

PART II

The Literati



### 3. Tsar Teh-yun at Age 100

#### *A Life of Qin Music, Poetry, and Calligraphy*

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The seven-string zither *qin* and its music are unique in Chinese musical culture.<sup>1</sup> Its long and uninterrupted history of at least two millennia is attested by archaeological and literary evidence. While many instruments in the world are as old, few can claim the unbroken continuity of the *qin* tradition, a continuity that underscores its generally conservative nature and retains much that is archaic, including the repertory, notational system, performance practice, and social context.

*Qin* music has always been associated intimately and exclusively with China's literati and is identified closely with the refinement and sophistication of this elite social class. Until recent times, the great majority of China's population had little chance to hear this music, although many would have known of the instrument, because it is often mentioned in popular performing genres such as storytelling and opera. It is also a common subject in paintings that depict the recluse scholar-gentleman contemplating the serenity and grandeur of nature.

The long history of the *qin* has produced a rich lore and literature. Physical parts of the instrument and many of the individual finger techniques have symbolic significance; individual pieces in the vast repertory are laden with extramusical content. The symbolism and lore are related to the history, myths, legends, philosophy, and religion of China, especially as cultivated and transmitted by the literati. Thus, the *qin* and its music constitute a microcosm of China's elite and refined culture. The notational system used today was established at least as early as the twelfth century A.D. and has remained essentially unchanged.<sup>2</sup> The relative stability of the notation makes music written down centuries ago accessible to a modern musician. A repertory of over three thousand items, mostly from the last five and a half centuries, is extant today.

The qin was traditionally used in a ritual music ensemble, and to accompany the singing of refined poetry. But its outstanding role has always been as a solo instrument. As such, it is played not so much for an audience as for the performer's own enlightenment and enjoyment, although occasionally performers may play for each other. Qin musicians are predominantly amateurs, in the sense that they do not depend upon performance for their livelihood and need not cater to a paying audience. This private mode of performance has been critical in shaping the aesthetic principles and musical characteristics of the instrument.

Qin music is complex in structure and refined and subtle in its aesthetics. The extreme quietness of its tone requires the listener's full and undivided attention; it takes a sensitive and cultivated ear to appreciate the many shades of timbre and dynamics within a small range of expression, produced by minute differences in finger techniques. Since most compositions have extramusical content that relate to the history, philosophy, and religion of China, the music offers yet another challenge to the uneducated listener.

These characteristics of the qin tradition are all related to the fact that it has for centuries been cultivated by the scholar-gentlemen, an elite class that held supreme power and wealth throughout history. As long as their status remained unchanged, so did the qin tradition and its special characteristics. Despite China's turbulent history in the last 2,500 years as dynasties rose and fell, the reign of the scholar-gentlemen remained essentially unchanged. It followed that the longevity and continuity of the qin tradition were sustained.

But the late nineteenth century and twentieth century witnessed tumultuous change in China's political, social, and economic structures. Furthermore, the last century saw a burst of development in science and technology, the large-scale import of Western ideas of democracy and aesthetics, the increasing dominance of market power, and the rise of the middle class. Along with the collapse of China's last imperial dynasty in 1911 came the disintegration of the scholar-gentlemen class. As a result, the qin tradition as it was practiced for two millennia was doomed.

Not surprisingly, by far the majority of famous qin musicians recorded in history, legend, or fiction were men, ranging from the mythological Bo Ya to great twentieth-century musicians such as Guan Pinghu.<sup>3</sup> According to the membership list of the well-known Jinyu Qin Society (Jinyu Qinshe) of Shanghai, formed in 1936, of the 224 members, 24 were female, some of whom were included in part because they were wives of qin musicians. It is therefore quite astonishing that the oldest and most revered qin musician today is a woman, Tsar Teh-yun,<sup>4</sup> or Mrs. Shen Honglai.

Tsar Teh-yun was born in the waning days of China's last imperial dy-

nasty. She lived through most of the twentieth century, and now well into the twenty-first. During this period, the world has seen unprecedented advances in science, technology, and mass media. China has witnessed violent upheavals, from the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911, through internal strife among warlords, the rise of the Communist Party, the invasion and ultimate defeat of the Japanese, the establishment in 1949 of the People's Republic, subsequent isolation from the outside world, the Cultural Revolution of 1966–76, and finally the development of a market economy since the 1980s. After 1949, the Nationalist government on Taiwan and the British colony of Hong Kong grew in economic power and enjoyed political stability. These tremendous political, social, and economic changes also brought enormous changes in ways of living and artistic pursuits. If someone from the early 1900s were transported to the twenty-first century, he or she would be totally disoriented by how people live today, by the value systems people hold, and by the fast pace of life.

Tsar Teh-yun grew up in a privileged family of education and refined tastes, which prepared her well when she later lived in a world of the literati. Such a world has a long tradition called *yaji*, or “elegant gatherings,” dating back at least two millennia. In imperial China, men of leisure, and occasionally women, met at these *yaji* and cultivated as a group the gentle arts of poetry, painting, calligraphy, and qin music. By the early twentieth century, the privileged literati class and its lifestyle had largely vanished along with the imperial dynasty. Yet in 1940s Shanghai and 1950s Hong Kong, Tsar and her friends held on to the last vestiges of artistic practice, even though most of them by then no longer belonged to the privileged leisure class but were working professionals. Tsar Teh-yun, at age 100 as of this writing, represents the last surviving testament of this heritage. Her life and artistic pursuits may be considered representative of a small group of Chinese who carried on in the last century a tradition that most of us only read about today. Through her, one senses a link to a part of Chinese social history that will not appear again.

Yet Tsar is also special because she is a woman in a man's world. From her many stories, one is struck by the fact that her being a daughter, a wife, and a mother—above all, a woman—exerted great influence on her private life, on the challenges she faced, and on the solutions she found. In her public and social life, she was often the only woman among a group of men. It cannot have been easy to maneuver her way through such social interactions. One story suffices as an example. A noted qin musician once expressed his admiration of her playing, but then in no uncertain terms let her know that she was so highly regarded only because she was a woman.

This essay aims to document Tsar's life, in particular those aspects concerned with the qin, her other artistic pursuits, and the *yaji* that have been

so important in the literatus world she has inhabited. As much as possible I stay close to her own words to depict her experience as an accomplished woman in this milieu, and the frustrations and rewards it has brought her.

## Meeting Tsar Teh-yun

I first met Tsar Teh-yun *laoshi*<sup>5</sup> in fall 1978 when I started teaching at Chinese University of Hong Kong. Shortly after arrival in September, I paid a visit to Tsar *laoshi* with Professor Rulan Chao Pian of Harvard University, who was visiting at the university that year. We expressed our wish to study qin with her, and she graciously agreed to accept us as students and give us weekly lessons. Professor Pian's lessons lasted only a few months because she had to return to Harvard; mine continued until December 1980, when I left Hong Kong to teach at the University of Pittsburgh. Lessons stopped during the summers of 1979 and 1980 because of the heat—her normal practice. At the time, Tsar *laoshi* and her husband lived in the North Point region of Hong Kong Island, occupying a modest third-floor apartment (“second floor” in British and Hong Kong terminology) along King's Road, a major thoroughfare. Stepping into her flat was like entering a different world, for despite the hum of traffic and the hustle and bustle outside, a special calmness reigned inside. Most prominent in the living room was the qin table, on which sat two instruments facing each other that she used for teaching. One of them was her personal instrument, called “Huxiao,” or “Tiger's roar,” with which I would become well acquainted in the following decades. The other was a nameless instrument for students to play. In another corner was her calligraphy table, on which sat an inkwell, an ink slab, and a cylindrical bamboo container in which calligraphic ink brushes of different sizes stood. Rolls of rice paper lay alongside. On one wall hung an ink-brush painting of peony flowers by her artist friend Zhou Shixin; on another was a short essay, composed by her and in her own elegant calligraphy, that read:

Yinyin Study is where I take delight and amuse myself  
with qin music and calligraphy.  
Despite frequent forced dislocations,  
I never forsake my arts.  
With all the separations and reunions  
I have had my fill of joy and sorrow,  
More than my body and soul can endure.  
Yet in this small study,  
I could rest my knees,  
Nurture my soul,

While away my time,  
And indulge my love for the arts.  
This place is my humble refuge.

Throughout the years I have known Tsar laoshi, she has moved house numerous times within Hong Kong, but in each flat she made her private Yinyin Study, her “humble refuge.” Though the rooms were different, the qin table, calligraphy table, and artwork on the wall were the same.

When I first met her in 1978, Tsar laoshi was seventy-three years old, although she looked not a day over fifty. Her hair barely showed streaks of gray, and her youthful gestures and movements hid her advanced age. She was soft-spoken, with delicate features and gentle demeanor. With sparkling eyes and a quick smile, she had a sharp wit and a lively sense of humor. When she played the qin, she seemed the embodiment of paradox, for her posture was calm and stately with hardly any overt movement, and her facial expression was neutral, betraying no emotion. In contrast, her hands were swift and flexible, darting this way and that, sliding, lifting, striking or in repose. The music that emanated, alive with excitement and rhythmic suppleness and subtlety, seemed an extension of the movements of her hands. In turn, her hands when she was playing the qin seemed to be the essence of her existence, the manifestation of her energy and spirit.

From 1981 on, I returned to Hong Kong at least once a year to conduct research and visit my parents. These visits lasted from a week or so to a month; much later, from 1996 to 2002, I taught at the University of Hong Kong and spent extended periods of time in the city. On each visit, I made a point of visiting Tsar laoshi and playing qin with her. Through the years, I realize that what I have learned from Tsar laoshi is much more than simply playing a musical instrument, for qin is not merely an instrument, and playing it is not merely making music. The long history of the instrument and its music have developed a unique philosophy and code of behavior among qin musicians. Learning about this philosophy is part and parcel of learning to play the qin. Studying with Tsar makes this point obvious. How she plays and teaches, how she talks about music and life, and how she behaves toward her students and others are different from norms common to other kinds of music making and teaching. Meeting her week after week, one learns a set of ethical codes and a philosophy of life besides playing the qin.

For example, after she agreed to teach me, she never mentioned money or tuition. It was tacitly understood that she taught me not because she expected any return, monetary or otherwise. Rather, she taught me because she liked me and thought I had the potential to be a qin musician. She never acted as if she was a teacher and I a student. Instead, she made it clear that

our relationship was one between close friends with a shared interest in qin music and in life.

Another student, Yip Mingmei, wrote, "Tsar laoshi does not only teach the technique of qin playing, but she is concerned with the development of one's character. She often says that qin playing will not bring one wealth and fame, but it makes one happy and would nurture one's aspirations" (Yip 1991:216). Tsar laoshi told me that she would agree to teach someone only if she found that the person had a pleasant physical appearance, refined manners, cultivated tastes, and integrity in personality. She is known to have rejected potential students outright, or after a few lessons, because she deemed them not worthy of being her friend. She has also said that playing the qin is an outward expression of one's inner self. Who you are will be laid bare by how you play.

My visits always began at around 3:00 P.M., shortly after her nap. After about one hour of lesson, the routine was to have an afternoon snack. During those early years when Tsar laoshi had a Chinese maid, the snacks were mini-meals, often consisting of a bowl of noodles or other delicacies. In later years, she would serve cakes that she had her Filipina maid buy in a bakery nearby. These rituals were obligatory in traditional middle- and upper-middle-class homes for family members and honored guests. For Tsar, her students belonged to one of those two categories. She would invite favored students to stay for dinner after the lesson, or arrange for several of them to gather to play for one another, with dinner served afterwards. On those occasions, Tsar laoshi often prepared dishes herself, surprising and delighting us with her Shanghai-style cuisine.

In recent years, particularly since about 2000, Tsar laoshi has played less and less because of arthritis in her right shoulder, which causes pain when she lifts her right arm. She wants her students to play, and, as we do, she closes her eyes and moves the fingers of her hands quietly across her lap as if herself playing.

Because she has been playing less of late, she and I would chat more during my visits. She began telling me about herself, with stories from different periods of her life. She talked about her parents and siblings, her teachers and schoolmates, her husband and his family, and, much later in her life, her qin friends and students. I found the early stories particularly fascinating and illuminating, for those first few decades of the twentieth century were no more than distant and vague images to my generation. Every little incident reveals a time and place that are both familiar and strange to me. Her stories are also moving because many are very personal. I began to see another side

of Tsar laoshi behind the gracious manners and witty words. Her pains are palpable, and her regrets are acute. I have read some of her poems, many of which suddenly assume their real meaning because of these stories. Her formidable memory made the stories immediate and alive.

During those early sessions, I would rush home and jot down from memory as much as possible into my computer. Later, when I decided to properly document her life and place all the stories in their correct sequence, I developed a technique that she kindly approved. I would bring my laptop and start retelling the stories back to her. She would then correct or elaborate on some details, or move tangentially to other stories. Thus I could weave the stories together into a narrative that forms a larger picture. Later, I relied very much on her son, George, to fill in details and factual information.

## Early Life, Education, and Marriage

Tsar Teh-yun was born on the thirtieth day of the tenth lunar month, 1905, into a well-to-do, highly educated family in the town of Shuanglin, Huzhou county, Zhejiang province. When she was very young her father, who was working in the silk business, moved the family fifty miles to Shanghai, which had become a foreign treaty port in the mid-nineteenth century, thus beginning its ascent as a major industrial and commercial hub. The Tsar clan's move was part of a pattern of migration at this time, as well-off families from the region surrounding Shanghai moved in to take advantage of new business opportunities.

In Shanghai, Tsar attended a school established by the Tsar clan, managed by one of her cousins. More significantly, she was also educated at home in Chinese literature by reading the classics and poetry on her own, or being tutored by her parents and two elder brothers. She spent many hours in her father's study doing her schoolwork, reading the vast book collection, memorizing poetry of the masters and learning to compose poems herself, practicing ink-brush calligraphy, and dabbling on the various musical instruments in the house—including the Chinese flute, *dizi*; the mouth organ, *sheng*; and the Western violin and organ. Thus the foundation of her education was by no means normal: she acquired a grounding in the Chinese classics unmatched by children whose education came mainly from formal schooling.

At age fifteen, Tsar entered Nanyang Nüzi Shifan Xuetang (Nanyang Women's Teacher Training School). The school offered two tracks: science and literature. The former included mathematics and English, while the latter focused narrowly on Chinese literature. Tsar chose the science track mainly

because she was interested in English and mathematics, but also because the literature track had no appeal—she had already built a solid foundation in classical Chinese literature at home.

That a young woman like Tsar in cosmopolitan Shanghai would develop an interest in English is not surprising. But it also reflects a larger social phenomenon in early twentieth-century China. Well-educated urban families were very aware of the political, social, and cultural dominance of Western culture in China. They perceived that the future belonged to those who could master foreign languages. As a result, many well-to-do families such as Tsar's were drawn to Western culture, often through churches and missionary-run educational institutions. Tsar's personal interest in English was also directly influenced by her father and brothers. Her father's silk business brought him into contact with foreigners, so that he learned to speak English of necessity. The influence of her second elder brother was particularly strong. He attended law school at the Western-style missionary-run Soochow University, becoming a fluent English speaker. He encouraged Tsar to learn English and actively tutored her at home.

Tsar graduated from the Teacher Training School after completing its two-year program and wanted to emulate her elder brothers by attending university. She had her heart set on the elite Ginling (or Jinling) College for Women in Nanjing, supported by American missionaries. At this time, it was still quite unusual for a young woman to attend university. With her exceptional academic record, Tsar would have had no problem getting accepted. But to her great disappointment, her father forbade her to leave home, despite her obvious talent and eagerness to pursue higher education. But in a paternalistic society, a father's decision was final, and she meekly submitted to his order. It was particularly painful to realize the reason for his decision, for it was not due to financial or social constraints, but to selfishness. Because she was her father's favorite child, he wanted her to remain close by so that she could keep him company. A few years later, her younger sister was allowed to go to Ginling College for Women.

Greatly disappointed, Tsar accepted a teaching post at the teacher training school from which she had just graduated. However, after one year, she decided to return to her own education. Unable to leave Shanghai, she enrolled at Mu'ertang Gaodeng Zhuanxiu Xuexiao (Mu'ertang Higher Institution of Specialization), a Methodist-run school for women. Equivalent to a junior college today, it offered a two-year program through which Tsar became completely fluent in English; she stayed on, teaching English language and Chinese literature, for two years after graduation. Nevertheless, seventy-five years later, she still spoke with acute bitterness of her profound disappoint-

ment at being denied the opportunity to receive the best higher education then available to women.

In 1928, at age twenty-three, Tsar entered into an arranged marriage with Shen Honglai, who had just returned to China with a prestigious BA from Oberlin and an MA in economics from the University of Chicago. The match was considered very suitable by both families, and as was the custom, Tsar moved into her in-laws' house. However, she suffered terribly at first from the open hostility of her mother-in-law, who died shortly after the birth of Tsar's son, George, in 1929 (Figure 3.1). Soon thereafter Tsar, Shen, and their son moved into their own apartment, beginning an odyssey of restless moves



Figure 3.1. Tsar Teh-yun with her husband, Shen Honglai, and son, George, 1936. Photographer unknown.

first in Shanghai and later, between 1937 and 1942, and from 1950 on, in Hong Kong. Tsar worked initially as a schoolteacher and later as a *wenshu* secretary.<sup>6</sup> Her family's permanent move to Hong Kong in 1950 was not unusual: many wealthy Shanghaiese emigrated because of concerns at what would happen in mainland China following the Communist victory of 1949.<sup>7</sup> Except for a three-month trip in 1953 to visit her mother in Shanghai and a few trips to Tokyo in the 1980s to visit her son, who was working there at the time, Tsar has stayed put in Hong Kong ever since. It is since this 1950 move to Hong Kong that she has become known in literary and qin circles as one of the most accomplished qin musicians, poets, and calligraphers of her time.

### Tsar's Qin Lessons with Shen Caonong

When Tsar started qin lessons in Hong Kong in 1941, she was already in her mid-thirties, although she had distant memories of hearing qin music when young. How she came to study qin with her teacher Shen Caonong was quite accidental. One day, Tsar and her husband were invited to dinner by his superior at the Salt Administration, where he was then employed. Among the guests was Shen Caonong, from the accounting department of the Salt Administration. Also invited was a well-known qin player called Wu Chunbai. Before dinner, Wu was asked to play for the guests. Tsar remembered that he played the piece "Yuqiao wenda" (Dialogue of the fisherman and the woodcutter), and she was completely mesmerized. This reaction must have impressed Shen Caonong, who approached her and asked if she liked qin music and would like qin lessons from him. She said she liked it very much but, very properly, did not submit to Shen's aggressive attempt to recruit her as his student. However, Shen showed up at their home the next day carrying his qin, ready to teach her. Caught by surprise, she politely declined. Her son, George, who was twelve years old and musically gifted, showed great interest in the instrument. Shen Caonong then started giving lessons to him and left his instrument, "Huxiao" (Tiger's roar), at their flat for George to practice. Several lessons later, Tsar gave in and also started learning. George, on the other hand, gave up shortly afterward.

Some time later, Wu Chunbai, whom she had heard at the dinner party, also approached her to offer lessons. She declined, with good reason, because she was already learning from Shen. It was not considered proper to study from two teachers. But another reason was that she disliked Wu as a person and did not want any association with him. It is interesting that both Shen and Wu would aggressively try to offer lessons. One can only surmise that Tsar was a charming young woman. Greatly refined and cultured, she must have been admired by many.

She recalls her lessons with Shen as follows:

The instrument was placed on a square table, one side of which was up against a window. Because of this placement, only one person could play at a time by sitting and facing the window. Therefore, I never played together with my teacher. Laoshi would begin teaching a piece by playing a few musical phrases three times through—never more than three. I would stand right next to him, watch closely, and try to memorize the musical sound as well as the movement of his hands and fingers. After he finished playing three times, he would stand up and I would be asked to repeat what he had done. For places where I did not play exactly as he did, he would point them out and correct me. After I mastered these few phrases, he would continue the process with the next few phrases, playing them three times. By repeating this process, I would reach the end of a piece, which would often take several lessons. Only when I finished the entire piece would he hand me the notation to allow me to copy it so that I could practice at home by reading the notation.

I remember the time when I mastered the piece “Pingsha luoyan” (Wild geese landing on a sandbank) that way. I played the entire piece for him and, when I finished, thought I had done a good job and would receive some praise. But his face changed color and he asked me sharply, “Where are all the *yin* and *nao*?”<sup>8</sup> I dared not answer. He told me to go home and work on those techniques. I was devastated and sadly left. At home, I studied the notation carefully and practiced diligently, and returned for my next lesson. Nervously, I played the entire piece again and expected the worst. To my surprise, he smiled and nodded approval. After that, I worked even harder and dared not be careless. (Tsar 2000b, front material)

In this way Tsar learned a series of pieces from Shen. The first was “Yangguan sandie” (Parting at Yangguan), followed by “Pu’an zhou” (Incantation of Buddhist priest Pu’An), and the two versions of “Pingsha luoyan” (Wild geese landing on a sandbank). These were followed by the larger and more complicated pieces “Changmenyuan” (Sorrow in Changmen Palace), “Meihua sannong” (Three variations on the “Plum Blossom”), and “Yiguren” (Thinking of an old friend). In 1942, both Tsar and her qin teacher were back in Shanghai, and Tsar resumed qin lessons at Shen’s house. Although Shen was an eccentric and sometimes difficult person, Tsar respected him greatly and was very fond of his wife. Shen, for his part, considered Tsar special, leaving his treasured qin at her house for her to practice and later willing it to her.

## Yaji Gatherings

In late 1953, Tsar returned to Shanghai to visit her mother, who died four years later aged eighty-three. It was a traumatic trip, for the Communist government

at first would not give her an exit visa to return to Hong Kong. Though she was eventually able to leave in early 1954, Tsar experienced firsthand the bureaucratic confusion and ideological extremism of the new Communist regime, and gave up any hope of returning to Shanghai in the near future. During that trip, she also visited many qin friends. A short memoir on qin activities she published in the *Wah Kiu Daily News* of Hong Kong in 1956 reads,

I returned to Shanghai to visit my mother and stayed for several months in 1953. My teacher [Shen Caonong] and his wife regularly took me to attend the gatherings of Jinyu Qin Society on Sundays, to listen to the playing by various gentlemen there. I enjoyed it so much that I often didn't want to leave. Among the members of Jinyu Qin Society, Mr. Wu Jinglüe, a proponent of the Changshu *pai* (school), played most pleasingly. He was very accomplished in his technique and had the largest number of students. The one who researched into theory deeply was Mr. Wu Zhenping, who was superior to everyone else in that regard. Mr. Zhang Ziqian of Guangling *pai* played in a relaxed and elegant manner, with accurate pitch and tuning. His rendition of "Longxiang cao" (Soaring dragon) was particularly outstanding. Many society members learned that piece from him. In spring 1954, I returned to Hong Kong. The night before departure, I could not bear to say farewell. The various qin friends said to me, "There are numerous qin musicians in Hong Kong, too. You'll probably meet them in time. Then you can listen to qin music again." (Tsar 2003:185)

Hong Kong in the early 1950s was considered backward compared to Shanghai, not only financially but also culturally. Nevertheless, among immigrants from Shanghai were writers, painters, musicians, filmmakers, actors, and other artists in addition to industrialists and entrepreneurs. For example, during those years Hong Kong's film industry consisted almost entirely of northerners, many from Shanghai. Their films were all in Mandarin, following the tradition established in Shanghai, despite the fact that Hong Kong was a Cantonese-speaking society. These expatriate artists formed a small circle and met regularly to practice and share their literary and artistic endeavors. Tsar soon found herself amid this group. In the *Wah Kiu Daily* of January 13, 1956, quoted earlier, she reported on a *yaji* gathering held at the Zhilian Jingyuan (Zhilian Nunnery) a few months earlier:

On October 16, Messers Xu Wenjing, Xiao Lisheng, Xian Mingcong, and Zhou Shixin were going to have a *yaji* gathering at the Zhilian Nunnery, and invited me to attend. Messers Sheng Xiansan, Wu Yinming, Yang Pan'geng, and Lü Zhenyuan (Lui Tsun-yuen) were also there. In the temple were set up tea and fruits, and later a vegetarian meal. The group sat around the table and had a wonderful time chatting. Messers Xiao, Zhou, and Wu collaborated on a paint-

ing on the spot and titled it “The Three Friends of Winter.” It was incomparably handsome. The qin musicians played in turn. . . . What a memorable occasion. Mr. Lü then played several pieces on the *pipa* in a most magical and fascinating way. (Ibid.:184)

Besides painting and playing qin music, poets composed poems on the spot. Other poets often “responded” to the new poem, also on the spot. Singing Kunqu arias was another favorite activity, accompanied by *xiao* (end-blown flute).<sup>9</sup> Of those who came to these *yaji* gatherings in Hong Kong in the 1950s and 1960s, some were academics, while others were writers, poets, artists, calligraphers, and Kunqu singers. Tsar laoshi recalls a journalist named Huang Seming, who edited the culture section for *Wah Kiu Daily News*. He often attended, though he never participated in the literary or artistic endeavors; rather, he reported on the activities in the next day’s newspaper. If some new poems were composed, he would publish them in his report the following day.

While the Zhilian Nunnery was favored for *yaji* gatherings because of its setting, some gatherings were held in private homes, hosted by one of the members; Tsar hosted several at her place. The Castle Peak Hotel, built on the coast of the New Territories near Tuen Mun and demolished in the 1970s, was another preferred meeting place because it was situated far from the hustle and bustle of the city.

Much later, in 1987, Tsar wrote a detailed account of the *yaji* of this period, listing many gatherings in those early years. For example, there were three in 1956, three in 1957, one in 1958, two in 1959, one in 1960, three in 1961, and one each in 1963 and 1964. Some were concerts with formal performances; others were informal gatherings as described in previous paragraphs. The concerts were held in university and school auditoriums; informal gatherings were held at Wanfo (Ten Thousand Buddhas) Buddhist Temple in Shatin, Zhilian Jingyuan Nunnery in Kowloon’s Diamond Hill district, and occasionally in someone’s home.

Mainly because of these activities, a formal group called Xinya Guoyuehui (New Asia Chinese Music Society) was established on August 5, 1964, to promote qin and other Chinese musical instruments. Tsar was invited to be the qin teacher. It was the first time that she formally and publicly held a “teaching” responsibility, and she accepted only reluctantly. The first class had eight students, for whom she ordered instruments from a local musical instrument factory.

Throughout the 1960s and the following decades, Tsar laoshi and her students became the major proponents of *yaji* gatherings and occasional public

performances. According to her detailed documentation, various ways of playing qin were attempted, some reported by the Jinyu Qin Society in 1937. For example, for pieces with a relatively constant pulse, such as “Pu’an zhou” and “Meihua sannong,” two or more qin players would play in unison, occasionally joined by a *zhonghu* (bowed lute). Sometimes a *xiao* (end-blown flute), whose gentle tone matches that of the qin, would join a qin in duet, playing mainly in unison. When a singer was present, pieces with poetic texts would be sung along with qin. When she spent several months with her son George in Tokyo over 1984–85, several of her Hong Kong students visited. A special concert was sponsored by the Nihon Gagakukai (Japan Gagaku Society) on January 19, 1985. Kishibe Shigeo, the prominent musicologist and professor emeritus of Tokyo University, gave a lecture at the occasion.

Within a few years of her arrival in Hong Kong, Tsar’s qin, calligraphy, and poetry had become known among this circle of literary and artistic friends. Filmmaker Yuan Yang’an, originally from Shanghai and a friend of her second elder brother, invited her to play qin for the soundtrack of two of his early 1950s films: *Niehaihua* (English title *The Torn Lily*) and *Juedai jieren* (English title *The Incomparable Beauty*). Yuan also invited her to use her fine calligraphy to do the credits for several films. A noted poet of the time, Xu Wenjing, originally from Hangzhou, invited Tsar to copy out his poems, praising her calligraphy, poetry, and qin playing in his preface (Zhou 2000:224).

## Teaching Qin

Tsar initially had no intention of teaching qin. She writes, “One day in the early 1950s, a young man suddenly showed up at my door requesting lessons, saying that he was sent by Zha Fuxi of Jinyu Qin Society of Shanghai. I could not refuse. Shortly afterwards, two women also came and wanted lessons. . . . At the time I was very aware of the danger of being too indulged in teaching others. But because an increasing number of people came and requested lessons, I reluctantly started teaching” (Tsar 2000b, front material).

Tsar continued to teach informally through the 1950s and early 1960s, and, as mentioned previously, in 1964, New Asia College of the Chinese University of Hong Kong invited her to be the qin instructor for its newly formed New Asia Chinese Music Society. Many of her students during that period were faculty and students there, although others had careers in medicine or business. She also attracted several international students, among them Belgian Georges Goormaghtigh, now on the Chinese faculty of the University of Geneva, who continues to visit regularly and became a fine player. Tsar considers him one of her best students.

Throughout the 1980s, Tsar continued to teach a few students. Several, particularly Lau Chor-wah, Sou Si-tai, and Tse Chun-yan, themselves began to teach and thus trained a third generation. The three of them are particularly active in performing, while Tse has composed several new compositions for qin. Shum Hing-shun became a qin collector about fifteen years ago and has to date amassed over one hundred antique instruments, some dating to the Song dynasty (960–1279). He trained and collaborated closely with a woodworker on qin repair, bringing a number of rare instruments to playable form. Lau, Sou, and Tse also started making qin from scratch, instructed by the only qin maker in Hong Kong, Choi Cheung-sau (Cai Changshou), thus continuing a long tradition of qin musicians who are also makers.

Tsar's husband, Shen Honglai, died in 1984, and after a distinguished business career her son, George, with his wife, Jane, retired to California in 1996. Although they urged her to come with them, Tsar refused, preferring to stay in Hong Kong and hiring a maid to take care of daily chores. That she was very close to her son was without question; yet, unlike most Chinese parents, she declined the opportunity to live with him. There are of course many reasons. She herself stated several: that it is easier to get domestic help in Hong Kong; that she did not want to burden George and Jane; and that all her close friends, particularly her qin students, are in Hong Kong. One can't help but speculate on a much deeper reason, a subliminal one that she herself may not be clearly aware of.

During her long sojourn in Hong Kong, Tsar never seemed to feel truly at home. She spent most of her time with fellow expatriates from Shanghai; she never learned to speak Cantonese fluently, nor did she attempt to do so. The deep sense of alienation is poignantly expressed in poems that she wrote during the 1950s and 1960s. In them she repeatedly invoked terms such as *ke* (guest), *piaopo* (adrift), *tianya* (heaven's end), and *haijiao* (ocean's edge), and referred to Hong Kong as *haiwai* (beyond the ocean). Reading these poems, one senses a constant longing to return to her hometown, Shanghai.

During the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, it was with her literary and artistic friends, mostly from Shanghai, that Tsar truly felt at home. In the last two decades, these friends have variously become too old to socialize, passed away, or emigrated abroad. However, she has found solace among her students, most of them born and bred in Hong Kong; they visit her regularly to chat, play qin, or take her out to lunch. A few sing Kunqu, and others practice calligraphy. Communication is not always easy because they speak Cantonese rather than Shanghainese, and most of them belong to her grandchildren's generation; yet through qin music, a new community was formed, molded by her through qin lessons and modeled upon her ideals and philosophy.

Thus she has created a new world that, though a pale reflection of an older one that had disappeared from around her, offers her a semblance of a more genteel age and refined practices. Were she to move to America, that world would be completely and irretrievably beyond her reach. Above all, she would be even farther away from Shanghai.

Even though Tsar has never considered Hong Kong her home, Hong Kong embraces her as one of its own. In 2002, the government bestowed upon her a Silver Bauhinia Star, the second-highest rank of honors.<sup>10</sup> The citation reads: “Ms. Tsar is awarded the Silver Bauhinia Star for her outstanding achievement as a renowned qin master, and for her dedicated contribution to the art form and cultivation of traditional virtues in her students for the past fifty years.”

### Philosophy of Teaching and Style of Playing

What makes Tsar such a special teacher and musician to her students and admirers? Part of the answer no doubt lies in the Chinese tradition of reverence for age. During the last few decades, as her most prominent peers on the mainland and Taiwan passed away one by one, she has stood alone as the undisputed senior qin master whom all younger players look up to. In recent years, prominent qin musicians and scholars on the mainland of her son's or grandchildren's generation have come to Hong Kong for conferences or performances. They have paid their respects to Tsar laoshi at her modest apartment, had their photographs taken with her, and wanted her to hear them play.

Age and seniority are not the only factors that establish her as the most revered qin player today; her steadfast adherence to traditional performance practice and aesthetics also sets her apart. After 1949, the world of qin on the mainland underwent major changes in performance practice (Yung 1989). In the early years of the new government, and particularly during the Cultural Revolution (1966–76), the Communist promotion of a classless society pressured the qin tradition to step out of the study of the privileged literati. Since the 1980s, the new market economy has exerted a different kind of pressure at the grassroots level to professionalize and commercialize qin music. Some of the most notable changes have been: silk strings replaced by metal to make the instrument louder; bodily movements and facial expressions exaggerated during performance; literary content deemphasized while technical brilliancy was developed; and dramatization of musical content. All this aimed to cater to a wider, nonplaying, and largely uninformed audience. *Yaji* gatherings and public concerts today regularly use electronic amplification; a formal qin curriculum has been established in music conservatories; qin recordings have

been packaged on CDs for wide commercial release; and teaching methods have changed to follow those of other musical instruments. Most qin teachers today emphasize technique. For beginning students, they focus on teaching how to pluck properly with the right hand, repeating the technique endlessly, and how to stop the strings at the correct positions with the left hand as a stand-alone gesture. These technical exercises, somewhat akin to practicing scales, arpeggios, and chords when learning Western musical instruments, are quite alien to traditional pedagogical methods.

In this frenzy of activities, Tsar laoshi has quietly but fiercely defended the age-old tradition of keeping qin within lofty literatus ideals and practices, free from societal demands and financial pressure, and has passed this tradition on to her students. Her distinctive conservatism is most obvious in her teaching. Lau Chor-wah, who began studying with Tsar in 1973 and is now a professor of Chinese philosophy at Hong Kong Baptist University, has provided a detailed description of her learning process:

The first lesson was devoted to the stringing of the qin. In subsequent lessons, I practiced plucking techniques by following the patterns given in the book *Guqin chujie*. Following that, I learned the pieces one by one in the *Yinyinshi qinpu* (Qin repertory from the Yinyin Study),<sup>11</sup> starting from the first pieces of volume 1. In the beginning, I learned the very short pieces; I could complete one piece after only one lesson. For the larger pieces, each lesson could only cover one or two sections. During a lesson, I watched closely her playing. Once I memorized the finger techniques for a section, I hand copied the notation for that section and then practiced it at home. I would play back to her that section by memory at the next lesson; laoshi would point out the errors. She would then move on to the next section. When I finished an entire piece in that way, she would ask me to play all the previous pieces once more.

Tsar laoshi's teaching method is basically one of demonstration for her students to imitate. Before beginning a new piece, she would sit in front of the qin reverently to collect her composure. She then played through the entire piece once. Each demonstration is not only a perfectly crafted musical performance, but also a testament of how the sound, the look, and the mental state can unify to produce a coherent whole. To her, be it for a formal concert, for her own enjoyment, or to demonstrate for her students, she plays with equal seriousness and complete attention. After she played the piece once, she explained the meaning of the piece, the notational symbols, and the finger techniques. On the one hand, her words were brief and concise, with little undue explanation. On the other, she never tired of repeatedly showing the finger techniques. Occasionally when my rhythm was wrong, or when I could not master the special ornamental techniques, she would hum the passage using her Kun operatic voice to guide me into figuring out my difficulty. The problem would then be

quickly solved. There were some particularly elusive techniques . . . which I still have not mastered. Yet the sound from her playing at the time was etched into my ear, and I can still hear it today. Such deep memory was entirely due to her repeated demonstrations.

For my lessons, there would always be two qin placed one opposite the other for unison playing. When I had learned a piece by heart but had not mastered the details, laoshi would play each section of the piece with me in unison, stopping to explain the details, until we played through the entire piece. She was like a tour guide, taking me along to explore the hidden treasures. Playing with a teacher in that way, a student learns different things at different stages of the learning process. In the beginning, such unison playing would correct technical errors, help memorize the piece, and allow the student to watch closely and imitate the subtler aspects of the teacher's finger technique such as the strength of plucking and the control of tone color. Later, the student would understand, appreciate, and imitate the coherency of the entire piece, and capture the mental state when the piece is being played. The perceptive student would also sense the music beyond what the strings produce. (Tsar 2000b, front material)

Lau's description applies to my own experience as Tsar laoshi's student. I may add that she seldom openly criticized my playing. After I played a piece, she would sometimes nod and smile, or say "You know the piece quite well"; or "Quite good"; or "A little too fast." The worst reaction would be not saying anything at all. When we played in unison facing each other, I would watch her hands as much as possible, but would notice that she also kept looking at my hands to make sure I was doing it correctly. Yet that did not necessarily mean that she would point out my mistakes afterwards. She would let me discover the mistake myself, or allow me to develop my personal style by departing from her way of playing. By not focusing on technique for its own sake, but learning to play almost entirely through knowing the repertory via imitation and repetition, I believe my mastery of the instrument and my ability to emulate her playing are more complete than modern teaching methods would allow. While Tsar laoshi seldom criticizes openly, she is always generous in her praise. If she remembers my rendition of certain pieces particularly well, she recalls those renditions over and over again. She also rarely, if ever, criticizes another student to me, but has good things to say about everyone.

Depending upon how fond she was of a particular student, Tsar laoshi would terminate lessons after several months or several years, at which point she would say, "You have graduated; there is no need to continue your lessons." However, even after "graduation," favored students would be told to visit and play with her in unison, though she insisted these visits were no longer "lessons" and the individuals were no longer "students" but "friends."

For beginners, Tsar laoshi introduces the short and relatively simple pieces from volume 1 of *Yinyinshi qinpu*; next are the ten larger-scale pieces of volume 2, which are the first test of a student's ability to concentrate, grasp the structure, and appreciate the complexity and subtlety of qin music. Yet we all know that the true masterpieces are the six in volume 3, of which the last one, "Xiaoxiang shuiyun" (Water and mist of the Rivers Xiao and Xiang), is the most hauntingly beautiful, technically challenging, structurally complex, and spiritually profound. Attributed to Guo Chuwang of the Southern Song period (1127–1279), the music, at one level, is a lyrical description of the two rivers and Mount Jiuyi nearby in southern Hunan province. At another level, it is the composer's lamentation over the land to the north that was lost to foreign invaders. Tsar taught this piece to only a select few students. At qin gatherings, when she played the piece, a hushed wonder would descend over everyone present (Figure 3.2). Even though there are several other pieces on which she has clearly put her stamp, none could match the magic of "Xiaoxiang shuiyun."



Figure 3.2. Tsar Teh-yun playing the qin, 2000. Photograph by Poon Tak Lun.

What makes Tsar laoshi's music so special? What distinguishes her musically from other qin players? Besides her cultural background, ideology, and teaching method, one needs to look into the music itself. Lau Chor-wah and I discussed this and agreed that it is difficult to put into words Tsar's distinctive musical style without careful transcription and analysis of her recordings, for much of it cannot be represented in conventional notation. Still, as I listen to her tapes and reflect upon my own playing, which has a strong stamp of her identity, there are several points I notice. These fall into two categories.

First is her exploitation of rhythm, meter, and tempo to affect the overall form and detailed structure of the music. Since qin notation does not specify temporal directions, it affords musicians the freedom to use temporal features for creative molding of the composition. In this respect Tsar is a master. She manipulates pauses between pitches in unexpected ways to blur phrasing, creating uniquely ambiguous phrase structures, and exploits rhythmic irregularity in pieces such as "Longxiang cao" (Soaring dragon): her tempo contrasts and pronounced pauses make the phrasing structure clear while embodying the freedom and rhapsodic exuberance she wishes to convey. Tsar also employs tempo to affect the formal and structural features of a composition, using tempo changes locally to demarcate sections and create musical climaxes. Related to this is her fondness of—and technical ability for—playing some musical phrases at breakneck speed to achieve dramatic effects. A well-known example is toward the end of the piece "Zuiyu Changwan" (Evening song of a drunken fisherman). The very last phrase of the piece, played in harmonics, is done with such a sudden flourish that few of her students are able to imitate and reproduce the effect.

Second is her very characteristic "shaping" of notes. In the qin context, this refers to the many different ways a string may be stopped with the left hand, just before, during, or after it is plucked with the right. Each of these techniques produces what may be described as the "shape" of the note, which does not generally change the perception of pitch or the overall form of the piece but subtly helps mold phrase structure, enrich the sound texture, and even project modal characteristics. One of the most obvious differences among qin players is how each one effects the "shapings" written in the notation, and how they introduce new "shapings" that are not written in the notation. Shaping of tones is certainly one of the most striking features of Tsar's playing. Not only does she carefully observe and follow the directions that are written into the notation, she also introduces an inordinate number that are not. Furthermore, whether the technique is *zhuo*, *zhu*, *yin*, *nao*, *dou*, *huan*, or the many variants of each, the shapings themselves are often carried out

in her own inimitable way that is hard to emulate, harder to describe.<sup>12</sup> The execution of these techniques is achieved by the movements of the left arm, hand, wrist, and finger joints, depending upon the specific technique. The finger that presses on a string must be firm in order to produce a full tone, while the arm, wrist, and finger joints must be flexible and supple for quick and sometimes minute movements. Tsar's Belgian student Georges Goormaghtigh wrote, "Her hands . . . seem alive with a natural energy; no need to force, nothing seems out of their reach; they flow freely" (*Deyin qinxun* 2001:10). Goormaghtigh's perception no doubt arose in part because of her shaping style, which gives each occurrence of a tone musical interest in its own right. I believe it is this last point that most distinguishes Tsar's playing, particularly in the larger pieces. When compared to other people's versions, hers display an overall richness that may be attributed to her shaping of notes.

## Deyin Qin Society

In 1995, more than forty of Tsar laoshi's students commemorated her ninetieth birthday and the thirty-year anniversary of her teaching career by holding a special *yaji* gathering, when each of her students, and some students of her students, played a piece. Several traveled from Europe and the United States to attend this event. In 1998, her students formally established the Deyin Qinshe (Deyin Qin Society)<sup>13</sup> and undertook a series of projects. The first was an exhibition of fifty antique qin from the collection of her student Shum Hing-shun, at the University Art Gallery of the University of Hong Kong, from October 14 to December 4, 1998. In conjunction with this exhibition, a CD of qin music titled *Qin Music on Antique Instruments*, performed by five of her students, was published. The year 2000 saw publication of *Yinyinshi qinpu* (Qin repertory from the Yinyin Study), a facsimile reprint of the four volumes of qin notation that she compiled and wrote in her calligraphy. A companion publication was the *Yinyinshi shici wengao* (Poetry from the Yinyin Study) of 2003, which compiled most of her poems since the 1940s. In 2003, her students mounted an exhibition on qin and qin music at the Hong Kong Central Library, which a year later moved to the Macao Museum. In 2002, the society began publishing an annual *Deyin qinxun* (News from Deyin Qin Society), which includes articles, reports, news, and musical notation, mostly by society members. Three of the most accomplished members, Lau Chor-wah, Sou Si-tai, and Tse Chun-yan, often perform in public concerts in Hong Kong and represent the society to perform and lecture in Taiwan and in mainland China.

Probably most important is the publication of a two-CD set, *Tsar Teh-yun: The Art of Qin Music* (2000), which includes recordings of twenty-five pieces played by her. Throughout her long life, the only commercially released recording of her playing was the piece “Xiaoxiang shuiyun” (Water and mist over the Rivers Xiao and Xiang), recorded by John Levy when he visited Tsar in Hong Kong in 1966; it was included in Levy’s LP *Chinese Classical Music*, issued in 1972 (1968 in the UK). Otherwise, she refused to have her playing recorded, even though for many years her students urged her to do so.

Unlike professional musicians, qin players generally do not practice endlessly until they can play pieces free of pitch and rhythmic errors. Tsar, for example, does not “practice” in the normal sense of the word. Rather, she would play through pieces one after another for her own enjoyment. While she certainly had the music and finger techniques completely memorized—playing without reading from the notation is mandatory—each playing differs in unexpected ways; because she plays for herself, there is no pressure to adhere to a particular interpretation. She is completely relaxed and immersed in the hand and finger movements and in the music. When she was aware that she was being recorded, she would become nervous, and with nervousness came errors and memory slips. That was because she was no longer playing for herself, but for the tape recorder.

Through the years, particularly from the late 1980s, Tsar’s students urged her to record her playing. We bought her a high-end tape recorder and set it up on her qin table so that she could record any time she wished. She told us that indeed she tried it, often in the middle of the night. But because she was never satisfied with the result, she always erased the tapes. In the early 1990s, when I spent an extended period in Hong Kong, I mapped out a recording plan for her, doing two pieces a week, one small and one large. With her consent, we listed specific pieces for each week. She said she would practice those two pieces especially for recording purposes. However, once the tape recorder was turned on, she became nervous and made all kinds of errors even with the simplest pieces. After several tries, we both knew that it was futile and gave up. Unbeknown to Tsar’s students, her son George and his wife Jane were trying to do the same thing, but, as George said, “she always used the excuse that she would like to practice more before doing any recording, and the idea was eventually dropped.”

Nevertheless, through the years, some of her students made recordings of her playing during lessons to aid ourselves for practice at home. In 1999, we gathered together all these recordings and discovered that in fact practically her entire repertory was already on tape in this form. Admittedly, because the

recordings were merely for study purposes, the quality was uneven, in terms both of her playing and of recording quality. She certainly was not happy with most of them. Nevertheless, she allowed us to compile the recordings into a two-CD set. It is the only comprehensive record of her playing available to the public.

In early 1983, Rulan Chao Pian was in Hong Kong briefly and visited Tsar on January 5 and 7. During those two visits, Pian took along her bulky videocassette recorder, tripod, and other accessories: those were the early days of video technology. She made about one hour of recording of Tsar's playing, assisted by Lau Chor-wah. This valuable unpublished document includes nine pieces. Some were played more than once; others had false starts or did not reach the ending. Not surprisingly, and true to form, Tsar did not play "perfectly": there were memory slips, errors in either right or left hand, and inconsistencies in tempo. Yet the video captures not only the sound of her playing, but also her posture and movement. I recently asked Pian how she managed to accomplish this feat. She had no answer. But Pian is a charming and persuasive person. And being a professor at Harvard University and a distinguished scholar of Chinese music, she has won great respect and admiration from Tsar. We are very grateful to her for achieving something that none of us were able to do, but most of all, we are thankful to Tsar laoshi for doing it. Needless to say, it must have been an ordeal for her.

Today, members of the Deyin Qin Society meet regularly to hold *yaji* gatherings. Because the group has grown to a sizable number, so that gatherings often draw twenty or thirty players, most of whom are Tsar's students and *their* students, they can no longer meet at the Yinyin Study. Instead, gatherings are often held in public meeting places such as a teahouse in Sheungwan, the Zhonghua Wenhua Xiehui (Chinese Culture Society) at the Shun Tak Center near the section of the city called Central, a classroom at Hong Kong Baptist University, or at one or another member's homes. Tsar seldom attends these gatherings now but always likes to hear about them afterward. Since about 2002, because of arthritis she hardly plays qin anymore. However, she still occasionally does large-character calligraphy by standing and being supported by someone, her hearing is still good, and her memory remains phenomenal. Most impressively, she has not lost her gentle demeanor and sharp sense of humor. She also loves company, particularly that of her former qin students.<sup>14</sup>

## SELECTED CHARACTER LIST

*Individuals*

Bo Ya	伯牙	Tsar Teh-yun	蔡德允
Cai Yan	蔡琰	Tse Chun-yan	謝俊仁
Cai Wenji	蔡文姬	Wu Chunbai	吳純白
Choi Cheung-sau	蔡昌壽	Wu Jinglüe	吳景略
Guan Pinghu	管平湖	Wu Yinming	吳因明
Guo Chuwang	郭處望	Xian Mingcong	冼茗聰
Huang Seming	黃耑名	Xiao Lisheng	蕭立聲
Lau Chor-wah	劉楚華	Xu Wenjing	徐文鏡
Lü Zhenyuan		Yang Pan'geng	楊盤庚
(Lui Tsun-yuen)	呂振原	Yip Ming-mei	葉明媚
Shen Caonong	沈草農	Yuan Yang'an	袁仰安
Shen Honglai	沈鴻來	Zha Fuxi	查阜西
Sheng Xiansan	盛獻三	Zhang Ziqian	張子謙
Sou Si-tai	蘇思棣	Zhou Shixin	周士心

*Qin Pieces and Scores*

Changmenyuan	長門怨	Yangguan sandie	陽關三疊
Guqin chujie	古琴初階	Yiguren	憶故人
Longxiang cao	龍翔操	Yinyinshi qinpu	愔愔室琴譜
Meihua sannong	梅花三弄	Yuqiao wenda	漁樵問答
Pingsha luoyan	平沙落雁	Zuiyu changwan	醉漁唱晚
Pu'an zhou	普庵咒		
Xiaoxiang shuiyun	瀟湘水雲		

*Other Names and Terms*

Deyin Qinshe	德愔琴社	Niehaihua	孽海花
Huxiao	虎嘯	wenshu	文書
jianzipu	減字譜	Xinya Guoyuehui	新亞國樂會
Jinyu Qinshe	今虞琴社	yaji	雅集
Juedai jiaren	絕代佳人	Yinyinshi shici	
Mu'ertang Gaodeng	慕爾堂高等專	wen'gao	愔愔室詩詞文稿
Zhuanxiu Xuexiao	修學校	Zhilian Jingyuan	志蓮靜苑
Nanyang Nüzi Shifan	南洋女子師	Zhonghua	
Xuetang	範學堂	Wenhua Xiehui	中華文化協會

## Notes

1. The qin is also referred to as *guqin* (“ancient qin”). For a detailed description of the instrument and its notation, see Yung 1997.

2. The notation is a tablature system known as *jianzipu*, derived from the Chinese script. Unlike staff notation in Western music, pitch and duration are not explicitly indicated; instead, the notation directs the player which string to pluck, how to pluck, and where to stop the string. An earlier notational system from which this one developed dates to the sixth century A.D.

3. A notable exception was Cai Yan, or Cai Wenji (second century A.D.). Historical documents and popular legend record that she was kidnapped by the Xiongnu people, bore two sons for a Xiongnu king, and returned to China after a ransom was paid twelve years later. Her story became the subject of many literary, dramatic, and artistic creations, and she herself was credited as the composer of several well-known qin compositions.

4. “Tsar” is the romanized form of her name based on her native Shanghainese language. In Mandarin it would be “Cai.”

5. *Laoshi* is the honorific form of address for one’s teacher.

6. The *wenshu* conducted a company’s correspondence. It required the ability to compose well-crafted letters in classical prose, presented in elegant ink-brush calligraphy.

7. Hong Kong’s economic development from the 1950s on owed much to these Shanghai immigrants, who brought financial resources, industrial know-how, and a spirit of enterprise to the British colony, which was a commercial backwater at the time (Wong Siu-lun 1988).

8. *Yin* and *nao* are special left-hand finger techniques that are normally marked in the notation.

9. Kunqu is a classical opera genre that arose in the fifteenth century (see Isabel K. F. Wong 2002).

10. Following the colonial government’s tradition, the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong (established on Hong Kong’s return to Chinese rule on July 1, 1997) annually bestows the “Bauhinia Awards” of various ranks on about one hundred distinguished citizens.

11. This is Tsar laoshi’s personal collection of qin notation in four volumes, handwritten in her calligraphy. Some of the pieces she learned from her teacher, Shen Caonong; the notation was copied from his manuscript. Others she learned on her own, copying the notation from a variety of sources.

12. For explanation of these techniques, see Lieberman 1977 or Yung 1997.

13. The name is derived from the first character of Tsar’s given name, De (Teh), and from the name of her study, Yinyin Study.

14. Sadly, Tsar Teh-yun passed away on June 10, 2007, at age 101, shortly after this essay was completed. Nevertheless, I retain my use of the present tense because that was how I wrote it.

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## 4. Gathering a Nation's Music

### *A Life of Yang Yinliu*

PETER MICIC

We have outstanding [musical] traditions. We all know this intuitively, but we have so far not expended enough of our energies to reveal the basic regularities or relationships of these traditions. Nor have we advanced and put forward theories to help others gain a deeper understanding of these traditions.

—Yang Yinliu, quoted in Wei Tingge, “Zaiyi Yang Yinliu de guoyue gua” (Another discussion on Yang Yinliu’s perspective on national music), in *Yinyuexue wenji: ji’nian Zhongguo yishu yanjiuyuan yinyue yanjiusuo jiansuo sishinian zhounian* (Collected essays on musicology: commemorating forty years of the Music Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Arts), 1994:1009

In early November 1999, Chinese music scholars in China and from overseas gathered at Jiuhua shanzhuang in Changping, north of Beijing, for an international conference commemorating the hundredth anniversary of Yang Yinliu (1899–1984), regarded by many as the founder of twentieth-century musicology in China. While the conference was intended to highlight Yang’s singular contributions to Chinese musicology, it also honored the achievements and contributions of other scholars in the field, in particular the uniquely entwined career of his cousin and lifelong colleague Cao Anhe (1905–2004).<sup>1</sup>

An occasion such as this teaches us that we each have our own Yang Yinliu. Unlike many of the participants at the conference, I had never met Yang. I had no memories of Yang, nor a professional association with him. The eloquent speeches delivered during the opening session were in fact stories, recollections, both historical and personal, that made up the Yang Yinliu memory.<sup>2</sup> What emerged from these images of Yang, be they general recollections or specific episodes, was his crucial role in the development of twentieth-century Chinese music scholarship and his influence in practically

all areas of musical endeavor. From these initial impressions, it was evident that Yang was indeed one of the makers of Chinese music history in the twentieth century and one of the custodians of the Chinese musical world.

While there were no published collections of letters, diaries, or correspondence, there was a chronology (*nianbiao*) published in a commemorative collection of essays in honor of Yang in Taipei (Hsu, Qiao, and Mao 1992). The chronology was an important biographical source, but not surprisingly, it was not filled with private revelations. His life was arranged by date—what he did during the spring of 1953, for instance, providing brief descriptions of where he worked or what he wrote at the time, the state of his health, and major political events. When I began compiling a biographical sketch of Yang, there was obviously a story to be told that covered many of the political and social upheavals of twentieth-century modern Chinese history, a story in which modern Chinese music could be seen and enacted through the perspective of one individual. Much of what I had read in Chinese showed signs of hagiography. Biographical writing in China, especially in the premodern period, was concerned with “the recording of exemplary lives” (Moloughney 1992:1), “essentially commemorative, born from a desire to provide a record of the deceased’s achievements and personality for his surviving descendants, relatives, associates” (Twitchett 1976:186). Assessing a life or improving upon it in ways that give the subject the halo of a saint is also found in Western biographies. As Samuel Johnson reminds us, “in lapidary inscriptions, a man is not upon oath” (Howell 1995:6). The focus here is not to examine biographical writing in traditional China or the many changes in writing biographies since the early twentieth century, but to provide a sketch of Yang Yinliu’s life, looking at the many roles he inhabited in the context of the intellectual and social traditions of his time.

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How do we begin compiling the textual and musical sources of a country with a history spanning five thousand years, with a huge land mass, and made up of a complex people who have continually come into contact and assimilated with foreign cultures?!

—Yang Yinliu [early 1940s], quoted in Luan Guijuan, “Shijie mo de fansi” (Reflections at the end of the century), *Zhongguo yinyuexue* (Musicology in China), 2000(1): 22

Yang died on February 25, 1984, at his home in Beijing. On March 6, a memorial service was held at Babaoshan cemetery, the resting place of many of China’s revolutionary heroes, located in the western suburbs of the city.

Family, friends, students, and colleagues attended the service, laying down wreaths and paying their respects. Despite all his efforts to pass from the world discreetly, Yang could not prevent the outpouring of homages that filled the newspapers in the following days and weeks.<sup>3</sup> Tributes also came from overseas. The influential American-based journal *Ethnomusicology* included a two-page memorial in May 1984 written by a number of Chinese music scholars in the United States (Pian et al. 1984).

Yang played a foundational role in shaping much of twentieth-century musicology in China, but he was by no means a lone fish swimming against the current; he was very much a product of the prevailing Chinese intellectual climate of his time. The collapse of the Qing dynasty (1644–1911), the absence of an institutional career path for young people, and the excitement of new ideas from outside China created a groundswell of active minds deeply engaged in “radical” alternatives. One of these alternatives in the early twentieth century was to promote a more global culture while retaining China’s national essence (*guocui*). Its roots were part of a broader cultural trend in literature, poetry, drama, and art in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that emphasized the political and social relevance of culture that could rejuvenate and invigorate the Chinese empire. This sense of urgency was emphatically stated by Yan Fu, the doyen of Western translation, in 1902: “We have no time to ask if this knowledge is Chinese or Western, whether it is old or new. If one course leads to ignorance and thus to poverty and weakness . . . we must cast it aside. If another course is effective in overcoming ignorance and thus leads to the cure of our poverty and weakness we must imitate it even if it proceeds from barbarians and wild beasts” (quoted in Schwarz 1964:49).

As part of the pressing and urgent need to elevate China out of social and political backwardness, music (especially songs) also took on the dimensions of a metagenre with political and social relevance. The terms “new music” (*xin yinyue*) and “national music” (*guoyue*) became part of post-nineteenth century musical debates used to discuss a number of issues from retaining China’s musical essence while incorporating foreign musical elements, to music diversity, tradition, modernity, and cultural identity. Yang’s writings and reflections on *guoyue* can be found in a series of three articles titled “The Future and Research of National Music” published in the Chongqing-based music journal *Yuefeng* (Musical styles) in the early 1940s (reprinted in Yang Yinliu 1989). These articles encapsulate much of what Yang was trying to achieve in his lifetime in his efforts to (re)discover China’s musical past and compile a musical narrative that chronicled the significance and achievements of its living traditions.

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From folk music we can see the preservation of music from China's distant past as well as the gradual loss and demise of traditions. Life evolves and is constantly changing. Musical styles also continually evolve and develop.

—Yang Yinliu, in *Zhongguo yinyue shigang* (Concise history of Chinese music), 336

Yang was born in Wuxi, Jiangsu province, on November 10, 1899, in the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Guangxu, a year after the failed Hundred Days Reform and a year before the Boxer Rebellion. Wuxi is located in the heart of the Yangtze delta. Originally a mining settlement rich in tin deposits, its resources were depleted by the early eastern Han dynasty (A.D. 25–220) and the settlement was renamed Wuxi (literally “no tin”).<sup>4</sup> It is a city that has historically produced rice, fish, and silk in abundance. When Emperor Yang (r. 605–17) built the Grand Canal in the Sui dynasty (A.D. 589–618), Wuxi's position at the hub of that great waterway made it an obligatory port for the grain barges from Zhejiang province. In neighboring Yangzhou, salt merchants built their houses and mansions during the Ming and Qing dynasties. Jiangsu and neighboring Zhejiang became one of the wealthiest regions in China.

Yang came from a family of schoolteachers who taught in private academies (*sishu*). His father, Zhonglin, courtesy name Zhenfu (1868–1937),<sup>5</sup> hoped that his son would one day come in first in the imperial examinations. However, the system was officially abolished in 1905, throwing wide open new avenues for young Chinese men and women to pursue their education. The Confucian classics made up most of the curriculum at a private academy Yang attended before he was sent to the Jiangsu Number Three Teachers' School. The school was an eye-opener for Yang. Subjects taught at the school included Chinese, mathematics, and English. Yang was fortunate in having rather tolerant mentors and teachers at the school who did not stick to a rigid syllabus or require students to write formalistic essays quoting heavily from the Confucian classics.

It was during this time that Yang met the American missionary Louise Strong Hammond (1887–1941?). Hammond arrived in Wuxi in September 1913 as a member of the American Protestant Episcopal Mission and part of a small but thriving Christian community in Wuxi.<sup>6</sup> Yang referred to her as his “adopted mother” (*ganma*), though we have only glimpses of that maternal bond: “sometimes she would lie in bed and ask me to read her poems and stories to send her to sleep” (Li Xing 1984). Hammond taught Yang English, the piano, and Western music theory. The wider impact of Hammond on Yang

in terms of his attitude to life was just as crucial.<sup>7</sup> Yang became a Christian in his early twenties, and in the early 1930s he joined the congregation of the United Christian Hymnal Committee, where he worked on the editorial board, arranging, composing, and translating hymns. This environment allowed him to take a much more active involvement in expressing his faith and searching to find a language in which to communicate his Christian beliefs. Yang's God was Protestant, and his faith would be a sustaining force throughout his life.

Southern Jiangsu was an important Taoist center from the Northern and Southern dynasties (420–581 A.D.) through to the late imperial period. Yang's childhood world included learning musical instruments from Taoist monks. He learned the *dizi* (transverse flute), *xiao* (end-blown flute), *erhu* (two-string spiked fiddle), and *sheng* (mouth organ) from the monk Ying Quan and the *pipa* (four-string pear-shape plucked lute) and *sanxian* (three-string long-necked plucked lute) from Hua Yanjun (1893–1950), better known as Abing. This marked the beginning of a lifelong involvement with Taoist music and of Yang's friendship and collaboration with Taoist musicians such as the drum master Zhu Qianfu (1902–81), Hui Huquan, Wang Yunpo, and Wu Junfeng. In the 1930s, Yang worked closely with Zhu in his research on the ensemble genres *Shifan'gu* and *Shifan luogu*.<sup>8</sup>

All these Taoist musicians lived a life of relative anonymity outside their own traditions, but Abing's music would soon be elevated to icon status within China's music conservatories after his death, occupying a special place alongside the works of other composers, such as Nie Er (1912–35) and Xian Xinghai (1905–45), in what might be called Communist China's musical pantheon. In August 1950, Yang, Cao Anhe, Li Songshou, and other musicologists recorded a number of instrumental genres in Wuxi, including *Su'nan chuidaqu* and *Shifan luogu*. They met many musicians, among them Abing. Both Yang and Cao were well aware that Abing had succumbed to blindness in his midthirties and had eked out an existence as a beggar musician for decades, but when they saw him again they were quite shocked to discover that he had not one musical instrument in his possession. This situation most likely prompted Yang and Cao to record a number of Abing's works while he was still alive. An *erhu* was procured from a local music store and a *pipa* from Cao's own collection at her home in Wuxi. Abing practiced for several days before Yang and Cao recorded six solo pieces (three each for *pipa* and *erhu*, respectively) on a Webster Chicago wire recorder.<sup>9</sup> The recordings were conducted in a school classroom and in Cao's home.<sup>10</sup> As it turned out, this "incidental aside," as Jonathan Stock puts it (1996:52), was indeed fortuitous, as Abing died in December that year. These recordings literally saved Abing

from fading into total obscurity. One piece in particular—“Moon reflected in the Second Spring” (*Erquan yinyue*)—has become one of the most popular and enduring of all Chinese tunes.<sup>11</sup>

Southern Jiangsu was also the cradle of the elegant classical opera Kunqu. By the eighteenth century, Kunqu was already on the wane, but it suffered a further blow in the 1850s when the Taiping Rebellion came to the region. Many Kunqu troupes had disbanded well before the collapse of China’s last imperial dynasty in 1911 (Zung 1937:65). The activities of the Tianyunshe (The Heavenly Sounding Society), a society of Kunqu aficionados founded during the Tianqi period (1620–27), and the Kunju Chuanxisuo (Institute for the Preservation and Transmission of Kunju), founded in 1921 by wealthy literati families in Suzhou, were significant in keeping the genre alive (Tang Caoyuan 1981:410–11; Wong 1991:39, 2002:294).<sup>12</sup> Yang became a student of Wu Wanjing (1847–1926), a Kunqu master who also presided over the Tianyunshe. Yang took over as head of the society when Wu died in 1926.

In August 1921, Yang and Wu arranged a series of weekly concerts for the American violinist, conductor, and composer Henry Eichheim (1870–1942) in Wuxi. Yang acted as Eichheim’s interpreter (Yang Yinliu 1980b:233–34). As Yang later wrote in English (1984): “The concerts started at 7:00 P.M. every night and lasted for two hours. In the beginning we performed Chinese music for one and a half hours, then Mr. Eichheim played Western music for half an hour. . . . He played the violin and was accompanied by Mrs. Eichheim on the piano and his daughter was turning the pages for her mother.”

Eichheim had the rare opportunity to hear *Shifan’gu* and *Shifan luogu* performed by Zhu Qinfu in August and in early December. He returned to Wuxi alone from India, where he had left his family, to hear more *Shifan luogu* music. Writing in English, Yang recalls (*ibid.*):

We gathered local shi-fan-luo-gu musicians to play. The concert started at 2:00 p.m. and ended at almost 7:30 p.m. I and an American friend of his took him to the station to catch the train at 8:30 p.m. to return to India. Before that afternoon concert, I had lunch with him at his friend’s home. I asked why he wanted to hear shi-fan-luo-gu again. He said that in the intervening months, he had traveled to many countries, but this is the music which impressed him the most. There was a very strong desire in him to listen to it once more. After the performance, I asked what was his impression. What he said was like this: “I can’t imagine that with only eight people, music of such depth and richness can be created: I am an admirer of this music, but with no understanding.”

Yang left for Shanghai in 1923. Shanghai was less than a day’s trip away from Wuxi but light-years away in feeling and atmosphere. By the 1920s, Shanghai

prided itself as one of the most cosmopolitan and modern cities in the world. Many of the latest trends that were sweeping New York, London, and Paris were part of the social life of Shanghai's Chinese urban middle class, as well as of foreigners who resided in the International Settlement and French Concession. The city undoubtedly opened up a new world of possibilities for Yang and greatly expanded his circle of acquaintances. When he enrolled at St. John's University (now East China University of Politics and Law) to study economics, the university already had a strong foreign music presence and a wide range of extracurricular musical activities. Yang switched to English literature in his second year and also studied music temperament and physics. He had several foreign teachers, including Fritz A. Kuttner, who arrived in China in 1939 as a refugee from Nazi Germany and taught at St. John's until 1949 (Kuttner 1990:9).<sup>13</sup>

During Yang's second year at St. John's in 1925 the May Thirtieth Incident broke out in Shanghai, sparked by a group of Chinese workers who staged a strike at a Japanese-owned factory. One of the workers, Gu Zhengzhong, was killed by Japanese guards during the strike. This event was followed by a wave of public outrage that saw workers and students take to the streets in protest. Hundreds of students from St. John's, including Yang, took part in demonstrations, delivering speeches and distributing pamphlets expressing their patriotic feelings. It is not surprising that songs became an important vehicle for self-expression during this period, or that Yang chose the patriotic lyric poem "Manjiang hong" (River covered in red), attributed to the Song dynasty general Yue Fei (1103–41), to set to his own arrangement of the ancient tune *Jinling huaigu* (Reminiscences of Nanjing) (Qian 1997). Students at St. John's moved to Guanghai University (now China Eastern Normal University) after St. John's temporarily closed its doors. The National Music Society (*Guoyueshe*), of which Yang was president at St. John's, regrouped at Guanghai. That the majority of its members were from Wuxi suggests that the Wuxi dialect was a badge of group membership. They performed regularly on and off campus (Zhu Zuyin 1987:45–46).

While at Guanghai, Yang wrote a paper on Chinese music history in English titled "An Outline History of Chinese Music," which won first prize in an English thesis competition. Cao Anhe has pointed out that this paper marked the very beginning of Yang's writings on Chinese music historiography (2000:34). Yang commented later that he snatched the prize only because his "written English was good and the judges had no idea about music" (Qiao 1999:8).<sup>14</sup> It was indeed the beginnings of an ambitious project to write a comprehensive history of Chinese music within the confine of one volume—a daunting task for any music historian—which later bore fruit as

*Zhongguo yinyue shigang* (A concise history of Chinese music, 1952) (hereafter *Concise History*).<sup>15</sup>

Yang returned to Wuxi in February 1926, taking up positions at junior secondary schools teaching English, Chinese, mathematics, and music to support his parents (Xu 1988:166). He was now reminded of his marital obligations; he was betrothed to a young woman by the name of Zhang Junxian, a primary schoolteacher. They were officially married in November 1928. We do not know whether Yang was ever consulted on the marriage with Junxian, or whether his consent to the marriage was regarded as a personal sacrifice to the customs of his parents' generation. The couple had five children: their first son, Guozhu, was followed by three girls—Guoqian, Guorui, and Guolan—and another son, Guozhen (Hua 1992:107; Hsu, Qiao, and Mao 1992:23).

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How to express our highest and best religious thought in verse which shall be both intelligible and singable, is something exceedingly difficult of attainment, and will perhaps only be satisfactorily accomplished by some Chinese Wesley or Watts yet to be born.

—R. F. Fitch, "Hymns and Hymn Books for the Chinese,"  
in *Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal* (1895): 467

The nineteenth century witnessed a great flurry of commercial activity in compiling hymnbooks in China. Hymnal after hymnal came off the presses, each one meeting the peculiar requirements of mission stations or individual missionaries. In 1877, Reverend C. Goodrich complained that most standard hymns had "a larger wardrobe than a Saratoga belle, even in Mandarin speaking districts." What Protestant missions needed, he argued, was not "a multitude of hymns, but good hymns" (Goodrich 1878:216). These concerns highlighted, among other things, difficulties in rendering Christian hymns into Chinese and writing hymns in literary and colloquial Chinese. Regular articles on Chinese hymnology were published in missionary journals such as the *Chinese Recorder*.<sup>16</sup> One of the chief obstacles, to be sure, was the Chinese language itself: "[A successful creator of hymns] would need to be a saint as well as a genius, for to carry across so rough a chasm as the gulf between the two languages such sacred, precious and tender gems, he must love them with his whole heart. . . . He must have a deep, genuine admiration for the choicer forms of Chinese diction and phraseology. He must have the true lyric spirit which will make his heart swiftly responsive to the sentiment and keep his ear true to the mystical charm of the rhythm. He must know how to lift the measured line to the loftiness of praise, to sink it with the weight of solemnity, or to set it quivering with the ecstasy of uncontrollable joy" (Candlin 1893:168).

Yang was not the first Chinese Christian to write hymns for the church in China, but he was most likely considered a “saint” among foreign missionaries because he was devotionally attuned to the Christian faith and had an excellent command of both Chinese and English. Hammond had no doubt of Yang’s ability. “My Godson Ernest Yang,” she wrote in August 1939, “[is a] most hard-working poet and musician, whose discovery by me for work on the Chinese Hymnal has been probably my greatest contribution to the Church of China.”<sup>17</sup> Yang became a member and executive secretary of the United Christian Hymnal Committee in 1929 (Kong 2003b:278). Committee members included Yang, Hammond, and Robert Fitch, a member of the American Presbyterian Mission who had arrived in China in 1898.<sup>18</sup>

Yang’s work, as mentioned earlier, involved translating, editing, composing, and writing Christian hymns (Yang Zhouhuai 1999). More precisely, the job involved setting Christian texts to Chinese melodies, collecting and translating hundreds of hymns, and working closely with other committee representatives appointed by their respective churches.<sup>19</sup> Yang worked with Liu Tingfang (1891–1947) translating a large corpus of hymnals, composing and writing Chinese texts. Together they also edited a journal on Chinese Christian hymnology called *Shengge yu Shengyue* (Hymns and sacred music) under their English names, Timothy Tingfang Lew and Ernest Y. L. Yang.<sup>20</sup> Yang collaborated with Fitch on a number of projects, including *The Little Bible*, a bilingual edition published by the Kunming Book Company in Shanghai;<sup>21</sup> *Anthems for a Church Year*, containing “forty-one anthems and antiphons for a choir of mixed voices,”<sup>22</sup> published by the Christian Literature Society; and an article titled “Divergent Opinions on Chinese Hymnology” (Yang and Fitch 1934). Yang also wrote some thirteen hymns and set ten hymns to his own texts in Chinese, including “Sharing” (*Fenxiang*), “Searching” (*Sanxing*), “My Only Trust Is in Jesus” (*Weikao Yesu*), and his setting of “Seeing Mr. Yuan Off on His Mission to Anxi” (*Yangguan sandie*):

Friends of years with just one heart  
Must now say farewell and part.  
Unsure again when we meet,  
These last hours are far more sweet.

May our loving God guide thee, guard thee  
Over hill and deep sea  
One will always be.  
One in faith, one in hope  
One in fellowship of love.<sup>23</sup>

These hymns, along with the translation of the texts of Christian hymns into Chinese, were published in *Hymns of Universal Praise* (*Putian songzan*)

in 1936 (Union Hymnal Committee 1936). The book contained 514 hymns, of which 452 were “translations” and 62 were “Chinese original hymns” (Union Hymnal Committee 1947:10). Yang’s contributions were modestly stated in the preface: “Dr. Fitch, with the help of Ernest Yang, has been responsible for seeing the book through the press” (ibid.:9).<sup>24</sup> Yang’s religious beliefs apparently had not the slightest influence on his scholarly interests, for less than a year after working on *Hymns of Universal Praise*, he returned to Wuxi and compiled two sets of Taoist instrumental scores—*Fanyinpu* and *Luogupu* (Tian 2000:335).

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Banquet music of the court is all folk music. The ruling class took pleasure in folk music, plundering and pillaging it and turning it into something their own. It was like taking a young woman and making her a maidservant or consort in the imperial palace.

—Yang Yinliu, in *Zhongguo yinyue shigang* (Concise history of Chinese music), 1952: 338

Yang’s writings on Chinese music had by now earned him public esteem and academic recognition. By the late 1930s he was constantly on the move, traveling vast distances to meet his busy work schedule. He was appointed professor of Chinese history at Yenching University in Beijing in 1936 and became a research fellow attached to the Harvard-Yenching Institute.<sup>25</sup> Yang read British physicist Alexander J. Ellis’s English translation of Hermann Helmholtz’s *On the Sensations of Tone* (1875) at Yenching with the help of Liu Tingfang and the physicist Ding Xielin. Yang had also read an essay on the cents system by Alexander Ellis translated by Wang Guangqi (1892–1936), a Chinese law student turned musicologist who studied under Karl Stumpf, Erich von Hornbostel, and Curt Sachs at Berlin University in the late 1920s. Both these translations had a significant impact on Yang, who later employed some comparative concepts in his major work on music temperament (1937). Ten years later he translated Alexander Wood’s *The Physics of Music*.<sup>26</sup>

At Yenching University, Yang met Bliss Wiant (1895–1974), dean of the music department and a Methodist minister who had come to China with his wife, Mildred, in 1923 under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church.<sup>27</sup> Wiant later offered Yang a job in the United States to head a Chinese music institute, but Yang declined the offer, arguing that China was the grounding place of all his work. The folksingers, the musicians, the textual sources and artifacts of China’s musical past resided in China, not some distant place a vast ocean away. As he told a reporter in the early 1980s: “I can do nothing if I leave Chinese soil, where Chinese music lives” (Li Xing 1984:5).

Yang also took a temporary job in a government office in Nanjing just as the Japanese were taking control of the city. He wrote to Hammond that when the war broke out, everyone spent their time in dugouts, because of air raids. "This gave me an excellent opportunity," he wrote, "to finish my treatise on Taoist music."<sup>28</sup> Yang soon fled occupied Nanjing and took a job as "head treasurer of an important Government organization" in Kunming, the capital city of Yunnan province in southwest China. Yang's days were busy, as he devoted "between ten and twelve hours everyday to mechanical work on treasurer's figures." Hammond wrote that this was "a great waste of an artistic talent" and came to Kunming with a letter from Liu Tingfang to persuade him to return to Shanghai "to resume his work on Christian literature and music."<sup>29</sup> While working as a treasurer, he also received an invitation from the central government to become a member of a music education committee attached to the National Board of Education "to do research in Chinese music for the purpose of deepening and spreading the national spirit of China."<sup>30</sup>

In Kunming, Yang met many Chinese intellectuals from Peking, Tsinghua, and Nankai universities who had moved to Kunming during the Anti-Japanese War (1937–45) to form the National Southwestern Associated University (*Xi'nan Lianda*). Chongqing, Kunming, and Guilin were known as the three "rear areas" (*dahoufang*), under Kuomintang (KMT/Nationalist) rule during the War of Resistance. By 1938, some sixty thousand refugees had migrated to Yunnan province (Eastman 1984:17). Yang's mother, wife, and five children later joined him in Kunming.<sup>31</sup>

By the late 1930s, the Communist capital of Yan'an in northwest China gave Chinese intellectuals a new approach to the problem of saving China. The revolutionary base attracted many left-wing writers, students, and intellectuals who lent their disparate voices to oppose the War of Resistance as well as serve the Communist Party. Yang's ambivalence or reluctance to step into the Communist camp and his indifference to interpreting China's past within the framework of Marxist-Leninist doctrines—as evidenced in his *Concise History*—suggests that, unlike many of his contemporaries, he never rallied to the cause of "music for revolution's sake." Although he later became a member of the National Political Consultative Committee, Yang was not a member of the Communist Youth league before 1949, nor drawn to Yan'an to join the teaching staff at the Lu Xun Academy of Arts. Neither did he join the rank and file of songwriters who penned suitably soul-stirring songs for the new Communist regime (the names Qiao Yu, He Jingzhi, Tian Ge, Li Jiefu, Su Tie, and Wang Xin come readily to mind). In many respects, his collaborative projects with foreign missionaries stood in stark contrast

to the cultural workers at Yan'an who compiled songs and texts imbued with socialist, not religious, images.

Yang also taught music history at the National Conservatory at Qingmu-guan in Chongqing, a music conservatory founded in the late 1930s and made up of musicians from Shanghai, Shandong, Peiping (now Beijing), and other parts of the country. The draft of his *Concise History*, first conceived almost twenty years earlier at Guanghai University, was completed in 1944 under difficult wartime conditions. The book was officially published in Shanghai in 1952 and dedicated to the memory of his father. It ran its first reprint the following year. In it, Yang's time line of Chinese history starts with the Yellow Emperor and the Chalcolithic Cultures (Longshan, Liangzhu, and Qijia), then continues with the early historical dynasties of the Xia, Shang, and Zhou to the late Qing, the Republican period, and the People's Republic of China (1952:2). This book "remains one of the most authoritative works on the subject," writes Isabel Wong, "a cornerstone" in the history of modern Chinese music (1991:46).<sup>32</sup>

Yang was criticized for his book during the "Anti-Rightist Campaign" in 1958 because it had no identifying Marxist elements, such as class struggle. The book also failed to acknowledge the role of the proletariat in music. Whether he lay awake at night in a constant state of self-criticism for his "petty-bourgeois views" expressed in the text will never be known, but he did publish two self-criticisms.<sup>33</sup> Yang later recalled that at the time of writing his *Concise History*, his political viewpoint was totally incompatible with the ideology of the proletariat: "When I began writing my *Concise History*, I had not yet acquainted myself with Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong thought. I saw the world through the eyes of a petit bourgeois, lacked a correct understanding of historical materialism and worshipped Western doctrines. . . . In my own research, I committed a number of serious errors, too many to enumerate here. These include my tendency to exaggerate foreign [musical] influences, not to see the creative energy of the laboring masses, and to praise views of music extolled by Confucian philosophers. . . . I was imbued with a sense of idealism, my thoughts colored by abstractions and theoretical issues. As a result, I wrote a very poor book indeed (Yang Yinliu 1981, vol. 2:1069-70).

The above comments appeared in a postscript published in Yang's two-volume *Zhongguo gudai yinyue shigao* (Draft history of ancient Chinese music), hereafter *Draft*, in 1981. The postscript reads much like a self-criticism, Yang stating his far-from-perfect grasp of Communist doctrines and the fact that he had not become "proletarianized" enough: "In 1959, the Party gave me the glorious task of researching Chinese music history. . . . I have continued to discover my own shortcomings as my basic attitudes and beliefs have

changed over the course of time. My failings discovered in the early stage of the 'reform thinking' process explain shortcomings that remained undetected in the latter state, and I still don't know how many more remain. . . . In the last couple of years, I have gradually realized that an important factor in my inability to thoroughly analyze issues on music was because I did not understand the 'particularity of contradictions' in society and its interconnectedness to other contradictions" (Yang Yinliu 1981, vol. 2:1065–66).

The *Draft* had taken some eighteen years to complete. Yang started in July 1959 and completed the two volumes in July 1977 (Feng 1999c:15). In a period spanning almost twenty years, the *Draft* underwent numerous political revisions. The book's delayed publication no doubt had much to do with Yang's reluctance to make these revisions.<sup>34</sup> When the *Draft* was officially published in February 1981, the masses were now the creators of music, not the Yellow Emperor (Yang Yinliu 1981, vol. 1:1). Explicit throughout the text are references to the "laboring masses," the ordinary Chinese "exploited" and "oppressed" by a small ruling bourgeois elite.<sup>35</sup> "The oppressed classes would not appreciate what was called the elegant music of the court," wrote Yang, for "they loved music created by the people. Li Zicheng, the hero who led the peasant uprising [that finally toppled the Ming dynasty in 1644] loved Shaanxi regional opera from north China, and [during the Taiping rebellion (1850–64)], leaders of the Taiping peasant revolutionary government loved *Shifan luoguo* from the south" (ibid., vol. 2:1017).<sup>36</sup>

Despite all the political revisions of the *Draft*, it has become Yang's best-known and most easily accessible account of Chinese music history.

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Western music made further inroads into China after the Opium Wars, but with the influx of Western music, some intellectuals in China paid little attention to their own music traditions. There was even a tendency among some intellectuals to despise Chinese music.

—Yang Yinliu, in *Zhongguo gudai yinyue shigao* (A draft History of Ancient Chinese Music), 1981, vol. 2:1017

From the early 1950s, Yang received a number of appointments at the national level. These official positions included codirector of the National and Folk Research Institute of the Central Conservatory of Music (1954); professor of music, Central Conservatory of Music (1960); and advisor at the Research Institute of Literature and the Arts (1977). At the National and Folk Research Institute (the forerunner of Music Research Institute, Chinese Academy of Arts),<sup>37</sup> Yang and its other director, Li Yuanqing (1914–79), played a crucial role in organizing the collecting of historical and living music traditions

across China for study and preservation, supervising music scholars in their fieldwork projects, and building up the Traditional Music Sound Archive.<sup>38</sup> During the 1950s, Yang also chaired numerous music committees and was among a panel of judges at the Sixth World Youth and Student Festival held in Moscow from late July to mid-August 1957. He recorded his trip in a small pocket-size diary<sup>39</sup> and went to Moscow again on a goodwill visit at the end of 1959 and early 1960 (Yang Yinliu 1960).

Like most intellectuals, Yang suffered during the Cultural Revolution (1966–76), though he fared a lot better than others. Yang did not have an impeccable class background. His connections with Christianity were closely scrutinized, and he was accused of being a KMT spy, but nothing substantial came out of the investigations.<sup>40</sup> He was publicly paraded in the grounds of the institute, forced to don a dunce's cap, and had a sign hung around his neck advertising his so-called crimes (Li Ni 2001:56). He was also confined to a *niupeng* (literally “cow shed”)—a form of confinement on the grounds of the institute (Liu Dongsheng 2000:13).<sup>41</sup> In October 1969, staff members at the institute were “sent down” (*xiafang*) to a May Seventh Cadre School—schools for the reeducation of cadres and intellectuals—in Tuanbowa, Hebei province, where they were reeducated in “proper” Communist thought through a combination of agricultural work and study of Mao's writings. Some, including Yang and Huang Xiangpeng, furtively continued to pursue their music research despite possible repercussions.<sup>42</sup> In December 1972, one of the most spectacular archaeological finds in the twentieth century took place in Mawangdui, northeast of Changsha, in Hunan province: musical instruments dating to the Western Han (206 B.C.–24 A.D.) were excavated. Several scholars from the institute, including Yang, had permission to leave Tuanbowa and report on these musical artifacts. In early 1974, a report on the musical instruments unearthed in Mawangdui was published in the first issue of the journal *Kaogu* (Archaeology) (Yinyue yanjiusuo 1994:40).

Yang's health began to decline as early as 1973 with a number of respiratory problems that were the beginning of emphysema. His hectic work schedule, incessant cigarette smoking, and advancing years were now taking their toll. By the early 1980s, Yang's health deteriorated further. In a letter to Han Kuohuang dated May 26, 1980, Yang wrote: “I have pulmonary emphysema. I am often short of breath and can't move. Recently, I've caught a cold and fever again. I was admitted to hospital for almost a month not being discharged until May 23.”<sup>43</sup> Cold and fever persisted. In early 1983 Yang was sent to Jishuitan Hospital in Beijing, where he remained for almost three months. He was now confined to a wheelchair and by December was bedridden. He died the following year.

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Yang Yinliu was a large tree full of lush leaves and branches reaching high into the sky. I can only caress each branch and leaf with my hands. Yang was a bridge between the ancient, the modern, Chinese and foreign. I'm still walking along that bridge that Yang built.

—Huang Xiangpeng, in “Wangshi jie yiai, renjin fang jiansi—aiwan Yang Yinliu xiansheng” (We are reminded today of his legacy: an elegy for Yang Yinliu), *Zhongyang yinyue xueyuan xuebao* (Journal of the Central Conservatory of Music), 1984

Yang's approach to (re)writing Chinese music drew inspiration from prominent Chinese reformers at the turn of the twentieth century, such as Liang Qichao (1873–1929). Liang questioned traditional practices of historical writing in his *New History* (1902), pointing out that dynastic or standard histories (*zhengshi*) were an obstacle to China's modernization: written by court historians concerned only with court events or related matters, they neglected the lives of ordinary citizens (*guomin*) (Lin Yi 1980:3–5). So, too, did Yang seek to reconstruct China's musical past and invent what might be called a new music historiography that would include the music of ordinary people. His aim was to rescue Chinese music history from the clutches of imperial scribes and provide a rigorous and scientific approach as found in modern Western historiography, and, in turn, to demonstrate similar periods of development, progress, and evolution in Chinese music.<sup>44</sup>

Yang was well aware of the Herculean task required to compile and gather China's musical heritage. The undertaking was obviously beyond the ability of one individual. To peruse all of the textual sources of China's musical past and collect and study its living traditions would need the combined efforts of many. It would be necessary to recruit a team, a “relay team” (*jieli saipao*)—as Yang had put it in the early 1940s (1989:7)—made up of Chinese music scholars, as well as a large number of helpers. The relay team suggests that one lifetime was not enough to make a truly full record of Chinese music history; the unfinished work would be passed on to the next person, the next group or generation.

A defining quality of Yang's legacy as a scholar was that he worked at a vocation shared with others and was receptive and alert to the research of younger scholars and students he supervised, with many of whom he formed close friendships.<sup>45</sup> Yang was not the only music historian and practicing musician of his day, but the particular nature of his achievements—a broad perspective and vision of (re)defining Chinese music history; an historical sweep that embraced practically all fields of Chinese music and historical

periods; an eye for accuracy and detail; an intimate knowledge of the textual sources, artifacts, and musical traditions he studied; and an ethos of hard work and persistence that few of his contemporaries could match—bestowed upon him such labels as “the outstanding scholar” and “the founder of Chinese musicology.” Through him, as eminent scholar Qiao Jianzhong notes, Chinese music history was “freed from the shackles of the text, allowing the music and the musicians to take center stage” (Xiao 2000:67).

Throughout his long life, Yang exhibited diffidence and modesty with regard to his own work and achievements. He called his two-volume history on ancient Chinese music a “draft” (*gao*), a rough, preliminary outline of what in fact would have been an ongoing project of compiling a history of Chinese music from antiquity to the early twentieth century. He declared late in his life that his knowledge and understanding of Chinese music were “extremely shallow” (*shifen fuqian*) and “naïve” (*youzhi*) (Yang Yinliu 1981, vol. 2:1066). Was this taking modesty just a bit too far? The statement was characteristically self-effacing, but its underlying meaning was clear to all Chinese music scholars. “We have no doubt of Yang’s real meaning,” writes Wei Tingge: “Chinese music is of such depth, covering such a broad area and so abundantly rich that a systematic knowledge or understanding of it is really difficult” (1994:1009). Yang’s stature in Chinese music is undisputed, but we will need to go beyond simple appraisals of Yang as “the outstanding scholar,” the “founder of Chinese musicology,” and critically read and study his writings to understand his pivotal role in shaping twentieth-century musicology in China, a role and legacy that continue to speak to us well beyond that century.<sup>46</sup>

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## SELECTED CHARACTER LIST

### *Individuals*

Abing (Hua Yanjun)	阿炳 (华彦钧)	Xian Xinghai	冼星海
Cao Anhe	曹安和	Wu Wanqing	吴皖卿
Huang Xiangpeng	黄翔鹏	Yang Yinliu	杨荫浏
Li Yuanqing	李元庆	Zhu Qinfu	朱勤甫
Nie Er	聂耳		

### *Musical Titles and Other Terms*

Erquan yingyue	二泉映月	Shifan’gu	十番鼓
Fanyinpu	梵音谱	Shifan luogu	十番锣鼓
Fenxiang	分享	Su’nan chuidaqu	苏南吹打曲
Jinling huaigu	金陵怀古	Tianyunshe	天韵社
Kunju chuanxisuo	昆剧传习所	Weikao Yesu	惟靠耶稣

Luogupu	锣鼓谱	Xi'an guyue	西安古乐
Manjiang hong	满江红	Yangguan sandie	阳关三叠
Putian songzan	普天颂赞	Yinyue xiao zazhi	音乐小杂志
Sanxing	三省	Yuefeng	乐风
Shengge yu shengyue	圣歌与圣乐		

## Notes

I would like to acknowledge the help of staff in the Reference Library at the Music Research Institute, Chinese Academy of Arts, Beijing. Without their kind support and hospitality, this essay could not have been written. I also wish to acknowledge individually the support and encouragement of Qiao Jianzhong, Zhang Zhentao, and Xiao Mei. In particular, my gratitude and heartfelt thanks to Helen Rees, who provided constant support and encouragement at all stages of writing up.

1. This chapter can only briefly touch upon their professional relationship. Cao also provided Yang with encouragement and strength throughout much of his creative adult life. Without her, it is possible that he would never have had the time to write as much as he did: she helped him with his research and supported him through difficult times. Alas, Cao's advanced years and deteriorating health prevented me from conducting any interviews with her during my sojourn in Beijing from late 1999 to December 2002. Cao passed away December 4, 2004, and was buried at Babaoshan Cemetery on December 24. For biographical sketches of Cao, see *Zhongguo yishu yanjiuyuan, yinyue yanjiusuo* 2006.

2. For a summary of papers delivered at this International Symposium, see Xiao 2000, Zheng and Jones 1999/2000, and Kwan 2000.

3. See, for example, the newspaper reports "Yang Yinliu xiansheng yinbing shishi" (1984), "Yang Yinliu xiansheng zhuidaohui zai Jing juxing" (1984), and Xu Yihe 1984; also tributes by fellow scholars such as Lü Ji (1984), and in particular Huang Xiangpeng's touching elegy (1984).

4. On the history of Wuxi, see *Cihai* 1979:656 and Wagner 1996:127.

5. Information on Yang's father is meager. These dates are taken from the inside cover of Yang Yinliu 1952.

6. See "Arrivals" in *Chinese Recorder*, vol. 44(11):718.

7. We know very little about the daily interactions between Yang and Hammond and between Christians and non-Christians in Wuxi. The Inventory of Eunice Tietjens' Papers 1898–1944, housed in the Roger and Julie Baskes Department of Special Collections in the Newberry Library, Chicago, contains Hammond's personal correspondence to Eunice Tietjens covering the period 1912–43. There are twenty-six folders under Louise Strong Hammond. These include "Chinese Songs" (ten items in one folder, words and music); "Photographs" (two items in one folder); and twenty-four folders of correspondence. I am grateful to Elizabeth Freebairn at Newberry Library for generously providing me with access to two letters from this collection. On a trip to Wuxi in early February 2002, I was investigating Christian churches in the city and visited the Wuxi Christian Church (founded in 1901), which had moved to its present location—130 Zhongshan Road—in

1916. I spoke to Mr. Jiang, a retired pastor in his seventies, who recalled that Yang regularly attended church services there (personal communication, February 7, 2002).

8. For an English-language treatment of the now iconic figure of Abing, see Stock 1996; for brief biographies of Zhu, see Qiao Jianzhong 1988 and Jones 1995:255–56.

9. I am grateful to Stephen Jones for drawing my attention to the Webster Chicago wire recorder. Two of these recorders used by Yang and Cao are housed in the Chinese Traditional Music Sound Archive at the Music Research Institute in Beijing. According to Wang Yusang, an audio engineer who works in the archive, two Webster Chicago recorders were brought back from Hong Kong by Li Huanzhi (1919–2000) in 1949. I was able to view the two reels used to record the six works of Abing from a computer in the sound archive, the titles of each piece written on both reels respectively. More recordings could have been made, but there was not enough wire (Wang Yusang, personal communication, December 20, 2003). Schimmelpenninck points out that Yang was among the first Chinese musicologists to experiment with recording musicians in their natural environment (1997:8). Yang and Cao's transcriptions of Abing's six pieces were later published (Yang and Cao 1952).

10. This account is taken from Qiao 2002:21–22.

11. Yang wrote several short biographies of Abing. See Yang, Cao, and Chu 1954; Yang Yinliu 1977; Yang Yinliu 1980a.

12. The name Tianyunshe was not coined until after the collapse of the last imperial dynasty in 1911, when there was renewed interest in and patronage of Kunqu. During the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368–1644, 1644–1911), it was called Quju (Bureau of Tunes). In the late nineteenth century, the society had several hundred members. By the early Republican period, membership had dwindled to under fifty, and by the 1930s, the society had totally disbanded. On Tianyunshe, see Cao Anhe 2006.

13. On the history of St. John's University, see Lamberton 1955.

14. I have not been able to gain access to this important paper.

15. Several major works by Chinese scholars on Chinese music history had already been published in the early twentieth century. For a comprehensive list, see Liu Zaisheng 1999:55.

16. This important missionary journal, generally referred to as the *Chinese Recorder*, actually changed names three times: from *The Missionary Recorder* (1867), to *Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal* (1868–1912), to *Chinese Recorder* (1912–38), to *Chinese Recorder and Educational Review* (1939–41).

17. Letter dated Kunming, Yunnan, August 13, 1939, 6. Contents of Louise Strong Hammond correspondence, Box 7.

18. The aim of the committee was to compile a book that would “express praise and the loftiest aspirations of the whole Christian church in China” (Sheng 1964:184).

19. This committee was appointed by the Chung Hwa Sheng Kung Hwei, the Church of Christ in China, the East China Baptist Convention, the Methodist Episcopal Church North, the Methodist Episcopal Church South, and the North China Kung Li Hui.

20. The first issue was published in March 1934 by the Truth and Life Publishing House in Peiping (now Beijing). The last issue (no. 14) was published in June 1937 (Zhongguo yishu yanjiuyuan 1990:74–75). For a biographical sketch of Liu, see West 1976:59–62. West's list of Chinese Christian educators at Yenching University omits Yang.

21. See the *Chinese Recorder* 65(2) (February 1934):128–29.

22. See “Our Book Table,” *Chinese Recorder and Educational Review* 70 (June 1939):333–34.

23. Translated by Frank W. Price (1953). See “Friends of Years with Just One Heart” in *The New Hymnal* (New Hymnal Committee 1999:195). I am grateful to Sun Chenhui for bringing *The New Hymnal* to my attention. The inspiration for Yang’s setting originally comes from a poem titled *Yangguan sandie* by the Tang dynasty poet Wang Wei (701–761 A.D.): “In Weicheng, the morning rain has drenched the light dust; willows look freshly green beside the tavern. Let me persuade you to empty one more cup of wine; there are no more friends where you are going, west of Yang Pass.”

24. For a brief overview of Yang’s contributions to Chinese hymnody, see Wang Shenyin 1991:93–103 and Yang Zhouhuai 1999:39–42.

25. For a history of the institute, see West 1976:187–94.

26. A handwritten copy of Yang’s translation, *Yinyue wulixue*, is housed in the library at the Music Research Institute in Beijing. For a discussion on Yang’s work on music temperament, see Chen Yingshi 1999:30–38; see also Guo Nai’an 1998:160–65.

27. Bliss Wiant was professor of music at Yenching University from 1923 to 1951. The dust jacket of his well-known book *The Music of China* (Wiant 1965) lists other related publications: *Christmas Carol* (H. W. Gray Co., 1946) and *Chinese Lyrics* (J. Fischer and Bro., 1946). Mildred Artz Wiant died in a nursing home in Columbus, Ohio, on May 15, 2001, aged 102. The Bliss and Mildred Wiant Award was established in their honor in 1989 by the Ohio Wesleyan University Ad Hoc Committee on Religious Life “to remember the importance of leadership which promotes interfaith and intercultural understanding.” The Yale Divinity School in New Haven holds forty-nine folders of correspondence of Bliss Wiant from 1922 to 1972. It is possible that we could find correspondence between Wiant and Yang in these folders that would augment the information provided here.

28. Hammond, letter dated August 13, 1939, 6.

29. Hammond, letter dated August 13, 1939, 6. Yang’s employer eventually agreed to let Yang resign from his position as head treasurer, but was reluctant to “lose so honest and cooperative a treasurer”: “I have every respect for the Christian church,” he wrote, “because of the excellent work they do, so I have the greatest sympathy for you wanting to help them. But I hear that the Church’s plans reach into the future, for the good of the country a hundred years from now. Can’t you afford me five short years of your time at present?” Hammond, letter dated August 13, 1939, 7.

30. Hammond, letter dated August 13, 1939, 6.

31. Kunming was used by the Allies in the early part of World War II to send supplies to Chiang Kai-shek’s government in Chongqing, and the threat of air raid strikes hung menacingly over the city. During one air raid, a number of Yang’s colleagues took shelter in his home in Wugong, located in the suburbs of Kunming (Hua 1992:110).

32. For an excellent appraisal of Yang’s *Concise History*, see Zheng Zuxiang 1999. For a comparative study of Yang’s *Concise History* and his later *Draft History of Ancient Chinese Music*, see Kong 2003a:38–49.

33. Yang wrote a critique of the book in the April issue of *Yinyue yanjiu* (Music research) in 1958 (Yang Yinliu 1958). A further critique of his own past failure to conduct scholarship from a proper political viewpoint appeared in the July issue of *Renmin yinyue*

(People's music) in 1962 (Yang Yinliu 1962). The public self-criticism, as Barmé writes, “was a typical example of the baleful self-abnegations produced by countless writers, artists, and intellectuals, who were cajoled and threatened into confessing to the heedless errors of their past and swearing allegiance to the people and their ultimate representative, the Communist Party, before they were allowed to serve in the ranks of the new citizens and be institutionalized within the official state structure of cultural production” (2002:297).

34. For an “inside story” of the vicissitudes of the *Draft's* much-delayed publication, see Ma 1990. Ma writes that in 1965 Mao Zedong instructed that Yang's book be published without delay and that Yang worked frantically to complete the text. However, Yang was reluctant to make any political revisions to the text, so that the book ended up on the printing press shelves for over ten years. Yang made further corrections and changes to the text in the late 1970s. His two-volume *Draft* was officially published on February 2, 1981.

35. See, for example, the first paragraph on the Yuan dynasty (Yang Yingliu 1981, vol. 2:459).

36. For a comparative study of Yang's *Concise History* and the *Draft*, see Kong Peipei 2003a. A sensitive examination of the ideological slant of the *Draft* is offered also by Lam (1995).

37. The Music Research Institute has had many different names since it began as an offshoot of the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing in the early 1950s. “Music Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Arts” (Zhongguo yishu yanjiuyuan, yinyue yanjiusuo) was the name officially chosen in 1980 (Yinyue yanjiusuo 1994:81–83).

38. The holdings of the sound archive have been published (Zhongguo yishu yanjiuyuan, yinyue yanjiusuo ziliaoshi 1994). Major recording projects that Yang supervised include the Abing recordings in August 1950; recordings of religious music at the Zhihua temple in Beijing (November 1952–March 1953); recordings of the instrumental genre *Xi'an guyue* in Xi'an (June 15–27, 1953); and recordings of the instrumental genres *Shifan luogu* and *Chuidaqu* in Wuxi in December 1962. Yang also led an army of musicologists to Hunan province between April 25 and July 7, 1956. Forty-four counties in the province were investigated, and over two hundred different kinds of music collected. The trip also yielded important songs and texts from the nineteenth-century Taiping Rebellion (Yinyue yanjiusuo 1994:18–36).

39. The diary is housed in the Music Research Institute and is listed in a catalog of Yang's handwritten manuscripts (Yang Yinliu 1987).

40. See Qiao Jianzhong 1999:9. Qiao's transcript of Yang's final class states that Yang was called a “CC *pai tewu*” (“CC [i.e., KMT] spy”) (personal communication, February 5, 2001).

41. During the Cultural Revolution, the term *niupeng* (literally “cow/ox/buffalo shed”) was used to denote a form of detention for political outcasts. A *niupeng* was not a genuine stable as such, but could be a place such as a classroom, toilet, cinema, or temple, to which the victims were confined for a period.

42. See Yinyue yanjiusuo 1994:7; also Liu Dongsheng 2000:13–14, and Li Ni 2001. Huang Xiangpeng (1927–97), also a leading musicologist of the time, is described as “a leading figure in the field after Yang Yinliu” (Qiao and Zhang 2001:160).

43. Letter to Han Kuo-huang dated May 26, 1980. I am grateful to Han Kuo-huang for making a copy of this letter available to me.

44. Such terms as “survival of the fittest” (*yousheng liebai*), “struggle for existence” (*jingcun*), and “evolution” (*jinhua*), which entered the modern Chinese lexicon through Yan Fu’s translation of Huxley’s *Evolution and Ethics* (1898), captured the imagination of many of China’s literati and had a profound impact on how intellectuals reexamined their own history and culture. Translations of works on virtually all branches of Western knowledge at the turn of the twentieth century (many from Japanese texts) highlighted the “evolution,” “development,” and “progress” of the West, in stark contrast to the purported “stagnation” and “backwardness” of China. Articles and translations on Western music were also published. Li Shutong’s *Yinyue xiao zazhi* (Little music magazine), printed in Tokyo and distributed by Kaiming Bookstore in Shanghai (January 1906), introduces various aspects of Western art music; it includes a biographical sketch of “Beethoven, the Saint of Music” by Li (under the pen name Xishuang) and a comparative study of the piano and organ by a Japanese contributor. Other such writings include Wang Guangqi’s “On the Evolution of European Music” (1924) and Huang Zi’s “A Brief Survey on the Evolution of Western Music” (1930). For these and other examples, see Zhongguo yishu yanjiuyuan, *yinyue yanjiusuo ziliaoshi* 1990.

45. Yang co-supervised a number of MA students at the Music Research Institute in Beijing who received their degrees in the early 1980s. For a complete list, see *Yinyue yanjiusuo* 1994:87.

46. Several critiques of Yang’s work appeared in the wake of the 1999 conference, for example, Feng 1999a, 1999b, 1999c; Kong 2003a.

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