "Han brothers" and as ungrateful barbarians when they reject such civilizing influences. Evocations of Uyghur culture especially popular among (middle-aged and older) Han men and women include the so-called "Xinjiang folk songs" (*Xinjiang minge*) by Han songwriter WANG Luobin and the state-sponsored Uyghur composer and performer Kelimu (Kerim in Uyghur). Filled with suggestions of smiling belly-dancing Uyghur girls and concocted from sinicized adaptations of Uyghur rhythms and melodies, these songs reflect Han male fantasies of submissive exotic/erotic female others, even as they reflect official utopian visions of a socialist union bound together by loyalty to the Han majority.⁴¹

Less conspicuously, the exoticizing tendencies mentioned above can also be observed in the highly popular *Silk Road* documentary series, a collaborative production of the state television networks of China (CCTV) and Japan (NHK). Conceived after the restoration of Chinese-Japanese diplomatic relations in 1972 and originally broadcast in 1980, the *Silk Road* series was shot in China by NHK and CCTV film crews during a joint expedition in 1979. Both networks edited their own series in terms of what seemed important for their respective nation's history. When viewers in both countries asked for sequels, CCTV responded by presenting more Chinese sites, while NHK made its way westward to Rome. In 2003, CCTV and NHK production crews revisited the sites from the original series, equipped with state-of-the-art film facilities. Both entitled *New Silk Road*, the series produced for Chinese audiences (aired in 2006) again differed significantly from the series produced for Japanese audiences (aired in 2005). The CCTV team concentrated mainly on archeological discoveries and the folkloristic portrayal of local customs, cuisine, and music, whereas the NHK team paid closer attention to ways in which modernization has affected the lives of minority *minzu*. In a separate sequel screened two years later, Japan's network highlighted the political predicaments of peoples in the former Soviet republics and the Arab world, a perspective hard to imagine in a CCTV series.

Although slightly different, the lead-ins for both the NHK *New Silk Road* series and the CCTV one do not initially suggest any significant discrepancy in approach. Both reproduce the same romantic images that have served for a century and more as icons of orientalism: sun-drenched deserts, trudging camels, scenes of premodern village life, monuments of lost civili-



Example 2a: Soundtrack to the NHK series *New Silk Road* (2005), Sandeep Das and Indrajit Dey, arranged by Ljova (Lev Zhurbin), *Mohini* (*Enchantment*), reduction.

Example 2b: Soundtrack to the CCTV series *New Silk Road* (2006), Cheng Chi, *Intro*, reduction.

zations, praying Buddhist monks, and, of course, waving veils of silk. The series' music contains the tropes we have come to associate with a timeless and opulent Orient: modal melodies, wordless vocalizations, and lush harmonies articulated by lightly brushed cymbals (see examples 2a and 2b).⁴² Upon closer inspection, however, the lead-ins differ in significant respects. The CCTV version, for example, lacks the footage and sounds associated with Xinjiang that figure in the NHK version. Indeed, the NHK soundtrack as a whole, produced by Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble (a collective of musicians proficient in various musical traditions across the Eurasian continent), evokes the entire Silk Road area. It opens with an excerpt from a *mugham* performance by Azeri singer Alim Qasimov and segues into a circular melody that closes with an augmented second and that is scored for *tabla*, *sarangi*, *shakuhachi*, *pipa*, *ney*, and *duduk*, in addition to a Western string and percussion section. In contrast, the pounding string and brass CCTV soundtrack prepared by CHENG Chi is nearly oblivious to any music from the Arabo-Irano-Turkic area. Cheng's score does contain samples of traditional music he recorded during the NHK/CCTV expedition, including moments of *muqam* performances from Xinjiang. However, these moments, which often disappear into a pentatonic and synthesized wall of sound, emerge as dis-

pensable curiosities rather than as integral elements of the series' score. In sum, both visually and aurally, the lead-ins of the NHK and CCTV series replicate romantic notions about the Silk Road, with that difference that the Chinese lead-in downplays—intentionally or habitually—the Islamic legacy where its Japanese counterpart does not.

CONCLUSION

Behind the iterative Silk Road narratives and sound images circulating in China and the West lie two contrasting visions of collective harmony, one predicated on the (neo)liberal concept of cosmopolitanism, the other on the (post-)Maoist concept of multiethnic nationalism. Actually, it is more appropriate to speak of diverging, rather than contrasting, visions, because the PRC's current policies concerning minority communities as well as its large investments in infrastructural networks that have to tie the whole Eurasian continent together (the "Silk Road Economic Belt" and "Maritime Silk Road") are, in many respects, symptomatic of a nation on the rise, a nation filled with self-confidence and striving to (re)claim a leading position in the global order as Western powers have done before. Accordingly, both visions cannot easily be reconciled with alternative visions that challenge underlying laws of harmony, particularly those alternatives that depart from religious values. Till this very day, both China and the West are inclined, even committed, to overlooking or ignoring Islamic contributions to "common humanity." Instead, they often associate Islam with violence, disorder, and fundamentalism. Whereas China's government continues to privilege Buddhist legacies of China's past over Islamic ones, Western governments actively embrace or, at the very least, condone populist forms of Islamophobia. In the final analysis, contemporary sound images expressing a longing for global harmony embody conflicting discourses of belonging to a community based on Han Chinese, Western, Islamic, or other laws of harmony.

Notes

1. Sven Hedin, *The Silk Road: Ten Thousand Miles through Central Asia* (1936; London: Tauris Parke, 2009), 230.

2. Marie Thorsten, "Silk Road Nostalgia and Imagined Global Community," *Comparative American Studies* 3, no. 3 (2005): 301–17.

3. Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 259.

4. Ferdinand von Richthofen, *China: Ergebnisse eigener Reisen und darauf gegründeter Studien* (Berlin: Reimer, 1877), 1:495–510.

5. *Ferdinand von Richthofen's Tagebücher aus China*, ed. Ernst Tiessen (Berlin: Reimer, 1907), 1:282. Richthofen's expeditions were financed by the Bank of California and the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce, with the understanding that Richthofen would map China's coal deposits and mineral resources. After his return to Germany, the baron acted as a consultant to the Bismarck government on its China policy. See Jürgen Osterhammel, "Forschungsreise und Kolonialprogramm: Ferdinand von Richthofen und die Erschließung Chinas im 19. Jahrhundert," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 69 (1987): 150–95.

6. The phrase in question refers to the so-called Heartland Theory of British geographer Halford John Mackinder, who, at the height of the Great Game conflict between the British and Russian empires, defined Central Asia as an area of prime geostrategic significance. For more on the etymology of the term *Silk Road*, see Daniel C. Waugh, "Richthofen's 'Silk Roads': Toward the Archaeology of a Concept," *Silk Road* 5, no. 1 (2007): 1–10; Tamara Chin, "The Invention of the Silk Road, 1877," *Critical Inquiry* 40, no. 1 (2013): 194–219.

7. For a bibliography of these studies, see Peter Hopkirk, *Foreign Devils on the Silk Road: The Search for the Lost Cities and Treasures of Chinese Central Asia* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), 243–45.

8. Hedin, *The Silk Road*, 21. During their 1933–35 expedition, for instance, Hedin and his crew got caught up in the civil war following the Soviet invasion of Xinjiang and found themselves detained for several months in Ürümchi by the Guomindang-sponsored Hui warlord MA Zhongying.

9. The original program is quoted in Sergey A. Dianin, *Borodin* (1955), trans. Robert Lord (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 114. Borodin slightly revised the program for a performance of *In Central Asia* two years later, omitting the reference to the "formidable power" of the czarist army and replacing the opposition of "conquerors and conquered" in the last sentence with "Russians" versus "the native population." The revised version circulates today in concert and liner notes. See *ibid.*, 129.

10. For extensive discussions of nationalism and orientalism with respect to Russian music, see Richard Taruskin, *Defining Russia Musically: Historical and Hermeneutical Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); Marina Frolova-Walker, *Russian Music and Nationalism: From Glinka to Stalin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

11. Dianin, *Borodin*, 228. To substantiate his observation, Dianin cited the orientalist Alexander N. Samoylovich—a key figure in the development and execution of Moscow's policies regarding its Turkic republics, until he himself became a victim

of the 1937–38 wave of purges—who had told Dianin that the leading intelligentsia of 1920s Turkey appreciated *In Central Asia* as a confirmation of Soviet-Turkish friendship.

12. Pyotr Tchaikovsky to Anatoly Tchaikovsky, 28 January/9 February 1880, quoted in Tchaikovsky, *Letters to His Family: An Autobiography*, trans. Galina von Meck (London: Dobson, 1981), 234.

13. Pyotr Tchaikovsky to Anatoly Tchaikovsky, 31 January/12 February 1880, quoted in Tchaikovsky, *Letters*, 234–35.

14. Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov, *My Musical Life*, trans. Judah A. Joffe (London: Eulenberg, 1974), 215–16.

15. For an account of Soviet music policy with respect to the USSR's Central Asian and Caucasian republics, see Marina Frolova-Walker, "National in Form, Socialist in Content: Musical Nation-Building in the Soviet Republics," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 51, no. 2 (1998): 331–71. See also Ted Levin, *The Hundred Thousand Fools of God: Musical Travels in Central Asia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996).

16. See editorials in *People's China* 8, no. 16 (1956): 37–38 and *Chinese Literature* 7, no. 1 (1957): 194.

17. See, for instance, *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers*, ed. Stevan Harrell (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995); Colin Mackerras, *China's Minority Cultures: Identities and Integration since 1912* (New York: Longman, 1995).

18. For the score of *Si lu tuo ling*, see *Jiaoxiang: Journal of the Xi'an Conservatory of Music* 5, no. 1 (1986): 76–80. Offended at not having been asked for permission to include a two-minute segment of his composition in the blockbuster movie's soundtrack (he merely received two unsolicited checks of two hundred dollars each), Ning took Tan to court. Tan was cleared of the charge after it had been established that the challenged excerpt did not constitute a part of his score but was included as source music by Lee's team in the editing phase. In the end, Ning's Shanghai-based publisher, China Record Corporation, was held responsible for flaws made in the copyright negotiations with Lee's production company.

19. For deliberations on the value of the term *Silk Road* for academic discussion, see Warwick Ball, "Following the Mythical Road," *Geographical* 70, no. 3 (1998): 18–23; Susan Whitfield, "Was There a Silk Road?," *Asian Medicine* 3 (2007): 201–13; Khodadad Rezakhani, "The Road That Never Was: The Silk Road and Trans-Eurasian Exchange," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 30, no. 3 (2010): 420–33.

20. In the West, the term *Silk Road* gained wide usage in the 1960s after the publication of several glossy coffee-table books and travel guides, including Luce Boulnois's *La route de la soie* (Paris: Arthaud, 1963) and Robert J. Collins's *East to Cathay: The Silk Road* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968). At the same time, the term

shiruku rōdo was introduced in Japan through a translation of Hedin's *Silk Road*. In China, the term *sichou zhi lu* obtained currency in the 1970s.

21. For book-length studies on the matter, see Rein Müllerson, *Central Asia: A Chessboard and Player in the New Great Game* (London: Kegan Paul, 2007); Alexander Cooley, *Great Games, Local Rules: The New Great Power Contest in Central Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

22. *Integral Study of the Silk Roads: Roads of Dialogue, 1988–1997* (Paris: UNESCO, 1997).

23. Andre Gunder Frank, "On the Silk Road: An 'Academic' Travelogue," *Economic and Political Weekly* 25, no. 46 (1990): 2536–39.

24. See, for instance, Eiji Hattori, "The Silk Roads as Routes of Dialogue among Civilizations," in *Cultural Diversity and Transversal Values: East-West Dialogue on Spiritual and Secular Dynamics* (Paris: UNESCO, 2006), 53–57. Hattori was one of the initiators of the UNESCO Silk Roads project.

25. See Richard Kurin, "The Silk Road Festival: Connecting Cultures," *Anthropology News* (September 2002): 47; Mark Slobin, "The Silk Road Wends Its Way to Washington," *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin* 36, no. 2 (2003): 197–98. For documentation on the festival, see <http://www.festival.si.edu/2002/the-silk-road/smithsonian> (accessed 12 October 2012).

26. Colin Powell, "Remarks at the Opening of the Silk Road Festival," 26 June 2002, published in 148 Cong. Rec. S 6,942 (2002).

27. Richard Kennedy, "The Silk Road: Connecting Cultures, Creating Trust," *Talk Story: Culture in Motion* 21 (Spring 2002): 1.

28. For a detailed discussion of *Silu Huayu*, see Harm Langenkamp, "Conflict-ing Dreams of Global Harmony in US-PRC Silk Road Diplomacy," in *Music and Diplomacy from the Early Modern Era to the Present*, ed. Rebekah Ahrendt, Mark Ferraguto, and Damien Mahiet (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 85–91.

29. Hedin, *The Silk Road*, 234.

30. Steven R. Weisman, "A Global Gathering on the Mall," *New York Times*, 6 July 2002, A12.

31. See "People-to-People Diplomacy Needed More Than Ever, Harrison Says," 5 July 2002, *Washington File: East Asia and the Pacific*, <http://wfile.ait.org.tw/wf-archive/2002/020705/epf505.htm> (accessed 24 October 2012). The source cited is Patricia Harrison, assistant secretary of state for education and cultural affairs.

32. Yo-Yo Ma, "A Journey of Discovery," in the festival program booklet, *The Silk Road: Connecting Cultures, Creating Trust* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2002), 7.

33. For a critical analysis of the discourse surrounding the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas, see Finbarr Barry Flood, "Between Cult and Culture: Bamiyan, Islamic Iconoclasm, and the Museum," *Art Bulletin* 84, no. 4 (2002): 641–59.

34. For a critical discussion of post-9/11 Middle East arts events, see Jessica Winegar, "The Humanity Game: Art, Islam, and the War on Terror," *Anthropological Quarterly* 81, no. 3 (2008): 651–81.

35. Beijing's attempts to link Uyghur separatist movements with al-Qaeda lack substantial evidence and obscure the fact that Uyghur resistance has—at least until 9/11—primarily been inspired by nationalist, as opposed to religious, motives. James A. Millward, *Violent Separatism in Xinjiang: A Critical Assessment*, Policy Studies 6 (Washington, DC: East-West Center, 2004).

36. See UNESCO, "Tentative Lists: Chinese Section of the Silk Road," <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5335> (accessed 20 October 2012).

37. See Bruce Doar, "Approaching the Past: Preparing an Inventory of Intangible Cultural Properties," *China Heritage Quarterly*, no. 7 (2006), <http://chinaheritagequarterly.org/editorial.php?issue=007> (accessed 20 October 2012); Rachel Harris, *The Making of a Musical Canon in Chinese Central Asia: The Uyghur Twelve Muqam* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 109–36; Millward, "Uyghur Art Music and the Ambiguities of Chinese Silk Roadism in Xinjiang," *Silk Road* 3, no. 1 (2005): 12–14.

38. "Senior Chinese Official Calls for Protecting Intangible Cultural Heritage," *People's Daily Online*, 14 February 2006, http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200602/14/eng20060214_242429.html (accessed 12 November 2012).

39. See Bruce Doar, "Mistaken Identities? Focus on Cultural Heritage Protection in Xinjiang," *China Heritage Quarterly*, no. 3 (2005), <http://chinaheritagequarterly.org/editorial.php?issue=003>; Rachel Harris and Rahilā Dawut, "Mazar Festivals of the Uyghurs: Music, Islam, and the Chinese State," *British Journal of Ethnomusicology* 11, no. 1 (2002): 101–18.

40. See Nimrod Baranovitch, "From Resistance to Adaptation: Uyghur Popular Music and Changing Attitudes among Uyghur Youth," *China Journal*, no. 58 (2007): 59–82.

41. For a classic study of Han exoticism, see Dru C. Gladney, "Representing Nationality in China: Refiguring Majority/Minority Identities," *Journal of Asian Studies* 53, no. 1 (1994): 92–123. About WANG Luobin, see Harris, "Wang Luobin: Folk Song King of the Northwest or Song Thief? Copyright, Representation, and Chinese Folk Songs," *Modern China* 31, no. 3 (2005): 381–401. Attesting to the popularity of Luobin's songs is a tribute album by the Twelve Girls Band (EMI, 2006), which features arrangements of classics like "Dabancheng Girl," "Lift Your Veil," and "At a Faraway Place." For a discussion of more intricate Uyghur (self-)exoticizations, see Baranovitch, "From the Margins to the Centre: The Uyghur Challenge in Beijing," *China Quarterly*, no. 175 (2003): 726–50.

42. The NHK soundtrack is released on Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble, *Silk Road Journeys: Beyond the Horizon*, Sony Classical, SK 93962, 2005, compact disc, track 1; the CCTV soundtrack on CHENG Chi, *New Music of Silk Road 2006*, China Records Shanghai Corporation, 0094638436928, 2006, compact disc, track 13.

When a Great Nation Emerges

Chinese Music in the World

Frederick Lau

In April 2001, *New York Times* music critic James Oestreich boldly declared that “the sound of new music is often Chinese.”¹ His observation was no doubt a reaction to the increasing number of Chinese-inspired new compositions circulating in the West in recent years. He was referring to a new contingent of Chinese-born American composers who, since settling down in the United States, have established a “major and diversified presence” on the American and international musical scenes by receiving commissions from prestigious performing groups such as the New York Philharmonic and the Metropolitan Opera. According to Oestreich, composers such as TAN Dun (谭盾; b. 1957), CHEN Yi (陈怡; b. 1953), Bright Sheng (盛宗亮; b. 1955), ZHOU Long (周龙; b. 1953), and GE Ganru (葛甘孺; b. 1954) are synonymous with the musical style of composition generally known as East-West fusion or East-West composition. This type of music usually relies on the direct or indirect use of Chinese materials to evoke a specific kind of “Chinese” sentiment or accent. While this practice recalls the eighteenth-century artistic practice of chinoiserie in its reliance on Chinese motives as the main feature (e.g., see fig. 1), the content, nature, intention, and perception of current East-West compositions have all changed drastically.²

The timing and implication of this unique East-West cultural phenomenon suggest a number of questions. Why has the use of Chinese musical elements recently become so attractive and even fashionable in the West, particularly when the older chinoiserie has long been in decline? How does this current style differ from its predecessors? How do we grasp the meaning of the current style’s emergence and its popularity in the age of globalism



Fig. 1: A seventeenth-century chinoiserie delft plaque

and cosmopolitanism? To answer these questions, it is instructive to begin with a brief history of musical encounters between China and the West.

Sino-Western musical relations have attracted considerable scholarly attention in the decades shortly before and after the turn of the twenty-first century.³ These relations began in an era long before issues of acculturation, appropriation, hybridity, fusion, musical borrowing, musical synthesis, and bricolage came into vogue. Despite their long and illustrious history and their impact especially on Chinese music, these musical crosscurrents have often been overlooked in the study of music by cultural insiders and outsiders, because they were considered marginal and cursory to the understanding of Chinese and Western music in national terms.⁴ This historical oversight has been further entrenched by scholarly quests for cultural authenticity and purity, approaches that have tended to regard any foreign elements as tainting the integrity of national cultures.

In truth, the Sino-Western musical relationship has spawned many amazing and provocative creations that have enriched the content of national music on both sides. As John Hutnyk points out, we have entered a paradoxical moment characterized simultaneously by the celebration of ap-

appropriation and the defensiveness of authenticity.⁵ In the realm of appropriation, he explains, “people rejoice in a phantasmagoric fascination with the East: George Harrison . . . Kula Shaker, and Madonna; . . . within the narrative of cultural authenticity, we have Ravi Shanker, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.”⁶ In the age of globalism, an age inseparable from what Thomas Turino defined as modernist-capitalist formations and hybrid culture,⁷ is it sufficient simply to talk about the music of a country or region in nationalist terms? If it is not, what are the reasons? In this essay, I scrutinize the nature of Sino-Western musical relationship both by taking stock of lessons learned from the past and by asking how we can best understand the underlying forces that have influenced this relationship and the overlaps between the competing narratives. To accomplish this goal, I examine how differences are being conceived, received, negotiated, contested, and represented today both inside and outside the musical realm.

Because of the geopolitical distance and cultural autonomy that divides the regions stereotypically called “East” and “West,” contacts between these musical cultures have been sporadic and have surged only in critical historical moments of expansionism and empire building. I am speaking specifically of China and Europe. The unintended consequences of these musical encounters have created a space in which the “enduring effects of a racial imagination” are negotiated and being felt.⁸ In other words, musical exchanges manifest Sino-Western racializations of ideologies, cultural differences, and perceptions. There are many examples throughout the shared history that illustrate how China and the West have confronted each other musically.

Premodern China, for instance, was a powerful center of politics and culture. European music, in the form of Christian hymns, first arrived there in the eighth century CE, during the Tang dynasty, but it left little impact then on Chinese musical culture, except for a monument commemorating the arrival of Nestorian Christians (see fig. 2). Marco Polo’s sixteen years of service at the Yuan court during the thirteenth century CE contributed significantly to demystifying the culture of this distant country for Europeans, by introducing Chinese music to Europe and setting in motion waves of missionaries and adventurers traveling to China. Christian hymnody was again introduced to China, and, in turn, Chinese music and musical theory were brought back to Europe. The arrival in China of Jesuit priest Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) in 1582 CE and his subsequent trips there further cultivated this relationship by bringing European music and instruments to Chi-

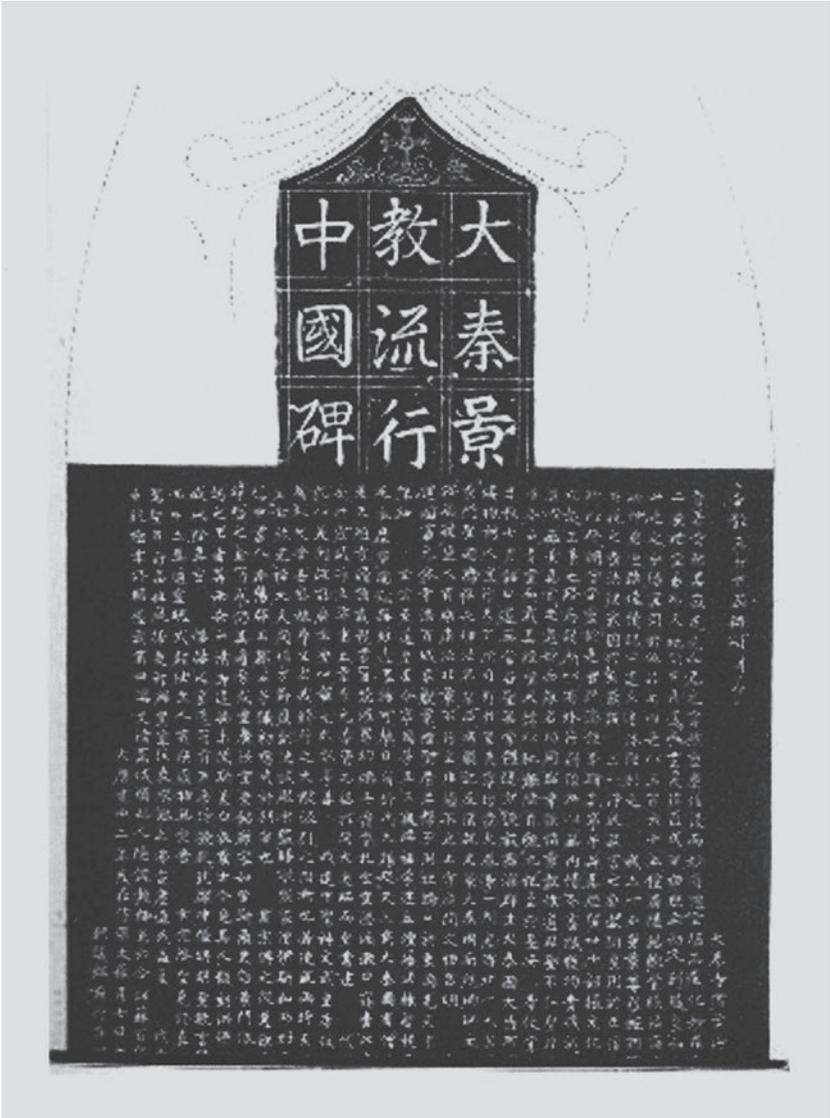


Fig. 2: A Nestorian stela erected in China in 781 CE



Fig. 3: The opening measures of “Les Chinois” from François Couperin’s *Pièces de clavecin* (1728)

na. The number of missionaries arriving in China began to rise during the seventeenth century.⁹ The consequences of these musical encounters were multidimensional and mutually influential, although they long remained at an abstract, theoretical, and nonsonic level. The European attitude toward Chinese music was not always positive, despite the emergence of eighteenth-century chinoiserie. The famous keyboard composition “Les Chinois” (1728) from François Couperin’s *Pièces de clavecin* (book 4, Ordre 27, in B minor) was written in the Baroque idiom and contains entirely perceived or imagined Chinese sentiments, with virtually no actual Chinese musical elements (see fig. 3). For the most part, the adoption of European music did not take root as a practice in China until the turn of the twentieth century, when China came face-to-face with European military threats.

In terms of actual musical sounds, East and West remained drastically different and divided in aesthetics and characteristics. From European perspectives, differences in terms of textures and timbres were measured against the standard practice in European music and, through circular argu-

ments, reaffirmed the complexity of European music as ideal, progressive, and superior. According to Western evolutionary notions of music, China's monophonic and heterophonic styles still had a long way to go before arriving at the higher end of cultural and aesthetic scales. Ricci's earlier impression of Chinese music is a perfect example of the European reaction to the sound of Chinese music.

Music instruments are common and of many varieties, but [they] possess no instrument of the keyboard type. . . . The whole art of Chinese music seems to consist in producing a monotonous rhythmic beat, as they know nothing of the variations and harmony that can be produced by combining different musical notes. However, they themselves are highly flattered by their own music, which to the ears of a stranger represents nothing but a discordant jangle.¹⁰

These attitudes continued well into the nineteenth century, when Europeans began visiting China more frequently. J. A. van Aalst, a Belgian who worked as a custom and postal officer for the imperial Qing court in Beijing during the late nineteenth century, concluded that Chinese music left a bad impression on European ears because Chinese scales were not tempered, Chinese instruments were not precisely tuned, and Chinese music, often performed in unison, did not conform to either major or minor scales.¹¹ Europeans did not understand the musical differences and perceived them in terms of simple good/bad and beautiful/ugly binaries, according to what was and was not European.

When European sounds began to reach the average Chinese around the middle of the nineteenth century, China was in political turmoil, and its own value system was being questioned. Whether Western knowledge could be used to recalibrate perceived backwardness in Chinese culture became a pressing issue. Amid this crisis of national ideology and encroaching foreign military threats, Chinese men and women became increasingly familiar with European music through church hymns, military bands, organs, school songs, and violins.¹² Chinese brass bands had become popular in the military. This was also the time when many books on Chinese instrument methods were widely circulated. Rather than receiving imported music and instruments as strange, which Europeans mostly did when they heard Chinese music, many Chinese experienced European music as a new "matrix of ideological consciousness of difference"—that is, as an embodiment of modernity, progress, optimism, and prestige.¹³ If Sino-Western musical dif-

ferences of the early period were shaped by intense interactions between peoples, contexts, and perceptions, it is not surprising that these differences have since become the foundation of modern Chinese music and continue to be reinterpreted and imagined in the ever-changing social contexts and cultural climate of our global age.

OF EAST AND WEST

Given the tumultuous history of this mutual musical encounter, the question is, how should we talk about a body of work that has been generally called “East-West” composition? “East meets West” is a neologism popularized in the twentieth century to describe cultural works that amalgamate especially Chinese and Western elements, broadly defined. In Anglo-American musical discourse, this term points to the musical phenomenon of incorporating Asian musical elements in Western compositions.¹⁴ In the most general way, any use of Asian melodies or indigenous instruments and any emulations of Asian scales, melodic contours, timbres, textures, structures, meters, sonorities, titles, and other musical parameters qualify for this label. The motivation for this form of hybridity, however, is precisely what makes appropriation difficult to pin down. This form of musical fusion is often understood as having injected new impulses and strategies into a musical tradition whose creative ideals are in pursuit of the “new” and “transcendence.” Nevertheless, despite the label’s usefulness and popularity, the use of “East meets West” as a discursive frame deserves further scrutiny and problematization.

Rather than taking “East” and “West” as essentialized and unproblematic givens, a more productive way of approaching cultural exchange is to examine how musical differences are manifested and represented. The notion of Chineseness in music is manifested in a network of ideological constructions that often involve language and other signifying practices rooted in history, musical practices, and sonic references and preferences. In other words, Chineseness is performed and reified by human actors through combinations of sounds and languages.

OF SOUND AND MAN

If “East meets West” is a story about agency, the focus should be placed on who is doing what to whom and why. Who is the composer? What is his or

her relationship to one or more traditions? How is he or she perceived in different cultural environments? What are the consequences of his or her musical decisions? These are perplexing (and intriguing) questions and cannot be answered easily. As Tan Dun put it, "In Europe and even Japan, everyone thinks I'm an American composer. . . . But in America, I'm a Chinese composer." The critic James Oestreich reported that Bright Sheng "echoed" Tan's sentiment in a separate conversation.¹⁵ Issues of identity and perception, often disregarded in the name of creativity and composers' claims of autonomy, are important to discussions of music. They are clues to explain the power of individual agency; at the same time, they allow us to see how composers take advantage of the market, audiences' expectations, and the cultural demand for personal gain and recognition, while tacitly challenging the status quo and cultural racism.

Listening to many musical examples that are labeled "East-West" will prove my point that music alone is unable to offer simple answers to the question of inherent Chineseness(es) in sound. Pieces such as Bright Sheng's *H'un* (Lacerations) and *3 Fantasies: Dream Song*, Ge Ganru's *Four Studies of Peking Opera*, Chen Yi's *As in a Dream*, and Zhou Long's *Out of Tang Court* rely on Chinese musical elements in one way or another. All these compositions are fundamentally Western and are scored for Western instruments; at the same time, they are adorned with "Chinese" musical gestures or inspired by their composers' understanding and interpretation of Chinese culture and history. Regardless of the composers' intentions, the works themselves are enhanced or further complicated by networks of multiple significations, such as titles, program notes, and audience perceptions. Some sections of these crossover pieces contain virtually no audible or recognizable Chinese musical gestures and characteristics. Nevertheless, they were inspired by or claim to invoke a sense of Chineseness. The so-called Chinese references in these compositions range from explicit to abstract references as they invoke Chinese sentiments.

My point here is that there is no automatic inherent connection between one's ethnicity and one's music. Hong Kong composer LAW Wing Fai once told me that one difference between himself and composers in China is that he does not feel the weight of Chinese traditions bearing down on him. Instead, he sees himself as standing outside the center of Chinese culture and does not burden himself with appropriating Chinese musical elements. The use of Chinese tunes or timbres or other relevant musical devices is, for him,

simply a matter of choice, convenience, and familiarity, as well as aesthetic and artistic preference.¹⁶ Law's comments are insightful in that they reveal the ways in which individuals shape their own identities vis-à-vis ethnicity. In the following pages, I concentrate on several selected titles, program notes, and reviews that show how music is further racialized and how its meaning is being fixed.

PROGRAM NOTES

Traditional Chinese music is mostly programmatic. The tradition of assigning program to Chinese music began around the second century CE.¹⁷ It is not clear whether contemporary Chinese composers are simply adhering to this age-old tradition or following the modern concert practice of providing program notes, but these composers invariably provide program notes for their compositions. Unlike traditional pieces that reference nature or scenery, program notes often reveal composers' intentions and notions of Chineseness. In the following selection of program notes, references to China and Chinese rituals, instruments, and ideology clearly link works by Bright Sheng and Tan Dun to a sense of sonic Chineseness.

On *The Stream Flows*, Sheng wrote,

The first part of "The Stream Flows" is based on a famous Chinese folk song from the southern part of China. The freshness and the richness of the tune deeply touched me when I first heard it. Since then I have used it as basic material in several of my works. Here I hope that the resemblance of the timbre and the tone quality of a female folk singer is evoked by the solo violin. The second part is a fast country-dance based on a three-note motive.¹⁸

Sheng's piece is based on a famous folk song. In this case, China—the place, country, and cultural entity—is highlighted, and there is a direct relationship drawn between sound and place, quite apart from timbres and tone qualities.

In the program notes for three pieces composed since he arrived in the United States, Tan Dun has clearly explained his intentions and how his music references China, Chinese culture, and Chineseness.

On Taoism

This piece was written on the death of my grandmother, after I went back to Hunan [Province] to take part in her funeral in the village where I grew up. This Taoist ritual brought back to me the sounds, the movement, the spiritual vibrations from my childhood, forgotten in the many years I was dedicated to learning western music. I used both instruments and voice to break the artificial law that music must be made of tonal and atonal scales. I wanted to explore sound in many dimensions: microtonal, swimming among frequencies, expanding timbres as the ink of calligraphy spreads in rice paper.¹⁹

Out of Peking Opera for violin and orchestra

“What is *Out of Peking Opera*?”

1. The first three measures of this piece are a direct quotation from the “jing hu” [a two-stringed bowed lute with a small body that provides the main accompaniment to the voice] fiddling of Peking Opera. This is the seed—it unfolds, becomes increasingly abstract, expressionistic, developing power, beauty, and longing.

2. I began this piece when I first came to New York and left behind the ancient continuity of Chinese society. I saw new things, and began to make connections between my own thoughts and the rest of the world. I felt refreshed, lamenting. I started to see my past more clearly. But I’m still not sure if “out of” means farther away, or closer?

In 1987, *Out of Peking Opera* was written in ambivalence, confronting serialism, being attracted yet doubting that it was the way for me. A second operation was necessary, and finally in 1994 it was completed and out of my mind.²⁰

In Distance

I called this piece “In Distance” because it was a kind of questioning of myself. On the simplest level, there is a wide distance between each of the instruments in register, timbre, and dynamics. Then, even though I used three western instruments, the music is often very far from the way

these instruments might usually sound. The piccolo is treated more like the Chinese bamboo flute, the harp is treated like the koto, and the bass drum is made to sound like Indian drums, played only with palms and fingers. A third meaning can be heard in the texture of the music, which is very open with lots of space, as I began to use rests as a kind of musical language. Finally, I explored the distance, even the conflict between atonal writing and folk materials. Writing just after I arrived in New York, I began to see myself within the clarity of distance.²¹

Any audience would have “heard” China and Chineseness in Tan’s music merely by reading his program notes. In this sense, program notes are an important means and strategy of clarifying ideas associated with music and of assigning concrete meaning to sounds.

TITLES

Titles are part of the signification packages that provide other clues about musical references to China. By looking at the following titles, it is difficult to miss the suggested links between music and China.

- Nanking! Nanking!* (2000)
- H’un [Lacerations]: In Memoriam 1966–1976* (1988)
- Tibetan Swing* (2002)
- China Dream* (1995)
- Shanghai Overture* (2007)
- Silk Road* (1989)
- Peony Pavilion* (1998)
- Out of Peking Opera* (Violin Concerto No. 1) (1987, rev. 1994)
- Spring Dream* (1997)
- Chinese Rhapsody* (1992)
- Chinese Fables for Erhu, Pipa, Cello and Percussion* (2002)
- Song of the Great Wall for Eight French Horns* (1999)
- Tibetan Tunes* (2007)
- Out of Tang Court* (2002)
- At the Kansas City Chinese New Year Concert* (2002)
- Song of the Ch’in* (1982)

Most of these titles are based on images or historical events familiar to Western as well as Chinese listeners. As if this were not enough, the addition of Chinese instruments completes the sonic indexing of Chineseness. The titles further illustrate the function of language in compensating for the lack of referential quality of musical sound.

Titles suggest ways of hearing pieces with references to—or as—“Chinese” music. Their effectiveness also depends on audiences’ cultural knowledge and understanding about China. Unlike musical clichés used during the *chinoiserie* era, contemporary Chinese sentiments may not always be easily audible in new compositions. Leading Chinese-American composer Chou Wen-Chung sees no virtue in combining cultural artifacts in a superficial way, without a deep understanding of the legacies involved. He finds “slim improvement in some of the work of his former students over the musical *chinoiserie* of a century ago.”²² Obviously, Chou’s opinion is based on a sense of his own Chineseness in locating these works along a historical trajectory.

IN THE EYES AND EARS OF THE CRITICS

In *Free Press Music* in 2008, Mark Stryker wrote of Bright Sheng’s “searing” *Nanking! Nanking!*,

The music’s indivisible fusion of Chinese and Western idioms defines the composer’s aesthetic at its most profound. . . . Like Béla Bartók . . . Sheng does the same with Chinese sources—without resorting to *chinoiserie* clichés or denying the raw beauty and emotion of the original. In “Nanking! Nanking!” (2000), the melodic colors and intervals are redolent of China but full of mystery, perhaps alluding to folk song without direct quotation. The harmony is modal, the orchestration tangy and fresh, with the solo pipa (Chinese lute) often sharing a song with a single instrument or two (flute, contrabassoon, violin, a pair of piccolos).²³

The descriptions of Sheng’s music and its relationship to China are suggestive. By developing an analogy between Bartók’s European compositions and Sheng’s use of Chinese resources, Stryker “locates” the presence of Chinese elements within a modernist Western tradition of classicizing “authenticity.” In terms of timbre, the only instrument that signifies China

in Sheng's composition is the *pipa*. The use of its strumming chords and signature tremolo is reminiscent of famous passages from such familiar works as *Ambush from All Sides* (*Shimian maifu*) or *The Tyrant Removes His Armor* (*Bawang Xiejia*). Apart from that, the audible signifiers of Chineseness are left to the imaginations of Sheng's listeners. By avoiding the use of unmistakably Chinese melodies, Sheng has prompted Stryker to compliment him for his compositional skill in not "resorting to chinoiserie clichés."

A review of Chen Yi's *West Lake* reveals how her vocal work was received by one Western critic, M. L. Rantala of the *Hyde Park Herald*.

The highlight was Chen Yi's "The West Lake." . . . Chen's modern techniques and complex tonal palette serve as a bridge between the musical sounds of East and West. Writing different parts for each of the ensemble's nine voices, the composer has created a delicately layered work. . . . She treats voices like orchestral instruments and this yields wonderful results. At times the voices sound like strings, later like brass, and most strikingly, something like bells, putting you in mind of ripples created by small stones dropped in clear water. The singers embraced the music beautifully.²⁴

About other works by Chen, Joshua Kosman of the *San Francisco Chronicle* said,

There are a number of composers these days trying to forge a musical link between China and the West, but few who bring as much exuberant pizzazz to the task as Chen Yi. This magnificent new CD [*The Music of Chen Yi*, New Albion NA-090] documents a concert last June devoted to her orchestral music, and it makes the point with splendid force. The Chinese-born composer spent three years in San Francisco as composer-in-residence for the Women's Philharmonic and the men's chorus Chanticleer, in the course of which she created several exciting works for each ensemble. This disc includes three of the orchestral pieces and culminates with the vastly ambitious *Chinese Myths Cantata*. What is so thrilling about all of these pieces is the brilliant vitality with which Chen Yi dresses the strains of Chinese music in Western orchestral garb. In the pictorial, all-too-brief *Ge Xu* (Antiphony), for example, she re-creates the mountain top calls of a Chinese ethnic minority, the Zhuang; the sliding string melodies and thwacking percussion seem to shimmer

through the autumn air. *Duo Ye No. 2* sounds as if the Stravinsky of the early ballets had looked far to the East and plundered what he found there, sprinkling it with pugnacious orchestration and a dash of knowing wit. And the *Symphony No. 2* stands as a dark, haunting cenotaph to the composer's late father. The 35-minute *Chinese Myths Cantata*, which joins orchestra, men's chorus and a quartet of traditional Chinese instruments, still sounds a little diffuse, . . . But the musical riches are all there, especially in the choral passages, and in the high-relief solos for the pipa, the erhu and other Chinese instruments . . . the colorful genius of Chen Yi's writing shines through.²⁵

The language used by Kosman, Rantala, and Stryker is revealing. All of them complimented the works they reviewed, using established standards of East-West hybrid musical practice. The words *China* and *Chinese* appear frequently in their reviews. They were clearly impressed with the skills and talent used by Sheng and Yi to infuse their compositions with Chinese sounds or sentiments. These critics' emphasis, however, is on creativity, rather than on the political implications of Chineseness within the uneasy history of Sino-European cultural exchange. Any composer, though, might be happy to be complimented for "dress[ing] the strains of Chinese music in Western orchestral garb."²⁶ Ironically, in the eyes of the composers' former teacher Chou Wen-chung, some of these compositions are "slim improvement . . . over the musical chinoiserie of a century ago," because Chou does not think that they are result of "spiritual digestion of one's legacies."²⁷

CONCLUSION

The tendency to produce "flavored" classical music has been on the rise in recent decades. One needs only look at albums with titles such as *The Enchanted Forest: Melodies of Japan for Flute*, *Soul of Tango: The Music of Astor Piazzolla*, *Obrigado Brazil: Live in Concert*, *Appalachian Journey*, *Dim Sum*, *Pieces of Africa*, *Silkroad Journey*, or *Oriental Landscapes*. In the process of creating niche markets for classical music, the global recording industry has begun using ethnic categories as selling points. Whether a matter of organizational convenience or deliberate market strategy, labels of these kinds have become commonplace, suggesting that classical music has turned folksy and that the consumption of ethnic musical products as well as ethnic foods,

clothing, and other cultural products reaffirms one's place in the globalized and cosmopolitan world, fulfilling Frederic Jameson's dictum that "the production of difference is inherent in the logic of capitalism itself."²⁸

In our age of global connections and interdependencies, perhaps it is inevitable that multiple forces have exerted influences on cultural practices and creativity. Given the interpenetration of Chinese music in Europe and vice versa, a simplistic East/West binary is no longer analytically adequate. The world's understanding of Chinese and European music has come a long way. To insist on using outdated categories forces us into essentialized notions of difference and distinction based primarily, if not exclusively, on race and nation. Furthermore, such categories privilege the hegemonic power of global marketing, at the expense of human agency and its creative power.

To comprehend the nature of today's Sino-Western fusion compositions, we must remember that China is a major player in today's global economy, a nation that has finally emerged as a "great" power. According to an article in the March 2009 issue of the *Economist*, Fred Bergsten of the Institute for International Economics observed that the world's economic problems lie essentially in the hands of two powers, China and America—what some call "the G2."²⁹ Hosting the 2008 Olympics, staging Puccini's operas at the Forbidden City, and producing award-winning film directors as well as a Nobel laureate are all signs of greatness. The timing of China's emerging prowess and the increasing popularity of Sino-Western compositions are no coincidence: they owe much to China's new global status and the changing geopolitical context.

I do not mean to criticize composers for doing what they do in their music. After all, composers must produce new pieces to further their careers. Instead, I am trying to raise questions about multilayered intercultural syntheses, human agency, and emerging contexts. One way to make sense of individual composers confronted by a globalized system of musical production, consumption, and dissemination is understanding more completely the multiple levels of signification associated with their works as well as the geopolitical and cultural circumstances in which they operate.

It is ironic that the evocative sound of Chinese music, dissonant and undesirable to Europeans of a century ago, has become part of an emerging Western aesthetic preference. Perhaps East-meets-West composers are capitalizing on their aesthetic legitimacy and ethnic status in order to break new creative ground and advance their careers. Of course, not every Chinese composer is highlighting Chineseness in his or her music, and I do not mean

to imply that all Chinese composers have to add “real” and “authentic” Chinese touches to their compositions. Instead, I want to suggest that we need to factor into our analyses what Timothy Taylor identifies as the “complicated subject positions that the international music industry has constructed and imposed” on what it means to incorporate Chinese elements vis-à-vis other non-Western elements in classical music.³⁰ Chinese composers and artists are visible in the global cultural marketplace. Their rising prominence is not unlike what Sanjay Sharma maintains when he says that “coolie has become cool.”³¹

As Daniel Chua eloquently argues in his study of absolute music, no composition or sound is “too transcendent to be soiled by the muck of contextualization.”³² Chua is absolutely right. Attention to multiple interdependencies between history, praxis, human agency, production, consumption, and networks of ideological constructions is a must if we are to make sense of musical and cultural production in the twenty-first century and the Sino-Western relationship.³³

Notes

1. James Oestreich, “The Sound of New Music Is Often Chinese: A New Contingent of American Composers,” *New York Times*, 1 April 2001, <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/04/01/arts/the-sound-of-new-music-is-often-chinese-a-new-contingent-of-american-composers.html?sec=&spon=&pagewanted=1> (accessed 13 April 2013).

2. See O. R. Impey, *Chinoiserie: The Impact of Oriental Styles on Western Art and Decoration* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1977); Madeleine Jarry, *Chinoiserie: Chinese Influence on European Decorative Art, 17th and 18th Centuries* (New York: Vendome, 1981).

3. See, for example, Eric Hung, “Performing ‘Chineseness’ on the Western Concert Stage,” *Asian Music* 40, no. 1 (2009): 131–48; Frederick Lau, “Fusion or Fission: The Paradox and Politics of Contemporary Chinese Avant-garde Music,” in *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, ed. Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 22–39; John Winzenburg, “Aaron Avshalomov and New Chinese Music in Shanghai, 1931–1847,” *Twentieth-Century China* 37, no. 1 (2012): 50–72; Hon-Lun Yang, “The Shanghai Conservatory, Chinese Musical Life, and the Russian Diaspora, 1927–1949,” *Twentieth-Century China* 37, no. 1 (2012): 73–95; Siu Wah Yu, “Two Practices Confused in One Composition: Tan Dun’s *Symphony 1997: Heaven, Earth, Man*,” in Everett and Lau, *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, 57–71.

4. See Stephen Blum, "Analysis of Musical Styles," in *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction*, ed. H. Myers (London: Macmillan, 1992), 165.
5. John Hutnyk, "Hybridity Saves? Authenticity and/or the Critique of Appropriation," *Amerasia Journal* 25, no. 3 (2000): 41.
6. Ibid.
7. Thomas Turino, *Nationalists, Cosmopolitans, and Popular Music in Zimbabwe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 7.
8. Philip Vilas Bohlman and Ronald Michael Radano, *Music and the Racial Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 2.
9. See David Mungello, *The Great Encounter between China and the West, 1500–1800* (Langham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2009).
10. Matteo Ricci, Nicholas Trigault, and Louis J. Gallagher, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci, 1583–1610* (New York: Random House, 1853), 22.
11. J. A. Van Aalst, *Chinese Music* (Shanghai: Statistical Department of the Inspectorate General of Customs, 1884; repr., New York: Paragon, 1964), 84.
12. See Yabing Tao, *Mingqing jian de zhongxi yinyue jia liu* [Sino-Western Musical Exchange in the Ming and Qing Dynasty] (Beijing: Oriental Publishing House, 2001), 198.
13. Bohlman and Radano, *Music and the Racial Imagination*, 8.
14. See Everett and Lau, *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*.
15. Quoted in Oestreich, "Sound of New Music."
16. See Lau, "Context, Agency, and Chineseness: The Music of Law Wing Fai," *Contemporary Music Review* 26, nos. 5–6 (2007): 585–603.
17. See Kuohuang Han, "The Chinese Concept of Program Music," *Asian Music* 10, no. 1 (1978): 17–38.
18. http://www.schirmer.com/Default.aspx?TabId=2420&State_2874=2&workId_2874=24861 (accessed 13 April 2013).
19. http://www.schirmer.com/default.aspx?TabId=2420&State_2874=2&workId_2874=33569 (accessed 13 April 2013).
20. http://www.schirmer.com/default.aspx?TabId=2420&State_2874=2&workId_2874=33572 (accessed 15 April 2013).
21. http://www.schirmer.com/default.aspx?TabId=2420&State_2874=2&workId_2874=33562 (accessed 15 April 2013).
22. Oestreich, "Sound of New Music."
23. Mark Stryker, "Bright Sheng: Music Leads DSO to China," *Free Press Music*, 18 October 2008, http://www.brightsheng.com/reviews/reviewsheng_DSOverview.html (accessed 15 April 2013).
24. M. L. Rantala, review, *Hyde Park Herald*, <http://www.presser.com/composers/chenyi.html#Reviews> (accessed 15 April 2013).
25. Joshua Kosman, review, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 2 February 1997, <http://>

www.sfgate.com/entertainment/article/CLASSICAL-CDS-Brilliant-Music-From-Chen-Yi-2855753.php (accessed 6 September 2016).

26. Ibid.

27. Oestreich, "Sound of New Music."

28. Viet Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination: South Africa and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 482.

29. <http://www.economist.com/node/13326106/print> (accessed 13 April 2013).

30. Timothy Dean Taylor, *Global Pop: World Music, World Markets* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 22–23.

31. Quoted in Hutnyk, "Hybridity Saves?," 41.

32. Daniel K. L. Chua, *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 4.

33. I thank Helan Yang and the organizing committee for their kind invitation to participate in the 2009 "East Meets West" conference in Hong Kong. I also acknowledge the wisdom and vision of Helan Yang, Ho Wai Chung, and Michael Saffle in selecting the conference themes and putting together a provocative program. I thank Michael Saffle, anonymous reviewers, and conference participants for their critical comments on my contribution.

A Postscript

Michael Saffle

The conference that launched the present volume was held at Hong Kong Baptist University in April 2009. Organized by HO Wai-Chung of that university's Music Department and by this volume's editors, the conference celebrated the ninetieth anniversary of China's May Fourth Movement. Everyone involved with the conference immediately became enmeshed in the problems associated with East-West issues, especially those associated with twentieth-century and twenty-first-century cultural similarity, hybridity, and difference. The 1919 movement was itself Eastern, particularly Chinese, but its models were largely Western. Hong Kong Baptist University was founded by Western missionaries, but Hong Kong itself—once a British treaty port (and a spoil of the mid-nineteenth-century Opium Wars)—belongs today to the People's Republic of China. Both Chinese and Western scholars attended the Hong Kong conference and delivered papers on a variety of subjects. Interestingly, some of the Chinese scholars discussed primarily Western music, while some of the Westerners (who represented Austria, Belgium, Canada, the Netherlands, and the United States) mostly talked about China. The gathering offered a veritable cocktail of intercultural possibilities.

In her discussion of theoretical approaches to Chinese and Western cultural issues, Hon-Lun Yang points out that an unqualified dichotomy is not merely offensive but simply incorrect. At the same time, cultural differences do exist; hybrids reflect similarities to some extent, but although they may reconcile differences, they never altogether eliminate them. An American visitor to downtown Beijing knows he is not in Chicago or Los Angeles, no matter how many Western brand names he encounters. A Chinese visitor to Pearl River, Manhattan's closest approach to a Chinese retail outlet, will not be fooled either. "East" and "West" never have been

and probably should never become entirely interchangeable, even though it seems today as if almost every nation is brought into ever-closer cultural proximity with every other. At the same time, a great many nations continue to exploit one another. Hegemonic power, after all, is national (i.e., local) as well as international. Harm Langenkamp understands this well. The Silk Road may once have served foreign powers; today, however, China's politicians and those of the West use its reputation and treasures for their own, politically motivated purposes.

Yang quotes Bruno Nettl's observation about the convergence of world musical cultures as a result of the "intensive diffusion of elements derived from European society—its technology, economic and political organizations."¹ This would seem to place the West (in this case, Europe) on the offensive, China on the defensive. But Yang goes on to ask whether it may be possible "for intercultural music to exist outside hegemonies of any and every kind." She then raises a closely related issue, that of postcolonial theory as "itself hegemonic, insofar as it concentrates on its own tradition and excludes the voices of others." To put it another way, we need to be careful where and how we tread on cultures of every kind, including our own. Those who believe that either New York or London still simply runs the world should read *A Year without "Made in China"*, Sara Bongiorni's best-selling account of one American family's struggle to survive without East Asian imports.²

In a lengthy article published a decade ago in the *Annual Review of Anthropology* and largely devoted to a critical examination of "world music," Martin Stokes clarifies distinctions (among other things) between "top-down" and "bottom-up" perspectives on global forces. Increasingly, as he explains, "the top-down perspective has been localized," with "specific global projects" increasingly understood "in specific institutional contexts." In other words, big business is not the only game on the planet. Instead, "state, civil, and other institutional sponsors" play important roles.³ These "sponsors" include China's Communist Party and Jiang Yiwon of the Shanghai Quartet, as Harm Langenkamp and Eric Hung point out. The bottom-up perspective, however, understands that locality is itself produced, rather than merely identified, and that "many actors have an interest and a stake" in it.⁴ Again, Hung and Langenkamp would agree.

Quoting Viet Erlmann, Stokes also references an important theoretical distinction between modern and postmodern methods of handling cultural differences. For Erlmann, the late nineteenth century (and probably the ear-

ly twentieth) was characterized by “the panorama, the fetish, and the spectacle” in relation to “colonized others.” James Deaville and I would agree with this assessment; the musical comedy stage has always been about fetishes and spectacle, Western as well as Chinese. In contrast, the late twentieth century (and probably the early twenty-first) continues to be characterized by “an increasing tendency toward the presentational and the mimetic.”⁵ For Erlmann, contemporary artists and their audiences seek “the ‘real presence’ of the Other rather than a represented abstraction.”⁶ Yet *Flower Drum Song* is based on the “real presence” of its Chinese-American author’s experiences, just as Chinese-themed musical comedies of the 1920s sometimes referenced “real” Chinese musical practices. At the same time, Chinese music cannot be said to have stood on its own feet—or to have been allowed so to stand—in most of the Western productions examined in this volume. Emile Wenekes considers some problematic examples in his own contribution: examples at once “Asian” and “Dutch” in ways people from other nations may not quite grasp. Alice’s words “curioser and curioser” come to mind.

Every contributor to the present volume has mostly avoided hegemonic traps. Instead, each considers a quite different subject from a different methodological perspective. David Urrows, for example, draws mostly on political and social history as well as organology. His subject is the past, specifically the Christian West’s introduction of pipe organs, with everything those instruments eventually implied, into seventeenth- and eighteenth-century China. Mary Ingraham draws on cultural theory as well as musicology. Her subject too is the past, but from today’s perspective. Her exemplum is *Iron Road*, an opera about the Chinese in Canada, composed by a cross-cultural duo, CHAN Ka Nin and Mark Brownell, for Canadian audiences. Its story of all-but-slave labor on Canada’s transcontinental railways portrays the Chinese as victims even as it also grants them the moral high ground; they were sinned against rather than sinning.

The question of hegemony in all its forms becomes messier still when we consider either Chinese musicians working with Western genres, instruments, and methods or Western musicians working with Chinese genres, instruments, and methods. Lang Lang more or less rules the world of contemporary Western classical piano performance, despite his Chinese origins. Cornelia Szabó-Knotik points this out, but she also points out Austria’s historical colonization of orientalized imagery, including the statue known as the “Big Chinese” and Chinese-themed waltzes that entertained visitors to Vienna’s Prater. John Winzenburg examines a quite different phenom-

enon, the “timbral divide” that has long distinguished Eastern, especially Chinese, and Western orchestral sonorities, and that is breaking down in the face of cross-cultural influences today. Sticking almost entirely to scores and sounds, Winzenburg carefully privileges neither Chinese nor Western instruments over their counterparts.

One potential trap identified by Thomas Turino and mostly avoided throughout the present volume is that of “globalist discourse.” Today, it has become suspect to emphasize “difference,” even when it unquestionably exists. Yet every contributor to this volume, especially Frederick Lau—who concludes the present volume with his essay on musical China as a “great nation” and on the phenomenon of “flavored” world music—treats “the East” as different from and in no musical sense inferior to “the West.” There can be no doubt that, today, Chinese and Western socio-politico-cultural realities are increasingly entangled with one another and increasingly influence each other financially and militarily as well as culturally. Still, for Turino, we have not yet achieved “globality,” because not everything—certainly not everything musical—“affect[s] everyone everywhere.”⁷ Maintaining that the term *globalization* is “too deeply, indexically, tied to the contemporary discourse naturalizing increased capitalist expansion and control throughout the world,”⁸ Turino argues,

The events of childbirth and sunrise are global; radio may, by now, be almost global. E-mail, the web, CD players, “global investing,” “world music,” and salsa are not yet global phenomena because there are numerous places and populations that cannot afford to invest or to have these machines and that are not involved with these musical styles. [Yet, b]y the literal definition [of globalization], the state system is global whereas nation-states are not.⁹

In other words, “globalization” is itself a hegemonic concept. China and the United States may partake of characteristics shared by nation-states everywhere, but they are not mere cogs in a globalized machine. Perhaps, with this in mind, Bongiorni should have subtitled her book “One Family’s True Life Adventure in the International Economy.” The phrase *global economy* is, in some important respects, an exaggeration.

To sum up, China, Europe, and North America are not and never have been interchangeable, even though they increasingly share opportunities and encourage certain forms of cultural exchange. Dichotomies are often

false, but so are assumptions of identity. Stereotypes may be demeaning, but at least they acknowledge (however awkwardly and unpleasantly) that differences exist. The model operas discussed by Nancy Rao were unquestionably the products of a particular time and place, just as the ongoing transformations of the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra described by Yang were products of a slightly different place and, culturally, a quite different time.

Notes

1. See Bruno Nettl, *The Western Impact on World Music: Change, Adaptation, and Survival* (New York: Schirmer, 1985), 3.
2. Sara Bongiorni, *A Year without "Made in China": One Family's True Life Adventure in the Global Economy* (New York: Wiley, 2008).
3. Martin Stokes, "Music and the Global Order," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33 (2004): 50.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., 49. Stokes paraphrases Viet Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination: South Africa and the West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 176–77.
6. Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination*, 177.
7. Thomas Turino, "Are We Global Yet? Globalist Discourse, Cultural Formations, and the Study of Zimbabwean Popular Music," *British Journal of Ethnomusicology* 12, no. 2 (2003): 53.
8. Ibid., 51
9. Ibid., 53.

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