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## The Rise Of The Chinese Concerto: A Look Into The Developments Of Chinese Traditional Instrument Concerti With Western Orchestra

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THE RISE OF THE CHINESE CONCERTO: A LOOK INTO THE DEVELOPMENTS OF  
CHINESE TRADITIONAL INSTRUMENT CONCERTI WITH WESTERN ORCHESTRA

by

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in

Conducting

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2018

Accepted by:

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## DEDICATION

Dedicated to my parents, John and Jody, and my grandma, Mary Jane. Without your loving support, I would have never made it to the point of writing a dedication to anything. You always believed in me whatever I decided to do, be it majoring in music or moving across the world. I would also like to thank the rest of my family, my brothers, and my friends for always cheering me on and being with me throughout all the highs and lows.

This research is also dedicated to anyone who has ever dared to live or study in another country. You do not know what it is like to be a foreigner until you move to another country and experience it for yourself. To anybody considering studying or living abroad, do it. Chances are it is a once in a lifetime opportunity, and you will be a better person because of it.

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Publishers of the works used in this research: Naxos of America, Inc., Schott Music/European American Music Distributors Company, G. Schirmer/The Music Sales Group, and Mrs. Ma, wife of late Ma Shui-long whom all permitted me to use their works in my document.

## ABSTRACT

The mixing of musical traditions between cultures, philosophies, and religions has been a crucial element of music for centuries. However, a marked rise over the last century has seen rapid development of specific East/West fusions that have become known as “fusion concertos.” These fusions combine Eastern and Western compositional techniques as well as Eastern and Western instruments to create new and interesting works for a multitude of ensembles.

This research takes two early examples written by Chinese composers, the world-famous works *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* and *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, and analyzes them regarding form, melodic content, harmonic content, and instrumental considerations. This analysis is then compared to three newer works written by well-known composers Ma Shui-long, Tan Dun, and Bright Sheng. Through this process, key factors will be identified that highlight the fusions between Eastern and Western ideas. Analysis of these traits identifies what makes these compositional hybrids successful regarding the compositional traits listed above and explores important cultural factors that shape the work's narrative.

It is my hope that, through this research, more scholars, researchers, and performers become aware of the fundamental techniques that make these works successful and endeavor to continue advancing this exciting and influential genre to a continually wider audience.

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## FOREWORD

This document is part of the dissertation requirement for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Conducting. The major portion of the dissertation consists of four public recitals. Copies of the recital programs are bound at the end of this paper, and recordings of the recitals are on file in the Music Library.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The role of music in China has a long and deep history. Confucian religious beliefs and its views towards music were central to this history. Predominately through ritual and ceremony, music was an essential part of the lives of Chinese people. Musical practices and history maintained a steady current from the time of Confucian (551-479 BCE) all the way to the fall of the Qing Dynasty in 1911.<sup>1</sup> Confucius specifies two types of music in his writings, “proper music” (*yayau*) and “vernacular music” (*suyue*). *Yayau* music existed in social harmony. This social harmony came when one listened to or played the music of the heavens. *Suyue*, on the other hand, was emotional and indulged in sentiment which could degrade the mind.<sup>2</sup> The common practices of music in Confucian society remained largely unchanged for two and a half millennia until the Qing Dynasty fell in 1911. Although these practices typically are labeled “Eastern” or “Traditional Chinese” that is not to say that during this period Western music never exerted its influence. There were many attempts to bring music from the West into the East.

The first influences from the West came as early as 1601 through Jesuit missionaries. These missionaries brought with them Christianity and sacred works in an

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick Lau, *Music in China* (Oxford University Press, Inc., 2008), 118.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 118.



attempt to spread their religion. Although marginally successful in introducing Western music to the imperial court, the most significant impact was through military bands brought to China by British diplomats in the late eighteenth century. These military bands played an important role, especially following the Opium War in 1839, in giving the residents a constant influence of Western music and musical instruments. What followed the treaties signed at the end of the Opium War in the later parts of the nineteenth century was an influx of aristocrats, missionaries, and merchants visiting China, bringing their Western musical traditions with them.<sup>3</sup> It is around this time that the first symphony orchestra established its roots as the Shanghai Municipal Symphony Orchestra in 1907, even if their audience was exclusively European.<sup>4</sup>

Following the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911, the musical landscape saw radical change as the influences of the West poured in and signaled a new age of modernism among the Chinese. Three critical factors shaped the establishment of Western music in China, the first being the institutions established in China in the early twentieth century. The second was the development of *guoyue*, or national music, and its impact in the modernization of Chinese instruments in the 1930's. Lastly, the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PROC) in 1949, the Cultural Revolution, and the opening of China's borders following Chairman Mao's death all significantly impacted the development of music in China.

Founded in 1927 by two Western-trained teachers, Cai Yuanpei and Xiao Yaomei, the National Music Conservatory (later Shanghai Conservatory of Music)

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<sup>3</sup> Richard Curt Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China : Middle-Class Ambitions and the Struggle over Western Music* (Cary, US: Oxford University Press (US), 1989), 4, <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/alltitles/docDetail.action?docID=10086787>.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

established the teaching of a Chinese idiom within a Western framework.<sup>5</sup> This framework is exemplified in the teachings of Russian conservatory professor Alexander Tcherepnin which in Richard Kraus's book "Pianos and Politics in China" adequately summarizes:

He [Tcherepnin] urged his students to learn to use local color by writing with the indigenous pentatonic (five-tone) scale, and to adapt Western techniques for their own culture. Tcherepnin encouraged young Chinese musicians to listen to music of China's peasants, rather than go abroad to study in conservatories.<sup>6</sup>

Although many students did take the opportunity to study abroad during this time, this sentiment of keeping a Chinese element in music was fundamental in the development of the Chinese musical identity through this initial period and still can be found today.

When the PROC was established in 1949, the National Conservatory became the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, and various conservatories were established throughout China by the Central Government. These new schools were all molded after the Shanghai Conservatory's example and continued predominately focusing on Western musical instruments and teachings.<sup>7</sup>

As Western tradition began making a broader impact on China's society, a significant debate emerged between leading musical figures in the 1930's and 1940's. This debate centered around the rapid changes brought on by the West, and how to maintain China's musical tradition and history. The solution was identifying "national music" (*guoyue*) that would maintain China's musical tradition and history. The central questions tackled by this movement was how to preserve traditional Chinese instruments

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<sup>5</sup> Lau, *Music in China*, 35.

<sup>6</sup> Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China*, 5.

<sup>7</sup> Lau, *Music in China*, 35.

and techniques while at the same time embracing Western methods. Educators such as the Western-trained Liu Tianhua advocated for synthesis of Western techniques with Chinese instruments. As one of the most well-loved twentieth-century erhu performers and a teacher at Peking University in the 1920's, Liu Tianhua set out to write music that incorporated this ideology.<sup>8</sup> Following his example, other teachers at the conservatories in Shanghai and Beijing began incorporating elements such as Western harmony, form, and rhythm with traditional elements of Chinese music, melody, and color.

Two of the most prominent issues facing the progression of Chinese music was creating an ensemble that would compare with that of the Western symphony orchestra and the modernization of traditional Chinese instruments which had remained mostly unchanged in their traditional form. Several traditional ensembles had a prominent place in society before the twentieth century. Most notable of these was the Jiangnan Sizhu (Silk and Bamboo) ensemble. Located in the region south of the Yangtze River in central China, the Jiangnan Sizhu ensemble was made up of some of the most popular traditional Chinese instruments.<sup>9</sup> In the late 1920's, Zheng Zhiwen began expanding this small ensemble of usually no more than ten players to up to 35 players. Based on the example of the Western orchestra, he also experimented with separating the ensemble into four distinct groups.<sup>10</sup> This model did not attract much attention until the first traditional Chinese orchestra, the Central Broadcasting Station National Orchestra, was founded in 1935. Although still small in scale, this Western-inspired ensemble saw several periods of performing before it disbanded due to the second Sino-Japanese war. A newer version

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>9</sup> Han Kuo-Huang and Judith Gray, "The Modern Chinese Orchestra," *Asian Music* 11, no. 1 (1979): 9, <https://doi.org/10.2307/833965>.

<sup>10</sup> Lau, *Music in China*, 37.

was attempted again in 1942 as a national traditional orchestra and consisted of about 20 members.<sup>11</sup>

While Western influences continued to shape the musical landscape of China, traditional instruments also saw a period of evolution and modernization in the newly formed PROC during the 1950's and 1960's. This modernization helped put the new national traditional Chinese orchestra at the center of the *guoyue* movement. Lead by its example, the model set by the enlarged National Orchestra of the Central Broadcasting Station in Peking spread throughout China. The advancements made to traditional instruments during this time included the establishment of equal-temperament tuning, advancements in accurate intonation, and increased range. Because of the soft tone and quiet sounds of silk and gut strings used in traditional instruments, changing these to metal greatly allowed for improved power and dynamic capabilities.<sup>12</sup>

When the Communist Party of China (CPC) came to power in 1949, the acceptance and openness of Western music and traditions began to shift. Influences coming from abroad were limited save for those from the Soviet Union, and measures put in place by the Ministry of Culture affected the state of not just Western music in China, but all music in China. The musical isolation of China that commenced in 1949 was not sudden or drastic. To the contrary, orchestras became directly state-sponsored, their musicians government employees. One of the first of such orchestras so protected was the Shanghai Municipal Symphonic Orchestra, renamed the Shanghai People's Government

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<sup>11</sup> Kuo-Huang and Gray, "The Modern Chinese Orchestra," 15.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 18.

Orchestra.<sup>13</sup> China's initial aim was not to rid itself of Western musical culture but, instead, embrace it to help modernize China. The CPC set some simple rules regarding music. Music should reflect the spirit of the People's Revolution and should be accessible by workers, peasants, and soldiers.<sup>14</sup> While restricting, this did not rule out Western influences entirely, and Soviet musicians and teachers were still educating Chinese both in the mainland and abroad in conservatories in the Soviet Union.<sup>15</sup> At first, the restrictions were broad and flexible, but over the next 15 years these began to grow stricter and stricter, until 1966, which marked the beginning of the Cultural Revolution.

When the Cultural Revolution began, all aspects of culture and society were heavily regulated by strict policies. For ten years Western music was severely limited from being composed, performed, and recorded. A value system under the direction of Jiang Qing, Chairman Mao's wife, was established and set to reform music, specifically Peking Opera. Following these values, Chinese instruments were protected and advanced. Western instruments that were already part of Peking Opera, namely the violin, saw continued use during this time. Because many composers had been educated in Western techniques, a Western compositional style survived the revolution and even came to embody the revolutionary ideals set by Mao.<sup>16</sup> The year 1972 was unique in that Jiang invited the Philadelphia Orchestra to China, the only Western orchestra allowed to do so during the revolution. During this visit, Eugene Ormandy performed the now famous

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<sup>13</sup> Chen Chen, "The Development of the Western Orchestra in China" (Ball State University, 1997), 43, <http://search.proquest.com.pallas2.tcl.sc.edu/pqdtglobal/docview/304336759/abstract/AC0C1500138B49F9PQ/2>.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 60.

*Yellow River Piano Concerto*, alongside Beethoven's *Symphony No. 6*.<sup>17</sup> Thanks to Jiang and her efforts, Western music traditions survived much of the suppression during the Cultural Revolution. Following Mao's death in 1976, there was a significant relaxation of the strict rules keeping Western influences out of China. Western music bloomed in full force, and China began setting its sights on connecting with the rest of the world.

In 1978 the party rules on culture and the arts set new standards. Artistic creativity and freedom of the arts were encouraged. The core conservatories again opened and held auditions to fill their enrollment. A new generation of young Chinese composers, who during this time also studied abroad at famous conservatories in Europe and the United States, was introduced to the general public. Combining Chinese traditions and values with techniques learned from the world's leading institutions, these composers set the stage for the future of Chinese music. This generation of Chinese composers included Chen Yi, Zhou Long, Ye Xiaogang, Yang Yong, Chen Qigang, Tan Dun, and Shen Mingliang.<sup>18</sup> Their inspirations coming from deep within Chinese and Western culture to create a new synthesis of art.

Because of this synthesis of art, a new genre began to emerge as China modernized. This genre took elements from both the East and the West and saw compositions that embodied a contemporary style not seen in China before. As early as the 1930's compositions began appearing that combined Eastern and Western influences. Shanghai was a unique cultural melting pot for these types of works to emerge, largely in part to Shanghai's high percentage of foreigners pre-1949. Because of their positions

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 64.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 70.

within the community as artist and teachers, their influence had a significant impact on the musical landscape.

An early influencer during this time was Aaron Avshalomov (1894-1965) who lived in Shanghai from 1931 until 1947.<sup>19</sup> As a teacher, conductor, and composer Avshlomov held positions with the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra and was guest lecturer at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music.<sup>20</sup> His works, most notably the symphonic poem *Hutungs of Peking* and his opera *The Great Wall*, made a dynamic impact on the musical scene of the day. The works incorporated Eastern melodies, rhythms, and colors, with the techniques and sounds of the Western orchestra. Avshlomov also experimented with the combination of traditional Chinese instruments with Western orchestra in his *Three Pieces for Erhu and Orchestra*.<sup>21</sup> Premiered in 1941, this work demonstrates the emerging genre of “fusion concerto” that began gaining prominence during this early transition period in China’s modernization.<sup>22</sup>

The evidence of Western influence on the modernization of China’s musical landscape is also apparent in the most famous works coming out of China during this time. The *Yellow River Great Chorus* (1930, re-written for piano and orchestra in 1969) and the *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* (1959) for violin and orchestra are clear examples of this. Both works were hugely successful culturally and politically. They are

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<sup>19</sup> John Winzenburg, “Aaron Avshalomov and New Chinese Music in Shanghai, 1931–1947,” *Twentieth-Century China* 37, no. 1 (January 1, 2012): 54, <https://doi.org/10.1179/194050611X13188386908332>.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> John Winzenburg has researched the field of combining traditional instruments with Western orchestra. He uses the term “fusion” to show the combination of both Eastern and Western influences in a work.

national treasures in China and are based heavily on Chinese culture and folk music.<sup>23</sup> However, these pieces also played a significant role in the development of modern Chinese music due to their incorporation of Western compositional techniques. While the influence of the West is apparent in these early examples, the political developments from 1949 until 1978 saw few works that displayed both Chinese and Western “fusions.” It was not until the political liberalization following the Cultural Revolution that there is a higher emergence of “fusion concertos” into the greater repertoire. To date, there have been nearly 400 such concertos written, the bulk of which was written in the latter part of the 1980’s.<sup>24</sup>

## 1.2 REVIEW OF RELATED MATERIAL

The development of music in China in the twentieth century is a central topic for musicological research, and accordingly, there has been extensive research on the subject. For this review, the research is divided into three sections: significant publications detailing the modernization of music in China during the twentieth century, historical and relevant research on the selected Chinese composers and the Chinese instruments used in their works, and research on the emerging genre of “fusion concertos.”

The development of music in China since 1911 has been rigorously researched, and the following selection of books represents a small sample of the more extensive knowledge base available yet provide adequate background for this research. Frederick Lau’s book *Music in China*<sup>25</sup> provides a comprehensive overview of the different

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<sup>23</sup> Alan R. Thrasher et al., “China,” *Grove Music Online*, 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.43141>.

<sup>24</sup> John Winzenburg, “Spanning the Timbral Divide: Insiders, Outsiders, and Novelty in Chinese-Western Fusion Concertos,” in *China and the West*, Music, Representation, and Reception (University of Michigan Press, 2017), 195, <http://www.jstor.org/pallas2.tcl.sc.edu/stable/j.ctt1qv5n9n.12>.

<sup>25</sup> Lau, *Music in China*.



traditional music found today in China and tracks its development as China modernized during the twentieth century. The political landscape during the twentieth century had a profound impact on the development of music, and there are a few notable works written on this subject. *Pianos and Politics in China: Middle-Class Ambitions and the Struggle over Western Music*<sup>26</sup> by Richard Curt Kraus gives a detailed historical accounting of how the people of China first were acquainted with Western music and how they reacted, and eventually accepted it. The book *Rhapsody in Red: How Western Classical Music Became Chinese*<sup>27</sup> by Sheila Melvin and Jindong Cai also discusses the developments of Western music in China and particularly gives details of famous works including *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* and *Yellow River Piano Concerto*.

The *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* and *Yellow River Piano Concerto* are two of the most famous works to come out of China in the twentieth century and have several scholarly writings that discuss them. The *Yellow River Piano Concerto* was the subject of a detailed dissertation by Shing-Lih Chen titled, “The ‘Yellow River Piano Concerto’: Politics, culture, and style” that includes a detailed biography of the composers as well as an analysis of the music.<sup>28</sup> The *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* also has been written on extensively and was the subject of two in-depth dissertations. “The Butterfly Lovers’ Violin Concerto by Zhanhao He and Gang Chen,” by Shan-Ken Chien gives a detailed

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<sup>26</sup> Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China*.

<sup>27</sup> Sheila Melvin and Jindong Cai, *Rhapsody in Red: How Western Classical Music Became Chinese* (Algora Publishing, 2004).

<sup>28</sup> Shing-Lih Chen, “The ‘Yellow River Piano Concerto’: Politics, Culture, and Style” (The University of British Columbia (Canada), 1996), <https://search-proquest-com.pallas2.tcl.sc.edu/docview/304361016/abstract/D731A80379EE4D7CPQ/2>.

analysis of the work and background of the composers.<sup>29</sup> Another in-depth dissertation written ten years prior by Yuli Jiang titled, “The Chinese Violin Concerto ‘The Butterfly Lovers’ by He Zhanhao (1933) and Chen Gang (1935) for Violin and Orchestra,” which also gives detailed background on the work and its composers.<sup>30</sup>

Composer Ma Shui-long, being one of Taiwan’s most famous composers, has received worldwide recognition. A sampling of the scholarly writing deals mostly with his works for piano and works written for Western orchestra. Although his *Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra* is one of his most famous works, it lacks scholarly writing outside of Taiwan. There is a comprehensive biography written on him by Luca Pisano titled *Remembering Ma Shui-long*.<sup>31</sup> There are two other notable publications written on the music of Ma Shui-long titled: *Yinyue duxingxia Ma Shuilong* by Chen Hanjin, and *The Sound of Formosa: papers and proceedings of conference on Ma Shui-long’s compositions* by Zeng Nengding. Both of which are written in Chinese and have no available English translation.

Being two of the most well-known composers from China that currently live in the United States, Bright Sheng and Tan Dun have made significant contributions to the symphonic repertoire. There have been many studies of their music with the most current biographies found on their websites. However, the works used in this research, Tan Dun’s

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<sup>29</sup> Shan-Ken Chien, “‘The Butterfly Lovers’” Violin Concerto by Zhanhao He and Gang Chen” (University of Kansas, 2014), <https://search-proquest-com.pallas2.tcl.sc.edu/docview/1564043927/abstract/37C761C56B7C48FCPQ/1>.

<sup>30</sup> Yuli Jiang, “The Chinese Violin Concerto ‘The Butterfly Lovers’ by He Zhanhao (1933) and Chen Gang (1935) for Violin and Orchestra” (The University of Texas at Austin, 2004), <http://search.proquest.com.pallas2.tcl.sc.edu/pqdtglobal/docview/305128408/abstract/F8CC565066104059PQ/1>.

<sup>31</sup> Luca Pisano, “Remembering Ma Shui-Long (1939-2015),” *ACMR (Association for Chinese Music Research) Newsletter*, Vol.21, n.2, accessed October 7, 2017, <https://www.academia.edu/19184282/>.

*Concerto for Pipa and String Orchestra* and Bright Sheng's *Song and Dance of Tears* have no in-depth studies to date.

There are several writings present on the hybridization or “fusion” of Eastern and Western music. “Fusion” is a more recently coined term by John Winzenburg. Scholarly writing on the cultural and compositional fusion of Eastern and Western elements include two collections of essays by theorists, musicologists, and ethnomusicologists. A 2004 book titled *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*<sup>32</sup> discusses the influences of Western music on the East and the East's influence on the West. The second, more recent collection of essays published in 2017 titled *China and the West: Music, Representation, and Reception*<sup>33</sup> discusses the hybridization of East and West and its impact on today's musical landscape.

Additional mention should be made on specific research in the “fusion concerto” genre. Scholar John Winzenburg has been researching this field since his 2004 DMA essay titled, “Fusion Concertos: An Emerging International Orchestral Repertoire.” He has continued his research in the field since and his work includes: “Spanning the Timbral Divide: Tradition, Multiplicity, and Novelty in Chinese-Western Fusion Concerto Instrumentation” (2017), “Heteroglossia and Traditional Vocal Genres in Chinese-Western Fusion Concertos” (2013), and “Navigating the Fragrant Musical Harbor: Cultural Identity and Fusion Orchestral Composition in ‘Postcolonial’ Hong Kong” (2013).

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<sup>32</sup> Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau, eds., *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music* (Wesleyan University Press, 2004).

<sup>33</sup> Michael Saffle and Hon-Lun Yang, eds., *China and the West: Music, Representation, and Reception* (University of Michigan Press, 2017).

### 1.3 NEED FOR THE STUDY

Due to the varied and separate evolutions of traditional Chinese instruments from that of Western instruments, the combination of Chinese traditional instruments with Western idioms and ensembles warrants an in-depth study into its developments. Even though fusion works that combine both elements still form a niche in the Western musical scene, in China they are a spotlight. Students from major conservatories studying traditional instruments continually learn and perform these works. The explosion of new compositions in this genre from a mere 26 before 1980 has now bloomed into nearly 400.<sup>34</sup> The unique qualities of these pieces, the relatively new attention to them on the Western stage, and their importance in today's classical repertoire makes them prime candidates for research. What started as a small body of works in China has become an international phenomenon. It is a genre that is being explored more and more in the current musical landscape, and there is a growing trend of composers, even those whose have no background with Chinese music, to include Chinese elements and instruments in their works. This document explores the background of this genre through select works that exemplify East/West fusions. This includes early works that showcase the blending of Eastern and Western compositional techniques and works that use Chinese traditional instruments as a solo, or solo ensemble with orchestra. Special attention is paid to the knowledge performers and conductors should be equipped with when taking on the challenge of a work that combines Chinese and Western elements.

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<sup>34</sup> Winzenburg, "Spanning the Timbral Divide," 195.

#### 1.4 DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The basis of this research is a comparative study of the early Chinese works *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* and *Yellow River Piano Concerto* with more recent works in the genre of “fusion concerto.” *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* and *Yellow River Piano Concerto* were analyzed regarding what makes them unique as cultural East/West fusions. These unique traits were then applied and compared to three later works in the emerging genre of “fusion concerto” to show the similarities and developments.

Chapter 1 of this research outlines the background and need for the study. Chapter 2 establishes an East/West framework based on the defining works *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* and *Yellow River Piano Concerto*. Chapter’s 3-5 explore three unique works for solo traditional instruments and Western orchestra. Each work utilizes a different traditional instrument or combination of instruments, and this research attempts to identify what makes each combination unique and how these works have developed as a genre. The first piece analyzed is Ma Shui-long’s *Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra* composed in 1981. Because of Taiwan’s shared history and traditions with China, this piece, inspired by the spirit of the Han Chinese, creates a starting point for comparison. Because it was written in 1981, it marks part of the earlier generation of “fusion concertos” and shares the most common traits with *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* and *Yellow River Piano Concerto*. The second and third pieces analyzed are Tan Dun’s *Concerto for Pipa and String Orchestra* composed in 1999 and Bright Sheng’s *Song and Dance of Tears* composed in 2003. Because both pieces represent major works from contemporary Chinese composers, their analysis gives insight into the

present-day attitudes towards “fusion concertos.” The concluding chapter discusses the researcher’s conclusions and recommendations for further study.

## CHAPTER 2

### COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF *BUTTERFLY LOVERS VIOLIN CONCERTO* (1959) AND *YELLOW RIVER PIANO CONCERTO* (1969)

#### 2.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Chinese violin concerto *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* and Chinese piano concerto *Yellow River Piano Concerto* occupy important, historical moments in the development of Western music in China. Written ten years apart, both works define and establish a precedent as nationalist works within the PROC. Their influences have rippled through works written in China ever since. Each work represents different political and cultural moments in China and takes important steps in blending China's folk heritage with imported Western musical techniques.

#### **Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto**

He Zhenhao and Chen Gang first started writing *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* while students at Shanghai Conservatory of Music in 1958. The board of the Communist Party overseeing the Shanghai Conservatory of Music decided to present a musical gift as the PROC reached its tenth birthday.<sup>35</sup> The theme of this gift was decided to be the story of *Liang Zhu*.<sup>36</sup> At the time He Zhenhao was a violin student and, along with fellow violin student Yu Lina were part of a group within the school called "The Nationalist Violin School" that sought out Chinese folk melodies to write them for Western

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<sup>35</sup> Chien, "The Butterfly Lovers'" Violin Concerto by Zhanhao He and Gang Chen," 8.

<sup>36</sup> *Liang Zhu* is a famous love story from eleventh-century China. This work is also known as "China's Romeo and Juliet" due to its similarities with the Shakespearean play.

instruments.<sup>37</sup> Using his experience with *Yueju*<sup>38</sup> theater and melodies from the opera based on the *Liang Zhu* story, He Zhanhao started finding ways to replicate the melodies and singing style of *Yueju* on the violin.<sup>39</sup> Beyond the singing styles, He Zhanhao was also an Erhu player, having toured with a *Yueju* group for five years,<sup>40</sup> and found ways to replicate the techniques Chinese traditional instrument erhu, pipa, and guzheng on the violin.<sup>41</sup> Since He was a violin student at the conservatory and not a composition student, Professor of Composition and President of Shanghai Conservatory Ding Shande assigned senior student Chen Gang to help.<sup>42</sup>

With He Zhanhao providing melodic material and Chen Gang writing much of the orchestration and counterpoint, the piece was completed and premiered in May of 1959 under the title, *Liang Shan Po and Zhu Ying Tai*.<sup>43</sup> In a 2013 interview with *Confucius Magazine*, Chen Gang recalled the premiere and rapid dissemination of *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*:

In 1959 when Yu Lina played the *Butterfly Lovers* in Lyceum Theatre, the radio broadcasted the concerto on the second day and it soon became quite popular in the whole country. The following year, Cao Peng, who was studying in the former Soviet Union, heard about the concerto and asked someone to send him the music score. He then directed the Soviet Union band to play it. In 1972, the American Boston Radio also played and introduced the *Butterfly Lovers* while titling it as “Romeo and Juliette of China.”

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<sup>37</sup> Jiang, “The Chinese Violin Concerto ‘The Butterfly Lovers’ by He Zhanhao (1933) and Chen Gang (1935) for Violin and Orchestra,” 17.

<sup>38</sup> Chinese style opera from the Shaoxing region.

<sup>39</sup> Melvin and Cai, *Rhapsody in Red*, 211.

<sup>40</sup> Jiang, “The Chinese Violin Concerto ‘The Butterfly Lovers’ by He Zhanhao (1933) and Chen Gang (1935) for Violin and Orchestra,” 19.

<sup>41</sup> Chien, “‘The Butterfly Lovers’” Violin Concerto by Zhanhao He and Gang Chen,” 11–14.

<sup>42</sup> Jiang, “The Chinese Violin Concerto ‘The Butterfly Lovers’ by He Zhanhao (1933) and Chen Gang (1935) for Violin and Orchestra,” 19.

<sup>43</sup> Melvin and Cai, *Rhapsody in Red*, 211.



When the *Butterfly Lovers* became known by the world, I was deeply touched by friends from the music community, in particular the Japanese violinist Takako Nishizaki. Indeed, she was the first to name the concerto as the *Butterfly Lovers* and I believe the naming is perfect.<sup>44</sup>

The premiere of the concerto was in fact so successful that, since the performers had not prepared an encore, they just played the whole piece again.<sup>45</sup> On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, the party-backed *People's Daily* wrote an article titled, "Our Own Symphonic Music" showing the support for the work by the Central Government.<sup>46</sup>

This support did not last long, and although the premiere was a tremendous success, the political climate of the time posed some issues for the work. It was subsequently banned during the Cultural Revolution because the *Liang Zhu* story centered around the imperial, bourgeoisie society of old China, and its central theme revolved around love, and not the ideals of the Cultural Revolution.<sup>47</sup> This censorship posed a problem for the Central Philharmonic during their tour throughout China in March 1964, for when the crowd began demanding to hear *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*, the orchestra could not perform it, nor tell the audience why.<sup>48</sup> Reemerging following the end of the Cultural Revolution, *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* has withstood the test of time as one of China's most famous works and is a standard work in the classical repertoire.

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<sup>44</sup> Cheng Ye, "Interview with Chen Gang: Butterfly Just Flies," *ConfuciusMag - Confucius Institute Magazine*, March 2013, <http://confuciusmag.com/chen-gang-interview>.

<sup>45</sup> Lina Yu, "The Butterfly Lovers Story" (Eastman School of Music, October 1, 2016), <https://youtu.be/PWvPnDeFbzM>.

<sup>46</sup> Melvin and Cai, *Rhapsody in Red*, 211.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 256.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

## Yellow River Piano Concerto

Although similar in many ways to *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* musically, the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* was created in a completely different political landscape. Composed during the tumultuous early years of the Cultural Revolution in 1969, *Yellow River Piano Concerto* is based on an earlier work under the name *Yellow River Great Chorus*. The *Yellow River Great Chorus*, more commonly known as the *Yellow River Cantata*, is an eight-movement work composed by Xian Xinghai (1905-1945) between the years 1938-1939.<sup>49</sup> The work symbolizes the spirit of the Chinese people who were, at the time, at war with Japan. Containing a strong populist message with folk songs and mass songs, songs meant to be sung by all people, *Yellow River Cantata* was written to inspire a call to arms against the Japanese invaders.<sup>50</sup> Thirty years later, because of its strong message and importance in the communist movement, combined with the lack of music that promoted the Cultural Revolution's ideals, Jiang Qing (Mao's wife) put together a team to re-write the *Yellow River Cantata* into a piano concerto.<sup>51</sup>

This team consisted of at least four people. Piano virtuoso Yin Chengzong lead the group with Shanghai Conservatory professor Liu Zhuang, Central Conservatory lecturer Chu Wanghua, and Sheng Lihong also contributing. Shi Shucheng and Xu Fei-Sheng possibly contributed to the work, but their exact contributions are not known.<sup>52</sup> Breaking down *Yellow River Cantata* from a massive work for orchestra and chorus, the composers reduced the work into four movements, re-writing much of the orchestration

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<sup>49</sup> Alan Charlton, "Xian Xinghai Yellow River Piano Concerto," *Music Teacher*, June 2012, 5.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

and adding a solo piano part. To write the work, the committee of composers secluded themselves in the caves of a former revolutionary base on the Yellow River and sought out peasants and folk musicians in the Shaanxi region, specifically the bamboo flute, to enrich their work.<sup>53</sup> Outside of its populist message and content, the music itself is heavily influenced by Western style, especially late nineteenth-century romanticism.<sup>54</sup>

The work was hugely successful, and, due to it being one of the eight of Jiang's "model works," the concerto was performed consistently throughout the Cultural Revolution.<sup>55</sup> The "model works" were works approved for performance by the CCP and were cited as examples of appropriate music for the people to be emulated. Notably, when the Philadelphia Orchestra was invited by Jiang to perform in China in 1972, *Yellow River Piano Concerto* was a required part of the program. Although receiving mixed reviews from some Western critics, the work's primary purpose was to be a piece for the people of China.<sup>56</sup> There were many benefits to this. The piece was an acceptable gateway to Western music by the Chinese population at a time in China's history where all Western music was banned. It also served as a saving grace for the piano as an instrument in China which had few approved works that could be learned and played by students.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Chen, "The 'Yellow River Piano Concerto,'" 24.

<sup>54</sup> Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China*, 148.

<sup>55</sup> Chen, "The 'Yellow River Piano Concerto,'" 24.

<sup>56</sup> Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China*, 152.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 149.

## 2.2 EXAMINATION OF EASTERN AND WESTERN CHARACTERISTICS IN *BUTTERFLY LOVERS VIOLIN CONCERTO* FOR VIOLIN AND ORCHESTRA

The combination of Eastern and Western techniques in *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* is extensive. Some of the most central contributions from Chinese music include emulating Chinese instruments on the solo violin and in various sections of the orchestra, the melodic content of the concerto, and the use of the Chinese “five-note scale” also referred to as the pentatonic scale. The highly programmatic nature of the work based heavily on the story of *Liang Zhu* also lends many Chinese storytelling elements. The Western characteristics of this work stem mainly from its standard Western orchestra instrumentation and orchestration methods, as well as its form.

### **Programmatic Elements and Form**

The programmatic elements of *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* are broken into three distinct sections within a larger one-movement sonata form. Each sub-section has a smaller ternary design (ABA) that also follows the elements of sonata form.<sup>58</sup> The first section “Romance” tells the story of Zhu, the main protagonist as portrayed by the solo violin, and her blossoming love with Liang, often portrayed as a solo cello. In the story, Zhu runs away from home and against the cultural norms of eleventh-century China, enrolls in school disguised as a boy. At school, she meets Liang, where they become friends, and she develops a secret love for him.<sup>59</sup> This section lasts from mm. 1-290 and is the exposition of the main sonata form. The smaller form within the exposition also contains similar elements of an exposition, development, and recapitulation happening at

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<sup>58</sup> Xiaoming Lang, “He Zhanhao and Chen Gang:” *The Butterfly Lovers” Violin Concerto.* (The University of Arizona, 1992), 14, <http://hdl.handle.net/10150/185865>.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 11–12.

mm. 1-50, 52-243, and 244-290 respectively. The primary theme of the concerto is developed throughout the work and is first introduced by the solo violin after a brief introduction by the orchestra (Example 2.1).

Example 2.1 He Zhenhao and Chen Gang, Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto, Love Theme, mm. 12-13<sup>60</sup>



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The second section, “Defiance of the Arranged Marriage,” also in a ternary form (ABA), tells the tragic tale of Zhu’s separation from Liang as she is called back home to be married against her will. The feudal tradition of arranged marriages can be heard in the opening theme of the A section representing Zhu’s father (Example 2.2) and her despair as she is forced to leave school (Example 2.3). The downward movement of the orchestra portrays a stark contrast to Zhu’s optimistic, yet sad variation of the love theme.

Example 2.2 He Zhenhao and Chen Gang, Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto, Father’s Theme, mm. 296-297

Più mosso ♩ = 104

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<sup>60</sup> All excerpts are in concert pitch, unless otherwise noted.

Example 2.3 He Zhenhao and Chen Gang, Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto,  
Parting from School, mm. 245-247

(Adagio assai doloroso) ♩=44

Solo Violin

*p*

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After not hearing from Zhu for some time, Liang decides to take a visit to his friend's home discovering that Zhu is actually a girl and embraces their love. Upon discovering that Zhu has been betrothed to another, he becomes lovesick and dies.<sup>61</sup> A short coda-like section between mm. 647-659 reveals that, in despair over her lover's death, Zhu has thrown herself into his grave, sealing her fate with his. Example 2.4 combines the Father's theme with dramatic triplets emphasizing the driving forces behind her despair.

Example 2.4 He Zhenhao and Chen Gang, Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto,  
Zhu Throws Herself into Liang's Grave, mm. 647-649

*mf* < *sf* *ff*

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<sup>61</sup> Lang, "He Zhanhao and Chen Gang," 12.

The concluding section, “Transformation into Butterflies,” which begins at m. 660 and comprises the recapitulation of the overall sonata form, is in ternary form (ABA). There is a brief reprise that begins with solo flute and harp repeating the themes from the beginning.<sup>62</sup> The light orchestration of both the solo violin and the orchestra represent the transformation of both Zhu and Liang into butterflies, signifying their eternal love and life beyond death (Example 2.5).<sup>63</sup>

Example 2.5 He Zhenhao and Chen Gang, *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*  
Transformation into Butterflies, mm. 710-714

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### Melodic Content and the Emulation of Chinese Instruments within the Work

Chinese aesthetics in music predominately focus on melodic content over simple harmonic accompaniment. The role of the central melodies in *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* represents many of the East/West fusions between folk melody, pentatonic writing, and motivic development. The opening themes are critical to the construction of

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

the work, and even though they do not directly quote *Yueju* theatre, they are representative of its elements in both melody and style.

The replication of the singing style found in *Yueju* opera and Chinese instruments is carefully written in the solo violin part as well as certain parts of the orchestration. In *Yueju* the singer often produces glissandi and slides as part of the style. This can be wider intervals often represented by the standard “*gliss.*” notation or mark. More commonly, though, the singing style is represented by a prolonged slide of a minor second that leads to the final note of a phrase. This prolongation is notated by a curved arrow pointing up towards the intended destination pitch (Example 2.6).<sup>64</sup>

Example 2.6 He Zhenhao and Chen Gang, *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*,  
Minor Second Slide Up, mm. 336-337



*Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* by He Zhenhao and Chen Gang  
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The solo violin part also frequently replicates the playing style of the erhu.<sup>65</sup> To facilitate this, the composers of *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* used specific notation to represent varying slides and bends. There are three specific slides used that replicate Erhu playing technique. The *half-step back forward slide*, represented by a downward half circle; shifting up or down a minor third, represented by an upward or downward arrow; and the up/down shift of a minor third, represented by an upward arrow followed by a downward arrow. Example 2.7 demonstrates both a minor third slide up, and a *half-step*

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>65</sup> The Erhu is a 2-string instrument tuned to the D above middle C and the A above middle C. It is commonly found with a snake skin membrane wrapped around a wooden octagonal resonator.



*back forward slide*. Example 2.8 is an example of an up/down slide of a minor third, but only uses one upward arrow to show the slide, while the fingering indicates the slide down. Each shift is designed to elicit a specific emotion. These are utilized extensively to replicate the emotion of the *Liang Zhu* story.<sup>66</sup>

Example 2.7 He Zhenhao and Chen Gang, *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*,  
Minor Third Slide Up and *Half-step Back Forward Slide*, mm. 561-566



*Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* by He Zhenhao and Chen Gang  
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Example 2.8 He Zhenhao and Chen Gang, *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*,  
Shifting Up and Down a Minor Third, m. 448



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There are two other Chinese instruments emulated in *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*, the pipa, and guzheng. Both instruments are plucked, and the elements of their sound are used in the solo violin as well as with the orchestration. The guzheng is a 21-string instrument that can quickly play fast running passages as well as tremolos. An excellent example of how this is brought over to *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* is found in mm. 162-164 where the solo violin plays fast running notes followed by octave leaps (Example 2.9).

<sup>66</sup> Chien, “‘The Butterfly Lovers’” *Violin Concerto* by Zhanhao He and Gang Chen,” 12–13.

Example 2.9 He Zhenhao and Chen Gang, *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*,  
Emulation of the Guzheng in the Violin Solo, mm. 162-164



*Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* by He Zhenhao and Chen Gang  
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The pipa, like the guzheng, can play fast notes and rhythms, and a characteristic style of playing the pipa is with quickly syncopated rhythms and full chords strummed in an upward or downward motion. This technique is replicated in the solo violin part at mm. 346-348 (Example 2.10).<sup>67</sup> The fast syncopation and utilization of the lower, open strings of the violin recreate this sound to new and climatic heights.

Example 2.10 He Zhenhao and Chen Gang, *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*,  
Emulation of the Pipa in the Solo Violin, mm. 346-348



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## Harmonic Content

There are some unique ways that He and Chen blend Eastern and Western harmony in *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*. Unique is their utilization of the pentatonic scale and the way they adapt its use throughout the work. Thanks in large part to Debussy and Bartók in the twentieth century, the use of the pentatonic scale has full acceptance and use in Western art music.<sup>68</sup> In China, however, this collection of pitches has been in

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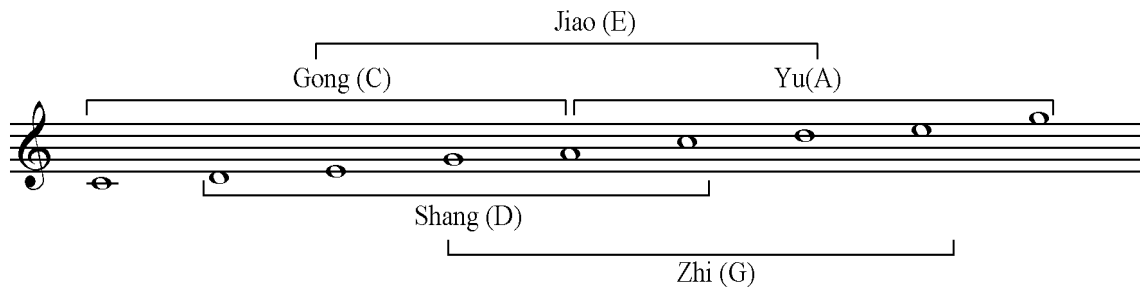
<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>68</sup> Jeremy Day-O'Connell, "Pentatonic," *Grove Music Online*, 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.21263>.

use as far back as the time of Confucius and the belief in the 12 fundamental pitches of the lunar months, from which the five-note scale is derived.<sup>69</sup>

Harmonic theory in China is broken into a set of modes, called *diao*, that are based on the fundamental five pitches “C D E G A” (In Chinese *gong*, *shang*, *jiao*, *zhi*, *yu*).<sup>70</sup> The scale can be transposed to any pitch, but because they are all relative to C-gong this pitch often serves as a key center or establishes certain modulations (Example 2.11).<sup>71</sup>

Example 2.11 The Five Primary *Diao* of Chinese Pentatonicism



The harmonic material in *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* is written in the mode of “D-Zhi” which begins on the scale tone of D. With a key signature of one sharp (F), D serves as the tonic and G the gong note. The reason D is the tonic and not G, as one would expect in conventional Western harmony, is that F-sharp in this context is utilized as a special note in the zhi mode of this scale called *bian-gong* or hypo-gong (Example 2.12). In tradition with that of Shanghai Opera, F-sharp in this context is used as a passing note

<sup>69</sup> David W. Hughes and Stephen Jones, “East Asia,” *Grove Music Online*, 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.08477>.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Lang, “He Zhanhao and Chen Gang,” 25.

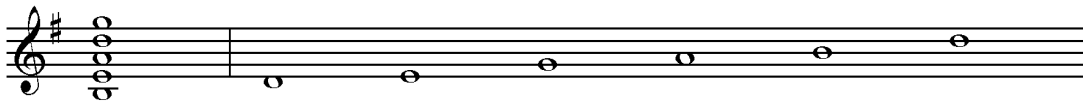
to E and the tonic, contrasting to common practice Western harmony, which would use F-sharp as a leading tone to G as the tonic.<sup>72</sup>

Example 2.12 D-zhi with *bian-gong*



Chords are built similarly to that of Western harmony, but instead of prevailing thirds as one would typically find, these thirds are replaced with either a corresponding major second or perfect fourth in relation to the current mode. These techniques create the open, circular character of Chinese music and avoid strong cadential pulls towards tonic.<sup>73</sup> These modes also allow for the use of quartal harmony since quartal harmony can be built using the notes of the pentatonic scale (Example 2.13).<sup>74</sup>

Example 2.13 Quartal Harmony and D-zhi



## Conclusions

Carefully written within a Western framework revolving around Western instruments and form, *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* composers He Zhanhao and Chen Gang carefully and craftily filled this Western framework with a world of Eastern elements. From the story of *Liang Zhu* and the emulation of Chinese instruments and

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 31.

singing technique, to the use and adaptation of pentatonic harmony and melody, these elements come together to create something exceptional. What *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* succeeds in doing is fusing these elements in such a way that neither is wholly representative of its origins but is instead a blending into something new. The success of this work in many ways parallels the integration of Western traditions in China, in line with what Mao believed, “Using the past to serve the present.”<sup>75</sup>

### 2.3 EXAMINATION OF EASTERN AND WESTERN CHARACTERISTICS IN *YELLOW RIVER PIANO CONCERTO* FOR PIANO AND ORCHESTRA

Enlisting Yin Chengzong as the lead composer for a new piano concerto based on Xian Xinghai’s *Yellow River Great Chorus* was a bold move in the early years of the Cultural Revolution. The piano at that time in China was considered a “bourgeois” Western instrument and most Western influences were prohibited. It was Jiang Qing’s affinity for the instrument and early lessons on it that made her want to create a new “model work” showing how the piano could be used for the benefit of China.<sup>76</sup>

Similar to *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*, *Yellow River Piano Concerto* is written with Chinese melodies and inspirations within the context of a Western orchestra and solo instrument. However, unlike *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*, the work has an obvious political context and anti-Western sentiment built into many aspects of the work. Western ideals were purposefully avoided in many ways, even though when listening to the work it typifies late nineteenth-century romanticism. Chinese characteristics are at the center of this work. This includes major programmatic elements taken directly from

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<sup>75</sup> Chen, “The ‘Yellow River Piano Concerto,’” 26.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

Xian's *Yellow River Great Chorus* with the addition of new political propaganda slogans that were inserted into each movement of the concerto. The use of Chinese melodies and songs are present from the beginning and include the use folk songs and instruments from the North Shannxi region, the same region as the Yellow River. The work also uses Eastern instruments directly and emulates their sounds throughout.<sup>77</sup>

Western elements are most clearly seen in the orchestration, the loose adherence to forms found in the West, and the harmony. Many of these elements were carefully written to avoid following Western traditions too closely. The strongest Western characteristics are found in the writing of the piano part, which could stem mainly from Yin Chenzhong's time studying piano in Russia.<sup>78</sup>

### **Programmatic elements, politics, and form**

When Xian Xinghai wrote the *Yellow River Great Chorus* it was done with a small group of traditional Chinese instruments and chorus. The work symbolizes the spirit of the Chinese people and incorporates the populist message and revolutionary themes of Mao's "Peoples Revolution," as well as anti-Japanese sentiment.<sup>79</sup> These themes form the core of the music for *Yellow River Piano Concerto*.

Jiang's instructions for the writing of the piano concerto were simple, "Remove the lyrics; keep the music."<sup>80</sup> Through this, the committee of composers took the eight movements of the cantata and reduced it down to four, incorporating some of the programmatic elements from the cantata and modifying the titles to incorporate

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<sup>77</sup> Charlton, "Xian Xinghai Yellow River Piano Concerto," 11.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 3–4.

<sup>80</sup> Chen, "The 'Yellow River Piano Concerto,'" 23.

propagandist sub-titles. Even though a Western concerto typically only consists of three movements, *Yellow River Piano Concerto* intentionally includes a fourth movement to avoid following this tradition too closely.<sup>81</sup>

The first movement is titled “Prelude: Yellow River Boatmen’s song.” Unlike the beautiful and calm depictions of rivers in music like that of Smetana’s *Ma Vlast* or Wagner’s *Prelude to Das Rheingold*, the Yellow River represents the tumultuous power and harsh living conditions of those near the water. Take for example the following lines from the cantata, “Do you remember the scene of the boatmen struggling for their lives, fighting against the frightful, raging waves?”<sup>82</sup> Indeed the depictions of the Yellow River throughout this movement are that of harsh living conditions and life during the Sino-Japanese war and the perseverance of the Chinese spirit. The subtitles of this movement that were added by the committee composers are political and serve the Cultural Revolution purposes. Some subtitles in the first movement include: “decisive and optimistic spirit,” “soldiers seeing the dawn of victory” and “a brave spirit, and the will to continue fighting.”<sup>83</sup>

The form of the first movement loosely resembles a rondo form. Table 2.1 represents Alan Charlton’s analysis of the music in his overview of the work in the June 2012 issue of *Music Teacher*. Because the composers did not want anything too similar to Western forms, there are some noticeable differences from a traditional rondo form (ABACABA). First, the initial A and B themes are repeated. This could be borrowed from Western forms in that the theme is first introduced in double exposition fashion,

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<sup>81</sup> Charlton, “Xian Xinghai Yellow River Piano Concerto,” 6.

<sup>82</sup> Chen, “The ‘Yellow River Piano Concerto,’” 35.

<sup>83</sup> Chen-Zhong Yin et al., *Yellow River Piano Concerto* (Beijing: People’s Music Press, 1972).

Table 2.1 Form of Mvt. I,  
Yellow River Piano Concerto<sup>84</sup>

<i>bar nos.</i>	<i>section</i>	<i>Key</i>	<i>bar nos.</i>	<i>section</i>	<i>Key</i>	<i>bar nos.</i>	<i>section</i>	<i>Key</i>
1-16	A	D maj	39-50	B1	D maj	84-92	B2	D maj
17-24	B	D maj	51-74	C	B min-C maj	93-103	D	D maj
25-38	A1	D maj	75-83	A2	Modulates	104	A3	D maj

but in the case of *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, the most significant difference is in the orchestration. Unlike a typical double exposition form, the first A and B section contains several cadenza-like interludes that bisect the themes. It is not until m. 25 that uninterrupted statements of the A theme are heard in the piano and orchestra. The A theme is more motivic, and it is the B theme “Boatmen’s Song” that presents the programmatic ideas of the first movement (Example 2.14). After the repeat of the A and B section, a small transition shifts the harmony to B-minor. This new C theme shares some common characteristics with the first two themes, most notably, the rhythm which proceeds in a palindrome-like figure and the call and response interjections between the piano and the orchestra (Example 2.15). At m. 75 there is a short restatement of the A theme followed by a cadenza-like passage that leads into m. 84. Here is what can be considered a D theme, even though it closely resembles the B theme, augmented and played at a slower tempo. Example 2.16 shows this augmented D theme in the flutes and oboes, which is then picked up by the solo piano. The concluding section quickly restates the A theme with melodic flourishes in the piano that end the movement with a final fortissimo chord in D-major.

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<sup>84</sup> Charlton, “Xian Xinghai Yellow River Piano Concerto,” 6.



Example 2.14 Xian Xinghai, Yellow River Piano Concerto,  
Mvt. I, Theme B, Yellow River Boatmen's Song, mm. 17-20

(Solo Piano)

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Example 2.15 Xian Xinghai, Yellow River Piano Concerto,  
Mvt. I, Theme C with Call and Response, mm. 51-58

$\text{♩} = 138$   
(Solo Piano) (Orchestra)

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Example 2.16 Xian Xinghai, Yellow River Piano Concerto,  
Mvt. I, Theme D Melody, mm. 84-87

$\text{♩} = 56$   
(Flute, Oboe)

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The second movement is titled “Yellow River Ode,” and the original introduction in the cantata gives a glimpse of the musical imagery found in this section:

“Ah! Friends! The Yellow River, appearing with heroic vigour in Asia, represents out national spirit: great, resolute, and strong. Here we face the Yellow River and sing our homage to the Yellow River.”<sup>85</sup>

The homage to national identity and the will of the Chinese people is clear, but the subtitles added by the committee composers also inserts elements of ancient China. “Go back in your mind and remember your nation’s long, ancient history.”<sup>86</sup> This slow movement is an open, rhapsodic-like song with different themes in each section. Table 2.2 below continues Alan Charlton’s analysis of the second movement.

Table 2.2 Form of Mvt. II.  
Yellow River Piano Concerto<sup>87</sup>

<i>bar nos.</i>	<i>section</i>	<i>Key</i>	<i>bar nos.</i>	<i>section</i>	<i>Key</i>
1-35	A	B-flat maj.	55-59	D	G min.
36-49	B	B-flat maj.	60-66	E	B-flat maj.
50-54	C	B-flat maj.	67-73	Coda	B-flat maj.

The opening theme is a soft and serene melody played by the cello section and is followed by the solo piano at m. 17. The phrase structure of these melodies is uncommon in that they vary in length and switch asymmetrically between duple and triple time. When the B theme picks up at m. 36, the material is similar to A; but, as the second movement progresses, the accentuations in the piano intensify, and the tempo picks up pace. From mm. 50-66 there are three new short themes that increase in intensity. The E

<sup>85</sup> Chen, “The ‘Yellow River Piano Concerto,’” 50.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>87</sup> Charlton, “Xian Xinghai Yellow River Piano Concerto,” 7.

theme from mm. 60-66 is a quotation from Nie Er's, "March of the Volunteers" which has been China's national anthem since 1949. There was a brief period during the Cultural Revolution where the national anthem unofficially became "The East is Red," but "March of the Volunteers" regained favor after the Cultural Revolution (Example 2.17a).<sup>88</sup> The quotation comes from mm. 22-23 of "March of the Volunteers" and does not take place in the piano part which is playing block chords. Instead, the quotation is echoed twice by the horns and first trumpet in melodic sequence (Example 2.17b). The concluding section is a simple coda that uses a descending pentatonic scale that diminishes from fortissimo to piano, ending the second movement.

Example 2.17a Nie Er, March of the Volunteers

The musical score for Example 2.17a is presented in four staves of music. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 2/4. The first staff contains measures 1 through 9. The second staff, starting at measure 10, continues the melody. The third staff, starting at measure 20, includes a triplet of eighth notes in measure 25. The fourth staff, starting at measure 26, concludes the excerpt with a triplet of eighth notes in measure 29. The piece ends with a double bar line at the end of measure 31.

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

Example 2.17b, Xian Xinghai, *Yellow River Piano Concerto*,  
Mvt. II, Reduction of Horn and Trumpet Section, mm. 61-64

(Hns, Tpt. 1)



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The third movement of *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, “Wrath of the Yellow River” is a combination of two movements from the cantata: “Yellow River Ballad” and “Yellow River Hatred.” It is in a ternary form (ABA) with the B section containing several of the themes from the cantata. The table below represents Charlton’s form analysis of the third movement (Table 2.3).<sup>89</sup> This section also carries with it another political subtitle, “the revolutionaries’ military base [in Yan’an] is bathed in sunlight and the people are full of hope.”<sup>90</sup>

Table 2.3 Form of Mvt. III  
*Yellow River Piano Concerto*<sup>91</sup>

<i>bar nos.</i>	<i>section</i>	<i>Key</i>	<i>bar nos.</i>	<i>section</i>	<i>Key</i>	<i>bar nos.</i>	<i>section</i>	<i>Key</i>
(1)	Intro	E-flat maj.	73-81	bridge	E-flat maj. – modulates	106-134	E	B-flat min-D-flat maj. B-flat min
2-53	A	E-flat maj.	82-88	C	B maj.	135-156	A	E-flat maj.
54-72	B	C min-E-flat maj.	89-105	D	D-flat maj.			

Because this movement is the combination of two movements from the cantata, there are several themes inserted between the opening and closing A theme. One probable

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>90</sup> Chen, “The ‘Yellow River Piano Concerto,’” 59.

<sup>91</sup> Charlton, “Xian Xinghai *Yellow River Piano Concerto*,” 8.

reason for this constant shifting of themes within the work is the composers desire to elicit emotional responses from the listeners by including important themes from the cantata.<sup>92</sup> A short *bangdi*<sup>93</sup> solo opens the introduction with a meandering pentatonic melody that transitions into a free cadenza-like section until the first A theme is played by the piano. This improvisatory section is free and flows similarly to the opening *bangdi* solo. Suddenly, at m. 54, a glimpse of the rage of the Yellow River is sounded with a drastic shift to C-minor. This dramatic minor key only last for a short while and functions as a bridge connecting m. 73 to a new theme in B-major at m. 82. The following sections, D and E, present two new themes before repeating A in the full orchestra. A small codetta from m. 149 restates the home key of E-flat major and signals the end of the third movement.

The fourth and final movement of this concerto is titled “Defense of the Yellow River.” The composers kept the same spirit of Xian’s original cannon in the opening and turned it into a theme and variation form. The political message of the subtitle reads, “Chairman Mao summons the people to fight.” Following a short introduction the orchestra teases “The East is Red,” a famous tune from the 1965 song and dance epic under the same name. Considered Mao’s anthem, this short excerpt paves the way for a full statement of “The East is Red” at the end of the movement.<sup>94</sup> The following A theme at m. 19 (Example 2.18) is repeated a total of eight times. Each time a new technique is used in the piano and orchestra to reinforce the theme.

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<sup>92</sup> Chen, “The ‘Yellow River Piano Concerto,’” 59.

<sup>93</sup> The *bangdi* is a Chinese flute made of bamboo that has a hole where a membrane can vibrate creating its distinct high nasal sound. When not available it is often replaced with the piccolo.

<sup>94</sup> Chen, “The ‘Yellow River Piano Concerto,’” 74.

Example 2.18 Xian Xinghai, Yellow River Piano Concerto,  
Mvt. IV, Theme A, mm. 19-30

$\text{♩} = 184$   
(Solo Piano)

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After all eight variations, “The East is Red” (Example 2.19) is stated in its entirety from mm. 303-326. At m. 361 a short excerpt from “The Internationale,” representing socialism, is quoted in the first horn. Although both songs were not part of Xian’s original cantata, Jiang insisted they be included in the work as a requirement for it to be approved for performance. The committee of composers used these two tunes to close out the work in an extended coda-like section to meet her request and glorify Mao. In the added subtitle at the climax of the work, “Long live Chairman Mao!”<sup>95</sup> exemplifies this glorification while the lyrics of “The East is Red” compare Mao to the Sun.<sup>96</sup> There have

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>96</sup> Charlton, “Xian Xinghai Yellow River Piano Concerto,” 10.

been some attempts to re-write this work following the Cultural Revolution by removing the political subtitles all together and re-write sections that overly emphasize Mao.<sup>97</sup>

Example 2.19 “The East is Red”



### Traditional Chinese Elements Found in *Yellow River Piano Concerto*

Much like the important use of melodic content in relation to Chinese influence found in *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*, *Yellow River Piano Concerto* exemplifies the same approach. Many of the melodies found in *Yellow River Piano Concerto* have a strong connection to the North Shaanxi region where the Yellow River is found. There are many uses of Chinese folk music throughout the work including melodic pentatonicism, work songs, quotations of mass songs, and replications of folk song and instruments like the pipa and guzheng.

“The Boatman’s Theme” in the initial ideas of the first movement is an example of work song chanting found on the Yellow River (see Example 2.14). The Boatman’s call is first heard in the solo piano, and a resounding response comes from the orchestra. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, this style of writing is also found in the C theme of the first movement (see Example 2.15).

The melodic content of the concerto is almost exclusively pentatonic. Used similarly as in *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*, the D-gong mode (D E F-sharp A B) highlights F-sharp and its movement to D through an E passing tone. The movement of a

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<sup>97</sup> Chen, “The ‘Yellow River Piano Concerto,’” 79.

whole step from F-sharp to E also reverberates throughout the work from the very beginning and represents the singing and wailing of the workers and peasants along the banks of the Yellow River (Example 2.20).<sup>98</sup>

Example 2.20 Xian Xinghai, Yellow River Piano Concerto, Mvt. I, mm. 1-5

The musical score shows the first five measures of the piano introduction. The right hand begins with a glissando (marked 'gliss.') and then plays a melodic line with a prominent whole-step interval from F# to E, which is bracketed and slurred. The left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment with chords and single notes. Dynamics range from piano (p) to fortissimo (ff). The tempo is marked as quarter note = 152.

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Mass songs were a central part of Mao's ideology, and Xian was one of the most prolific mass songwriters with over 600 to his name.<sup>99</sup> This influence of populist song is found throughout the concerto. Some of the best examples of this are "The East is Red" and "Internationale" which are both found in the fourth movement (see example 2.18). Other folk song inspirations find their way into the music, though most are less noticeable. A good example of this is the second theme of the third movement (Example

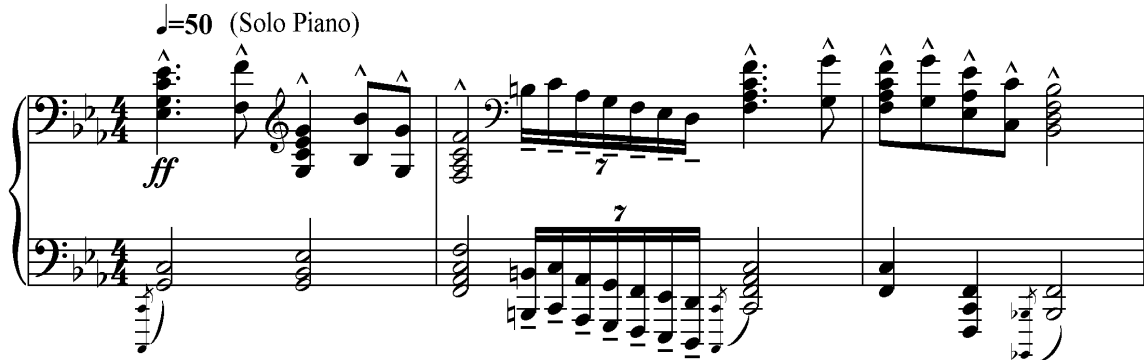
<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>99</sup> Charlton, "Xian Xinghai Yellow River Piano Concerto," 3.



2.21). Taken directly from the cantata version, this theme is a lament that expresses grief and sadness. Xian was quoted telling his composition students, “In the tune of the second theme, one can hear the same spirit of lament as is heard in such folk songs as ‘Meng Jiang Nu.’” (Example 2.22).<sup>100</sup>

Example 2.21 Xian Xinghai, Yellow River Piano Concerto, Mvt. III, mm. 55-57



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Example 2.22 “Meng Jiang Nu”



The same theme is repeated at m. 66, but this time it is varied with fast, light repetitive notes. This passage (Example 2.23) also replicates the playing style of the pipa.

<sup>100</sup> Chen, “The ‘Yellow River Piano Concerto,’” 66–67.

Example 2.23 Xian Xinghai, Yellow River Piano Concerto, Mvt. III, mm. 64-69

$\text{♩}=56$  (Solo Piano)

The musical score consists of two systems of piano notation. The first system (measures 64-69) features a right-hand part with a rapid, plucked melody and a left-hand part with a supporting bass line. The dynamic is marked *p*. The second system (measures 70-75) shows a more complex texture with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

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Notes plucked rapidly in succession are easy to achieve on the pipa due to the dexterity of the hand while plucking the strings vertically. However, this is much harder to replicate on the piano. To recreate the same tone on the piano requires the tempo to be slowed considerably, which produces the lethargic, grieving tone found in Example 2.23 and is similar in spirit to Meng Jiang Nu.

The guzheng, or Chinese zither, is also replicated in the opening moments of the third movement. The guzheng is a horizontal instrument with as many as 21 strings that are plucked. Its characteristic sound comes from its ability to play fast, sweeping movements and fast repeated notes followed by upward or downward movements of the hand. Example 2.24 shows how both techniques are replicated in the solo piano. The opening passages of the third movement demonstrate how the octaves in the left and right

hand are bisected by upward and downward sweeping motions.<sup>101</sup> The color of the guzheng also shines through in Example 2.24 by combining the unison texture of the melody with the periodic open fifths and octaves in the left hand.

Example 2.24 Xian Xinghai, *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, Mvt. III, mm. 2-15

(Solo Piano)  $\text{♩} = 88$

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## Western Harmony and Orchestration

Unlike *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* which uses a pentatonic language created by He Zhenhao and Chen Gang, *Yellow River Piano Concerto's* harmony is deeply rooted in Western theory and the pianistic influences of Chopin, Rachmaninoff, and Liszt. Even though the melodic content is dominated by pentatonic writing, triadic accompaniment is common throughout. It is easy to find examples of Western harmony,

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 62.

a few include: chromatic passing tones (mvt. I, mm. 75-81), dominant seventh chords (mvt. III, m. 22), enharmonic modulation (mvt. III, mm. 76-77), and quartal harmony (mvt. III, introduction).<sup>102</sup> The orchestration overall is light and open, primarily to accompany and support the piano with the characteristic openness of Chinese music. The music is orchestrated for a standard size Romantic era orchestra with the addition of the bangdi used in the opening of the third movement. There are many extended techniques used that are also common in Western orchestral music including: harp glissandi (opening), muted trumpets and trombones (mvt. III, m. 55), pizzicato (mvt. III m. 64), and double stops (mvt. IV, mm. 15-18).<sup>103</sup> The piano writing, being the most salient Western feature of the work, is rich in nineteenth-century romantic piano techniques. There are a wide range of techniques used that showcase the ability of the performer and include numerous virtuosic techniques: rapid arpeggios (mvt. I, m. 16), alternating octaves (mvt. I, m. 81), duple vs. triple time in each hand (mvt. II, m. 50), hand crossing (mvt. III, m. 36), and contrary motion scales (mvt. III, mm. 133-134).<sup>104</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Many factors went into the creation of this work. The political climate, the source material of Xian's earlier cantata version, the desire to show the potential of the piano to the Chinese populace, and the preservation of Chinese tradition within a Western framework all were contributing factors in this work's creation. In these ways, *Yellow River Piano Concerto* succeeds and parallels *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*. Both were heavily programmatic and based on previous source material, be it literature or another

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<sup>102</sup> Charlton, "Xian Xinghai Yellow River Piano Concerto," 12.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 14.

musical work. Both found unique ways to include Chinese melody and tradition within the scope of a Western orchestra. Both were received with remarkable success at the time of their premiers.

How they differ is an interesting point of comparison. Each work reconciles itself with Western harmony in different ways. *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* created a harmonic language using pentatonic harmony, while *Yellow River Piano Concerto* focused on triadic harmony. The quotation of folk song was also done differently. He and Chen used the inspiration of *Yueju* theatre to create and develop original melodies throughout the work, while the committee composers directly quoted folk songs. Also, the use of the solo instruments is different. The violin solo in *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* often tries to recreate different Chinese instruments; and, while there are small examples of this in the third movement of *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, the majority of the piano solo is idiomatic to nineteenth-century romanticism. Lastly, when He Zhenhao and Chen Gang started working together, their goal was to show how Western instruments and forms could elevate the story and emotion of Chinese literature, while the joint authorship of *Yellow River Piano Concerto* was a direct rebuttal of the individual and tried in many ways to avoid Western influence and encourage the spirit of Mao's Revolution.

Each work took its own path in realizing the fusion between Eastern and Western elements. It is these techniques and ideas that formed the foundation for the many composers that followed; and, through the next chapters of this research, I will demonstrate how the selected composers have taken these early examples and continued to build on them.

## CHAPTER 3

### MA SHUI-LONG – *CONCERTO FOR BAMBOO FLUTE AND ORCHESTRA* (1981)

#### 3.1 MA SHUI-LONG – AN OVERVIEW BIOGRAPHY

Born in Keelung, Taiwan in 1939, Ma Shui-long was exposed to both Western and Eastern music from an early age. He took piano lessons as early as elementary school and later took lessons on the cello. In high school, he was fond of both music and art, considering both as potential careers. Choosing music, he majored in composition at the National School of Arts from 1959 to 1964. In 1972, he won a scholarship to study in the Kirchenmusik Hochschule in Regensburg, Germany, where he studied composition with Oskar Sigmund.<sup>105</sup> In 1986, Professor Ma was awarded a Fulbright to study in the US where he became the first Taiwanese composer to have his music performed at Lincoln Center in New York, being praised by both Eastern and Western music critics.<sup>106</sup> He taught at many universities throughout Taiwan and was a fierce advocate for music education. Professor Ma believed that music education should not only focus on Western music, but also Taiwan's musical culture.<sup>107</sup> Composing almost 100 works over 40 years, Ma Shui-long wrote for orchestra, chamber, instrumental music and choral works.<sup>108</sup> His

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<sup>105</sup> Pisano, "Remembering Ma Shui-Long (1939-2015)," 4.

<sup>106</sup> *2012 NTU Honorary Doctorate - Sui-Long Ma*, accessed December 21, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6cCkFkmUU3U&feature=youtu.be>.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Pisano, "Remembering Ma Shui-Long (1939-2015)," 4.

musical inspiration came notably from his early years in Keelung where he was fond of the sounds of the natural environment. This included traditional Chinese music and folk songs.<sup>109</sup> In May of 2015, Ma Shui-long passed away due to illness.

### 3.2 DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BAMBOO FLUTE

With a long and ancient history, flutes in China come in many variations. Most bamboo flutes, or *dizi*, are played vertically or horizontally and have remained mostly unchanged for thousands of years. Small in size with a clear, prominent sound the *dizi* has been a part of traditional Chinese music ranging from solo and court instrument to traditional Chinese orchestra. Classified by their size and length, the *dizi* can be put into four groups: *xiaodi*, *bangdi*, *qudi*, and *dadi*.<sup>110</sup> The *bangdi*, prevalent in Northern China and commonly associated with local opera, is the type of Chinese flute used in Ma Shui-long's *Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra*.

The *bangdi* has a bright, loud, and rustic sound. This is a result of its size and construction. The *bangdi* is composed of several parts. The tube is made of purple bamboo, or arrow bamboo, and is closed on one end by a cork. There are ten holes drilled into the upper side of the flute: a blow-hole, a membrane hole, six finger-holes, and two end-holes that establish the air column length of the tube. There can be additional holes added to the end of the flute for decorative purposes, and the flute is sometimes adorned with various ornaments including silk thread, tassels, and bones. The most characteristic sound of the flute is its “buzz” created by a membrane placed over the membrane hole adjacent to the blow-hole. This membrane is typically made of a thin piece of bamboo

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<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>110</sup> Qiang Xi, *Chinese Music and Musical Instruments* (Shanghai Press and Publishing Development Company, 2011), 16.

skin that is attached to the flute with a sticky substance like peach sap. Typically, a bangdi is pitched in D with a range of about two-and-a-half octaves. It is also very common to see bangdi pitched in C and E.<sup>111</sup> The playing style of the bangdi is lively and animated. Flutter-tongue and repeated rhythms are standard performance practice and are often improvised by the performer.

### 3.3 EXAMINATION OF EASTERN AND WESTERN CHARACTERISTICS IN *CONCERTO FOR BAMBOO FLUTE AND ORCHESTRA*

#### **Background and Programmatic Elements**

Ma's *Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra* was composed in 1981 as a commission by the Broadcasting Corporation of China. It was premiered in the same year by the Taipei Century Symphony Orchestra, at the Taiwan National Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall.<sup>112</sup> The work seamlessly blends Eastern and Western characteristics cited by New York Times critic Bernard Holland saying,

Mr. Ma's collection of pieces balanced the largely conventional use of Western instruments with the pure intervallic skips and pentatonic melody from his own culture, and it did so without descending into the usual cloying chinoiserie, which is actually very difficult to achieve.<sup>113</sup>

The work has been transcribed for different instrumental soloists including the Chinese recorder and the Western piccolo.

The piece is a continuous two-movement work. The introductory text describes the piece in this way, "The first movement begins with a solemn prelude for wind and

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<sup>111</sup> Alan R. Thrasher, "Di," *Grove Music Online*, 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.45368>.

<sup>112</sup> Shui-Long Ma, *Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra* (Chew's Culture Foundation, 2010), Introduction.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, Composer Biography.



string instruments, introducing the first theme which expresses the fortitude of the Han Chinese Spirit.” It continues, “The second theme...is lively and cheerful, expressing the naivety and rusticity of the vigorous, optimistic folk people.”<sup>114</sup> It is this atmosphere that prevails for the entirety of the first movement, with the clear, lively sound of the bangdi ringing over the orchestra. The second movement takes a more serious turn in what is described as an “elegant *Adagio*” where snippets of the main theme are first heard in the low strings creating a distant echo effect. This sound quality continues to grow increasingly more present throughout the movement until finally a recapitulation of the first movement is reached. Like *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*, the work possesses many elements that fuse West and East. The Eastern elements can be clearly heard in the melodic writing as well as the harmonic content, while the Western elements are mainly contributed from the overall form of the piece, the orchestration, and motivic development of the melody.

### **Form**

The form of this work can be broken down into a background analysis that encompasses the piece as a whole in ternary form (ABA) and a foreground analysis that loosely follows sonata form in the first movement with continuous writing in the second movement. The table below (Table 3.1) represents the sections and keys of the first movement. A discussion of the Chinese modes used in this piece occurs in the next section.

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid., Introduction.

Table 3.1 Form of Movement I- Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra

<i>Mvt. I</i>	<i>Exposition</i>			<i>Development</i>		<i>Recapitulation</i>	
Intro	A	A1	B	C	Cadenza	A2	Transition to Mvt. II
mm. 1-16	17-32	33-48	49-62	63-121	122-161	162-175	176-181
Key: F-major	D-shang	E-shang	D-shang	modulates	modulates	D-shang	D-shang

The table above shows the movement’s strong resemblances to sonata form. This stems from the work’s usage of melody and the key relations of the Chinese modes.

After a brief introduction, a bright and vibrant entrance of the bangdi introduces the first theme over a simple orchestral accompaniment. This melody is characterized by quick leaps of an octave and fast runs upward or downward. As stated in the introductory notes of the work, the exuberance of the Han spirit can be felt in this lively tune. The first theme has two parts; first, the introduction of the theme played on the bangdi, with the second a restatement of the theme from the orchestra. What follows is a short B section that introduces the ideas that transform throughout the development. This B section has a lyrical quality as the notes are played in a legato style with staccato sections interspersed and jumps between octaves are less frequent. Once the development begins at m. 63 there is a shift to call and response writing between the orchestra and the solo bangdi. The opening theme of the work can be heard in brief glimpses in both the solo and the orchestra throughout the development, gradually working through to a full climax that builds between mm. 103-121. This gradual crescendo uses the main theme in inversion to avoid inclinations towards recapitulation until finally arriving at an open fourth on D and G. This chordal openness allows the bangdi to continue forward into the cadenza. The cadenza opens with a few short ideas that start and stop. Like an idea that was

remembered, the main theme eventually emerges out of these attempts immersed in a show of technique and liveliness. The bangdi showcases its abilities highlighting fast repeated notes, rapid scalar passages, and quick jumps between upper and lower octaves creating two melodic lines simultaneously. A short re-transition at m. 159 ends the cadenza and begins a short recapitulation. This quasi-recapitulation is quickly cut off by another transition that climatically ends the first movement on an open fifth between D and A and segues *attacca* into the second movement.

The second movement is composed of three short sections that build slowly and unhurriedly. Each section slightly changes through the orchestration and intensity of the solo line that eventually leads to a repeat of the first movement. The table below (Table 3.2) shows the main sections of the second movement and finale.

Table 3.2 Form of Movement II and Finale - Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra

<i>Mvt. II</i>				<i>Finale</i>				<i>Coda</i>
Transition	A	B	C	Intro	A	A2	A3	Coda
176-181	182-213	214-225	226-240	241-245	246-261	262-277	278-300	300-309
Key: D-shang	D-shang/ E-shang	E-shang	D-shang	D-shang	D-shang	E-shang	D-shang	D-shang

The first section of the second movement starts with a slow dialogue between the cellos and bassoon. This sets a solemn mood that allows the bangdi to express a contrasting character from the first movement. As more strings fill in the texture, the bangdi repeats the bassoon's opening figures. The cellos slightly quicken the pace and add chromatic passing tones which further reinforce the solemn mood. As the rhythmic pace quickens, the solo takes up the slightly intensified movement and continues this same pattern into the second section. In the B section, a more substantial string force begins playing

rhythmically active accompaniment. This continues to build until reaching a false climax at m. 224 that diminishes quickly. Here the cellos softly recall the main theme of the first movement. This begins the third and concluding section of the second movement, gaining increased momentum and reaching a fortissimo that signals the beginning of the finale and repeat of the first movement.

The finale is a direct recapitulation of the first half of the first movement, including the introduction, which now has modulated into the home mode of D-shang. The introduction, A, and A1 section are all repeated as they were in the first movement. Here a third section (A3) is added that combines many of the cadenza's virtuosic elements into the melody. This added intensity continues with the full support of the orchestra until another open chord pauses the forward motion. In the coda that follows, the momentum again picks up with the Chinese drums *ban ku* and *tan ku*.<sup>115</sup> A crescendo and rising melodic line in the orchestra concludes with a final tutti fortissimo that ends the concerto.

If analyzing the work as a whole, instead of breaking the work into movements, a possible background explanation of the form emerges. Because much of the material from the first movement is used in the second movement and finale, a holistic analysis can be helpful. This allows for the separation of the work into ternary form. In this form, the first movement would be considered the A section and the second movement the B section. The finale and short coda being mostly a repeat of the beginning could be considered A again. Table 3.3 below shows both foreground and background analysis of the form.

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<sup>115</sup> A Chinese barrel drum with cowhide heads that comes in various sizes. It is usually suspended by four rings in a wooden stand and played with one or two bamboo sticks. Also written as t'ang ku, tanggu, pan-ku, bangu, and danpi.

Table 3.3 Background and Foreground Form Analysis,  
Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra

Background Analysis	<i>Movement I</i>			<i>Movement II</i>			<i>Finale</i>	<i>Coda</i>
Ternary Form (ABA)	A (1-181)			B (182-240)			A (241-299)	(300-309)
Foreground Analysis	Expo.	Develop.	Recap.	A	B	C	Expo. (Mvt. I)	coda
MM.	1-62	63-161	162-181	182-213	214-225	226-240	241-300	300-309

Looking at the work in this way gives a cohesive view of how the music works together to create continuity. Because there are no dramatic changes in key and the movement between sections is clear-cut, a ternary analysis provides an important holistic understanding of the work whereas a movement by movement analysis provides an understanding of the smaller formal interactions.

### **Melodic and Harmonic Content**

As discussed in Chapter 2 of this document, melody plays a significant role in traditional Chinese music, and the melodies found in this work are excellent examples of that tradition. Much like the composers of *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* created a harmonic language to support their melodies, so too does Ma's *Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra* echo some of those same ideas. Take for example the main melody of this work which sets the dramatic and lively tone of the concerto (Example 3.1). At first look, the excerpt utilizes all the same notes as a D-dorian mode in Western theory, but upon closer inspection, the function of how the notes are used differs from the what would be expected in Western harmony. The first is the usage of the third scale degree, which in D-dorian is F. The third scale degree is important because it establishes a major or minor tonic area in Western harmony. Ma Shui-long avoids establishing triadic

harmony throughout the work by omitting the third of a chord, opting instead for open intervals.

Example 3.1 Ma Shui-Long, Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra,  
Mvt. I, Theme A, mm. 17-24

**Leggiero** ♩ = 112  
(Bamboo Flute)

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Example 3.2 shows a harmonic reduction of the orchestral accompaniment from mm. 15-20 that accompanies the solo bangdi example above.

Example 3.2 Ma Shui-Long, Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra,  
Mvt. I, Orchestral Reduction, mm. 15-18<sup>116</sup>

**Leggiero** ♩ = 112  
(Orchestral Reduction)

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Structured around D as the tonal center, the avoidance of thirds is distinct. Briefly, an F is used in the alto voice, but it is used in a more passing motion than as a chordal tone.

What Ma focuses on in the harmony is predominately open structure based on perfect

<sup>116</sup> Reduction from the score created by the author.

fourths and fifths. He primarily treats major cadential points in this way to avoid establishing any evident triadic harmony (Example 3.3).

Example 3.3 Ma Shui-Long, Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra,  
Chord Structure, m. 1, 121, 245, 308

The example above shows structural harmonic moments of the work that either begin a major section or end it. The opening chords only focus on F and C with an additional G in the bass, very similar to how *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* begins by rising fifths. The cadence point directly before the cadenza is an open perfect fourth. The chord that leads into the finale is an open fifth with an added second and fourth scale degree creating a type of suspension chord. Even the final chord ending the work is an open fifth between D and A. These examples avoid the establishment of a major or minor key and instead create an open harmonic accompaniment that allows the melody to progress in a circular, unhindered way.

Another way that D-dorian is an incorrect harmonic or melodic analysis is the usage of the sixth scale degree, B. Because this piece is written with a key signature of C-major, one would expect that B is used as a leading tone resolving to tonic. Since D is already established as the tonal center of this work, the half-step relationship between B and C is avoided so that C-major is not tonicized. Example 3.1 above demonstrates how both B and F are used sparingly and when they are used they only resolve down. This has two purposes. The first is that it avoids hearing dominant progression that would indicate

a V-I movement in the key of C-major. If B, in this case, would resolve up, it would give a sense of C-major. F is also used only in a downward motion as any resolution up by half or whole step indicates a major triad or the movement to a pre-dominant (IV) chord.

The most precise explanation of the Ma's melodic and harmonic language in this work is the usage of Chinese *diao*. As discussed in Chapter 2, the Chinese modes are built on a system of five primary notes with an interval relationship of whole-whole-minor 3<sup>rd</sup>-whole. These notes are named *gong-shang-jue-zhi-yu* respectively. In this work, Ma uses a C-gong scale and inverts the scale by taking the bottom C and putting it on top, making D the central pitch. This inversion is called D-shang because it uses the C-gong scale but starts on the shang scale degree of D. Example 3.4 shows the inversion of a C-gong scale to D-shang.

Example 3.4 C-gong and D-shang

The image shows two musical staves on a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff, labeled 'C-gong', contains five notes: C (Gong), D (Shang), E (Jue), F# (Zhi), and G (Yu). The second staff, labeled 'D-shang', contains five notes: D (Shang), E (Jue), F# (Zhi), G (Yu), and A (Gong). The notes are written as half notes on a five-line staff.

The five pitches in the D-shang example above constitute the majority of the melodic and harmonic writing in this work. As mentioned in the paragraphs above the notes B and F serve a particular role. Harmonically they are only used in brief passing figurations and very rarely do they make a triad. Melodically they serve a special purpose in D-shang. Similar to the usage of F-sharp in *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* where this note is denoted as *bian-gong* (*bian* meaning lowered), B serves the same function of *bian-gong* being the note lower than the *gong* note, C. This means that B is only ever resolved downward and more often is used as an upper neighbor or passing tone to A. Similarly, F



is called the *bian-zhi* due to its lowered relationship to G. It is also only ever resolved downward and is used as a connecting note to E, and eventually D. Example 3.5 shows the special usage of B and F in the opening theme presented by the bangdi.

Example 3.5 Ma Shui-Long, Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra, *bian-gong* and *bian-zhi* resolution, mm. 17-24

**Leggiero** ♩ = 112  
(Bamboo Flute)

5

*mp* *mf* *cresc.* *f*

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Harmonically, D-shang is not the only mode used in this piece and by modulating this mode to other pitches, Ma creates variety without leaving the language of the shang mode. The most common modulation in this work is the shift from D-shang to E-shang (Example 3.6).

Example 3.6 D-shang and E-shang

D-shang      bian-zhi      bian-gong      E-shang      bian-zhi      bian-gong

Shang Jue Zhi Yu Gong      Shang Jue Zhi Yu Gong

Example 3.7 below demonstrates how these two modes interact and modulate between each other. The modulation flows seamlessly due to the common tones E and A, creating a type of common-tone modulation, similar to Western harmony.

Example 3.7 Ma Shui-Long, Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra,  
E-shang/D-shang modulation, mm. 46-52<sup>117</sup>

(Bamboo Flute) E-shang *flatt.* *mf* *mp* *mp* modulation D-shang

(Orchestra Reduction) *mf* *mp* *p*

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Other Western melodic and harmonic characteristics are used throughout the work, and one that is often used by Ma is call and response between solo and orchestra. The texture of the call and response can be more intervallic, like Example 3.7 above, or more direct, like example 3.8 below.

Example 3.8 Ma Shui-Long, Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra,  
Call and Response Figures between Solo, Vln, and Vcl, mm. 81-83

B. Fl. *f* *mf*

Vln. *mf* *mp*

Vc. *mf* *mp*

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In this example, Ma uses both the high and low registers of the bangdi as well as the high and low registers of the orchestra. First, calling with the cellos in the lower octave, the bangdi responds in its upper register. Then, when the bangdi calls from the lower octave,

<sup>117</sup> Reduction from the score created by the author.

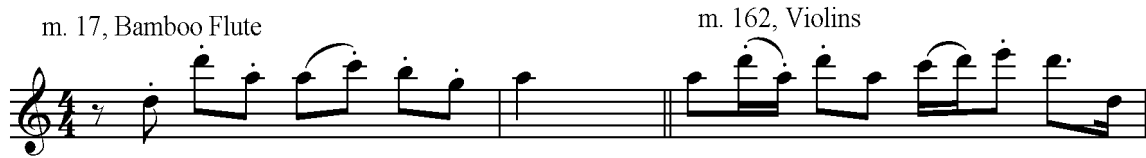
the violins respond higher. This sharing of color between the flute and orchestra creates an intermixing texture between East and West; what first started out as a bird-like call from the bangdi returns a bird-like call from the violins. Other examples of Western writing techniques found in this work include chromatic passing tones (Example 3.9) and melodic inversion (Example 3.10).

Example 3.9 Ma Shui-Long, Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra,  
Chromatic Passing Tones, Mvt II, mm. 198-201



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Example 3.10 Ma Shui-Long, Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra,  
Melodic Inversion Comparison, m. 17 and m. 162



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### Performance Considerations

Because of the bangdi's clear and powerful tone, nothing notable should be considered as far as the setup or size of the orchestra. The standard performance practice of placing the soloist in front of the orchestra between the conductor and first violins is recommended. There are also arrangements of this work for Western piccolo and piano or orchestra, but it is important to note that the bangdi sounds as written, while the piccolo sounds an octave above. The two Chinese drums used at the end of the work, *tan ku* and *ban ku* are easily accessible in most Western countries but can be substituted quite easily

with familiar Western drums. A possible substitute for the *tan ku* is any high-pitched woodblock played with hard wooden sticks, while a substitute for the *ban ku* is any wooden-bodied drum with a tight membrane lower in pitch than the *tan ku* substitution, also played with hard, wooden sticks.

## **Conclusion**

Like *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*, the work uses innovative melodic and harmonic language to fuse both Eastern and Western practices. The open chordal structure provides strong support for the Chinese modes used in this piece and allows the melody and texture of the bangdi to express a multitude of colors and spirit. The programmatic elements of the work give a good point of departure to the imagery Ma Shui-long hoped to create but does not limit the breadth of the listener's imagination. Like *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, the work uses Western forms as a framework, but not as a direct copy. This allows the work to maintain harmonic freedom which gives better support to the Chinese elements of the piece, while still creating clear thematic groupings that work well within the Western forms discussed. These groupings help progress the piece from beginning to end and give the work a sense of completion and unity.

## CHAPTER 4

### TAN DUN – *CONCERTO FOR PIPA AND STRING ORCHESTRA* (1999)

#### 4.1 TAN DUN – AN OVERVIEW BIOGRAPHY

Born in Hunan Province, August 18, 1957, Tan Dun's childhood coincided with the early years of the PROC and later the Cultural Revolution. During this time, he received no schooling or musical training and spent several years planting rice on a commune in Huangjin. It was also during this time that he began learning the violin and the musical traditions of the area. Due to a tragic boat accident of a traveling Peking opera troupe, Tan was invited to become a musician and arranger with the group.<sup>118</sup> Following the end of the Cultural Revolution and subsequent reopening of several of China's conservatories, nineteen-year-old Tan became one of 30 admitted into the Central Conservatory of Music. It was during this time that Tan was first exposed to Western music, especially the music of Bartók, Schoenberg, and Boulez.<sup>119</sup>

Considered a leading composer in China's "New Wave" of artists, Tan's music gained him increasing popularity in the early 1980's. However, due to political controversy, his music was briefly banned in 1983. In 1986, Tan moved to New York

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<sup>118</sup> "Tan Dun | About Tan Dun," accessed December 27, 2017, <http://tandun.com/>.

<sup>119</sup> Joanna C. Lee, "Tan Dun," *Tan Dun*, 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.42657>.

City and began graduate work at Columbia University. His teachers there included Chou Wen-Chung, Mario Davidovsky, and George Edwards.<sup>120</sup>

Tan's music features a pluralism of multiple cultures ranging from his childhood experiences and Chinese philosophy to his interest in the avant-garde scene of New York. A lover of the music of John Cage, nature and improvisation is a central focus in many of Tan's compositions, and he often incorporates natural elements such as water into his music and performances. His music has also garnered multiple accolades throughout his career including an Academy Award and a Grammy Award for his film score to *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, a Grawemeyer Award for his opera *Marco Polo*, and he was named Musical America Composer of the Year in 2003.<sup>121</sup>

## 4.2 DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PIPA

The pipa, like the dizi, has a long history in China. It is not precisely known if the pipa originated in China or came from an outside source, but mentions of it in historical literature have been around since the Han Dynasty (200 BCE-220 CE). Some sources say the name pipa comes from the words *pi* "to play forward" and *pa* "to play backward," but the exact origin of the instrument is difficult to isolate. Pipa refers to diverse types of plucked lutes that have a half-pear-shaped body with a long or short neck. The instrument's range is typically three octaves and has 14 or 16 frets under the instruments four strings. The strings are commonly tuned to A, D, E, A.<sup>122</sup>

The pipa has several characteristic sounds that are unique to the instrument. The performer plays the instrument vertically, pushing down of the frets with their left hand

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> "Tan Dun | About Tan Dun."

<sup>122</sup> Tsun-Yuen Lui, Wu Ben, and Robert C. Provine, "Pipa," *Grove Music Online*, 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.45149>.

and strumming the strings with their right hand. Each finger on the right hand has a plectrum attached with tape enabling the player to pluck the strings both in a forward and backward manner. It also allows for rapid strumming on individual strings and chords that can be played in a forward or backward direction. The left hand also can control various aspects of the pitch by bending the string sideways, affecting the intonation by more than a semi-tone.<sup>123</sup>

There are two characteristic playing styles of the pipa, *wenqu* and *wuqu*. *Wenqu* means gentle tones and the music of this style is typically lyrical and calm. *Wuqu*, on the other hand, is played vigorously and usually is represented by powerful playing recounting military encounters found throughout China's embattled history.<sup>124</sup> It is in both categories that Tan Dun's *Concerto for Pipa and String Orchestra* is found, highly energetic, yet at times melodic and calm.

#### 4.3 EXAMINATION OF EASTERN AND WESTERN CHARACTERISTICS IN *CONCERTO FOR PIPA AND STRING ORCHESTRA*

Unlike the pieces discussed in the previous chapters, this chapter and the chapter following represent a more significant combination of contemporary techniques including extended technique, post-modern tonality, and experimentalism. These ideas, when combined with the East/West techniques mentioned so far in this research, gives these works a notable place on the current world stage. Tan Dun is no doubt one of the most well-known figures in contemporary music today, and his *Concerto for Pipa and String Orchestra* is no exception to his diverse and eclectic body of music.

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Xi, *Chinese Music and Musical Instruments*, 33.

The pipa concerto has been rewritten since its initial inception and was initially composed for string quartet, pipa with water, stone, paper and metal under the title *Ghost Opera*. The original version created in 1994 included many theatrical elements such as speaking, singing, lighting, and dramatic effects. In 1999, the pipa concerto was extracted from the original work and set for solo pipa and string orchestra.<sup>125</sup> This shorter version is a concert version of the opera and can be performed with either pipa or guzheng as the soloist. The fusions in this work vary from movement to movement but are intricately linked in surprising ways. The Eastern characteristics of this work stem from Tan's usage of Chinese modes and open orchestration techniques, similar to the previous examples in the research. His usage of the pipa shares characteristics between both *wenqu* and *wuqu* playing styles. The melodic writing shares both Eastern and Western features as Tan juxtaposes an Eastern melody, which he introduces in the first movement, with a quotation from Bach's C-sharp minor prelude in the third movement. The form of the work is defined by the character of each section and does not adhere to any Western defined method, each movement presenting a different mood and level of energy. Lastly, there are several contemporary techniques that are not identifiable to either East or West. The work itself is highly theatrical even though it is not staged, a hallmark of Tan's compositional style.

### **Programmatic Elements and Form**

In the program notes for the work found on Tan's website, Christine Dahl describes the piece by saying, "The work was inspired by China's 4000-year-old 'Ghost Opera' tradition at Taoist funerals (which Tan experienced as a child), where shamans

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<sup>125</sup> Tan Dun, *Concerto for String Orchestra and Pipa or Zheng* (G. Schirmer, Inc. New York, NY, 1999), title page.



communicate with spirits from the past and future and establish dialogues between nature and the human soul.”<sup>126</sup> It is these spiritual ideas that lead the listener through a myriad of sounds and textures as the work progresses from movement to movement. The program note continues to say, “Tan continues to pepper the score with colorful effects, including shouts of the word ‘Yao,’ improvised sound masses, eerie harmonics from the strings, bent notes, rolls and slides. The work fairly throbs with energy. Only the third movement, Adagio, provides an island of calm.”<sup>127</sup>

Although the pipa concerto is a concert version, there are still important theatrical elements to the performance. Performers in the orchestra use far more than just their instruments to convey the spirituality of the work. It is hard to pinpoint every aspect of Taoist funerals Tan is specifically trying to emulate, but one idea is certain, the wails and sobs of those lamenting the dead. In the article “Grieving for the Dead, Grieving for the Living” Elizabeth Johnson describes the atmosphere of Taoist funeral services:

There are certain characteristic, unforgettable sounds associated with Chinese funerals: percussion instruments beating a solemn rhythm, the chanting of priests, the melodies of the *so-na*, and the lamenting of women. This lamenting, high pitched and penetrating, conveys an intense expression of grief. It is both weeping and singing, repeating melodic phrases that end with calls to the dead and sobs. At certain points in the funeral process several women may wail together, but there may be times when a single woman will lament, entering the site alone and singing in a solitary outpouring of grief.<sup>128</sup>

The first moment of the work begins with a stomp, and what follows are a series of continuous, long glissandi starting in the cello section, but growing to include the

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<sup>126</sup> “Tan Dun | Concerto for String Orchestra and Pipa,” accessed January 20, 2018, <http://tandun.com/compositions/>.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Elizabeth L. Johnson, “Grieving for the Dead, Grieving for the Living: Funeral Laments of the Hakka Women,” in *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China*, ed. James L. Watson and Evelyn S. Rawski (University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, California, 1988).

entire orchestra over a span of ten bars. This can be described as nothing short of an orchestral “wail” in line with what the quote above describes. This intense expression of emotion is prevalent throughout the work, the bending of the notes imitating the laments of the deceased. As the work continues the wail grows until reaching an unpitched climax, followed by a new section titled, “Melancholia.” What follows is a series of open chords and percussive sounds from the orchestra and soloist that accompany a new set of elongated glissandi and bent notes presented in the violas that outline a melody. This section serves to release much of the tension built up from the previous section and prepares for the first introduction of a recurring Chinese tune played by the pipa. This tune ends the first movement and quickly fades in an aura of obscure high-pitched harmonics from the soloist.

The second movement picks up the low-level energy from the previous movement’s ending and introduces an unassuming two-note motive in the solo pipa that is continuously bent up and down from the same note. It is here that the glissandi from the first movement transform into their own motivic idea that reemerges throughout the rest of the work. This rhythmically active section builds as the orchestra accentuates a mix of syncopated rhythms. This section comes to a climax at m. 41 and turns the motivic glissandi into a theme full of energy and drive. What follows from mm. 62-140 is a development of both the first two-note motive from the pipa and the thematic material introduced by the violins. The ideas are shared between the soloist and orchestra, augmented and reworked through several periods of growth and decay until finally a harmonic shift at m. 140 leads into a section of high energy. It is here that Tan introduces another theatrical element into the work, the shouting of the word “Yao.” “Yao” has

several meanings in Chinese, most commonly the word is used to mean “want.” It is more likely though that “Yao” in this context does not have a specific meaning, but instead represents the wails and cries of lamenters.

There are two parts to this high energy section. In the first section, the orchestra shouts “Yao” in unison between percussive quadruple-stop pizzicatos while the soloist sings an elongated “Yao” above the orchestra. This energetic section continues even once the shouting has stopped when finally, a *ritardando* in the violas concludes with an audible sigh from the orchestra releasing all the built-up energy. The following section begins similarly to the beginning of the second movement and attempts to revive the short, bent notes from the pipa, this time played by the strings. Quickly building up energy, a new improvisatory section begins, and the orchestra is instructed to randomly glissando in general pitch areas as designated in their part. This section, starting at m. 226, gives a sense of chaos as the organized “Yao” of the previous section forms an incomprehensible murmur of shouts that mix in the space above the orchestra. This sound slowly dies away until only the solo pipa remains, playing a short cadenza that is briefly interrupted by tuning the orchestra as instructed by the score, signaling the end of the movement.

The third movement begins with a re-introduction of the Chinese tune first heard at the end of the first movement. The slow, relaxed character sets the mood for what will be a dramatic shift from the material presented so far in the concerto. At m. 3 an almost alien theme appears in the context of this work, the opening lines of Bach’s *Prelude in C-Sharp Minor*. This downward theme is itself a lament, creating a timeless, almost endless motion that repeats throughout the strings. This timelessness is felt more directly in

moments like m. 7, where the players are instructed to “hold (freezing)” while a violin solo interjects with a truncated version of the Chinese tune. This intermixing of both the Bach and Chinese theme continues through several iterations until a stretto in the orchestra blends both themes together. The concluding section of this movement ends with the pipa playing the Chinese theme and the orchestra continuing the Bach. This dialogue slowly dissolves as the cellos and bass begin degrading the Bach theme into a wide oscillation that segues into the fourth and final movement.

Each movement to this point exhibits a distinct character and energy. The first movement introduces long slides and builds in intensity mimicking wailing sounds. The second movement is rhythmically active and incorporates the “Yao” shouts and breathes. The third movement exudes a moment of calm as the Bach and Chinese themes intermix. The fourth movement now takes a contrasting character and is atonal. Unlike the opening fifths in the first movement, a cluster of nine pitches spaced apart by perfect fifths and tritones introduces the movement. These clusters are played in rhythmic unison for three bars until tonally, the piece falls apart. What follows is a succession of incomplete tone rows that use all but one or two pitches. This sets the tone for the movement as much of the string part is atonal, while the pipa accompanies with non-pitched percussive sounds. A figure of the pitches A, B-flat, D-flat, and C eventually emerges at m. 33 in the pipa. These notes form a repetitive pattern that is eventually picked up by the rest of the orchestra and repeated in a myriad of diverse ways. There are brief glimpses of the sliding motive from the second movement, the open fifth glissandi, and the improvisatory moments of the work including random shouting of “Yao.” A unison “Yao!” is sounded at m. 98 signaling a brief pause. The four-note figure re-emerges in a slow, pronounced

unison, gradually picking up from its initial crawl to a feverish pace. At m. 108, a final “Yao” releases the tension and is followed by a D-major chord with an added sixth. This harmonic resolution of the movement’s atonality is completed by a final statement of the Chinese tune gluing the work together as a whole and fades into nothing as the piece ends.

### **Harmonic and Melodic Content**

There are several important harmonic and melodic aspects of the work that persist through each movement. These ideas form the foundation that makes the piece function, even though each movement contains a varied character. The first movement introduces two important ideas that set up the work. The first is represented in the opening bars of the work that establishes the non-triadic language similar to what has been shown so far in this research. Open harmonic language is achieved in this work by pairing an open fifth on D and A, with an open fourth on E and A. This is unique because these are the same pitches the pipa is tuned to. By doing this, not only is Tan establishing an open, harmonic space to write from, he is creating a foundation for the pipa to express its most idiomatic properties. Example 4.1 shows the opening four bars, and how Tan creates an open harmonic space for the pipa. This open framework continues for a majority of the first movement. However, at m. 19 the violas begin a glissando that slides above and below different octaves of D, cementing this as the tonal center (Example 4.2). Tan avoids presenting a clear harmonic framework, choosing instead to continue the open character introduced in the beginning and further elongates the viola’s twisting glissandi until m. 41, near the end of the first movement. At this moment the pipa introduces the main Chinese theme (Example 4.3) that Tan continues to revisit throughout the work.

This Chinese theme also presents a clear picture of the Chinese mode used in this work,  
D-gong.

Example 4.1 Tan Dun, Concerto for String Orchestra and Pipa, Mvt. I, mm. 1-4

Andante molto ♩ = 65

Vc. *sfp* < *sf* *sfp* < *sf* *sfp* < *sf* *sfp* < *sf* *sfp* < *sf* *sfp* < *sf* *sfp* < *sf* *sfp* < *sf* *sfp* < *sf*

Cb. *sff* \*Foot stomp (including conductor) *sfp* < *sf* *sfp* < *sf* *sfp* < *sf* *sfp* < *sf*

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Example 4.2 Tan Dun, Concerto for String Orchestra and Pipa, Mvt. I, mm. 20-25

Melancholia ♩ = 58

Vla. *p* *mp* *mf*

C. *f* *f* dolce melancholia

3 - 3 2 - 2 3 - 3 3 - 3

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Example 4.3 Tan Dun, Concerto for String Orchestra and Pipa, Mvt. I, mm. 41-45

The musical score for Example 4.3 consists of two systems. The first system features the Pipa part in the upper staff, starting with a *mp dolce* dynamic and a melodic line with various ornaments and a *mf* dynamic later. The Violin II part in the lower staff is mostly silent, with a fermata over a whole note. The second system continues the Pipa part with a *p* dynamic and a *sfp* dynamic, while the Violin II part has a *p* dynamic and a *sfp* dynamic, with a fermata over a whole note.

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Example 4.4 6-tone D-gong and 7-tone D-gong *qingyue*

The notation shows two scales on a single staff. The first scale, labeled '6-Tone D-Gong', has notes: Gong, Shang, Jue, Zhi, Yu, and bian-gong. The second scale, labeled '7-Tone D-Gong qingyue', has notes: Gong, Shang, Jue, Zhi, Yu, qing-jue, and bian-gong. The notes are represented by circles on a staff with a treble clef.

Example 4.4 above shows the two primary D-gong scales used in this work. The first is a 6-tone D-gong mode. This mode includes one additional altered pitch apart from the fundamental five, *bian-gong*. The usage of *bian-gong* remains the same as in the other works cited in the research; it does not act like a leading tone and always resolves in a downward motion. The second use of the D-gong mode does not appear until the second movement which begins taking shape as a sliding motive introduced by the second violins (Example 4.5).

Example 4.5 Tan Dun, Concerto for String Orchestra and Pipa, Mvt. II, mm. 13-18



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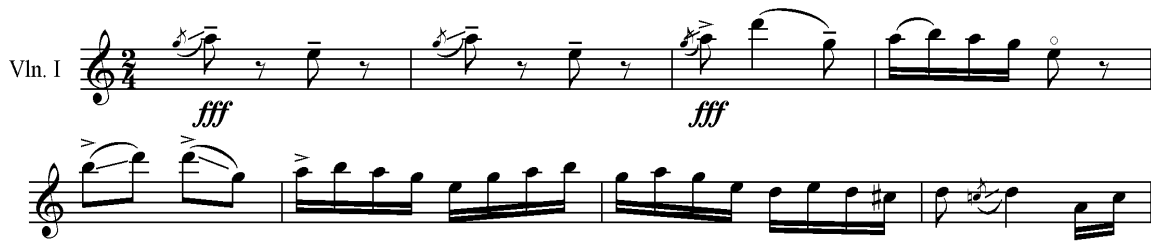
Although this motive does not introduce any new pitches, when the first violins expand on the second violin motive, Tan adds a seventh note to the mode, G. This G becomes the seventh tone of the D-gong mode and because of its raised location from *jue* (F-sharp), this note is called *qing-jue*. *Qing* can be translated as “clean, comfortable and leisure,” which means that this added pitch to the mode creates a laid-back atmosphere commonly called *qingyue* and found in folk tunes throughout China. This contrasts with *yayue* music, which translates as “Elegant mode music” historically used by royalty, or in religious contexts. *Yayue*, like *qingyue*, also contains two altered tones, but instead of a raised *jue* pitch, the *zhi* is lowered (*bian-zhi*).<sup>129</sup> The way *qing-jue* functions in the context of this work is it adds additional flexibility melodically allowing a subdominant character to exist. However, characteristic of other altered pitches found in Chinese modes, *qing-jue* avoids movement towards a dominant harmony and melodically is never featured as a structural pitch. Example 4.6 shows the first violin theme at m. 41 which includes this added scale degree. Notice the fun and lively texture this mode creates through its *qingyue* style folk inspiration.

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<sup>129</sup> “Chinese Style - IMSLP/Petrucci Music Library: Free Public Domain Sheet Music,” accessed January 23, 2018, [http://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Chinese\\_style](http://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Chinese_style).



Example 4.6 Tan Dun, Concerto for String Orchestra and Pipa, Mvt. II, mm. 41-46



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In the example above, it is interesting to point out that Tan does break some of the rules here by resolving a C-sharp (*bian-gong*) to D, but immediately retracts that idea by adding a grace note on C-natural following that slides back up to D.

Later in the second movement, there is a brief section where D-gong is modulated to E-gong, and the same sliding motive continues as the orchestra shouts “Yao.” This is eventually re-transitioned back to D-gong as the sliding note motive is played in its entirety, leading to the cadenza, and ending the second movement.

The third movement contains interesting juxtapositions between East and West as the Chinese melody is playing alongside Bach’s *Prelude in C-Sharp Minor* (Example 4.7).

Example 4.7 J. S. Bach, *Prelude in C-Sharp Minor*, WTC Book 1, mm. 1-2



The third movement begins in D-gong mode but is quickly shifted to C-sharp minor as the Bach is introduced in violas. These two ideas seem to exist independently of one another until m. 27 when Tan incorporates both ideas simultaneously with each idea

interchanging freely between the sections of the orchestra. Example 4.8 shows how both ideas are combined and are shared freely among the orchestra.

Example 4.8 Tan Dun, Concerto for String Orchestra and Pipa, Mvt. III, mm. 27-30

The musical score for Example 4.8 consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The Violin I part features glissando and trill markings. The Viola and Violoncello parts are marked pizzicato. The second system continues the same instrumentation, with dynamic markings of *p* appearing in the lower staves.

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Although the harmonic language of the last movement is unlike anything seen leading up to this point, the inclusion of the Chinese tune and sliding note motive from the earlier movements glue the work together. Harmonically, there are two important moments in the last movement. The first, which clearly sets the atonal framework, is a tone cluster of nine chromatic tones occurring at the beginning of the fourth movement. The second is the shocking yet satisfying final resolution concluding the tumultuous atonality on a D-major added sixth chord.

Example 4.9 shows the strings for the first six bars of the last movement. Notice the atonal framework that creates the unrest of this movement. There are moments where the sliding note motive attempts to bring order to the chaos, mm. 64-97 for example, but the chaotic energy is too much to overcome. This unrest is built on a unison accelerando centered around A, B-flat, C, and D-flat that brings this unrest to a climax. When the D-major added sixth chord is finally reached at the m.109, the pipa ends the work with a final farewell from the Chinese tune (Example 4.10).

The reason the final chord that accompanies the concluding Chinese theme is so shocking is that it is the first time in the whole work a clear, triadic harmony is heard. It also gives great release after the intensely atonal fourth movement. Tan does subvert this slightly by adding the sixth scale degree (B) in the second violins, but the impact and resolution on the work is very powerful.

Example 4.9 Tan Dun, Concerto for String Orchestra and Pipa, Mvt. IV, mm. 1-6

Moderato (♩=75)

Vln. I  
pizz. *ppp* *p* *sf* *pp*

Vln. II  
pizz. *ppp* *p* *sf* *pp*

Vla.  
pizz. *ppp* *p* *sf* *pp*

Vc.  
pizz. *ppp* *p* *sf* *pp*

Db.  
pizz. *ppp* - - -

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Example 4.10 Tan Dun, Concerto for String Orchestra and Pipa, Mvt. IV, mm. 109-112

Tempo I  
Andante molto (♩=65)

The musical score consists of six staves. The top staff is for the Pipa, written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It begins with a dynamic marking of *mf dolce* and a 'strike' instruction. The subsequent staves are for the string orchestra: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.), all in bass clef with a 4/4 time signature. These string parts start with a dynamic marking of *sf* and a 'strike' instruction, then transition to *mp*. The score shows the Pipa playing a melodic line with some grace notes and a 'strike' instruction, while the strings provide a rhythmic accompaniment with glissandi.

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### Pipa Style and Emulation

The *wenqu* and *wuqu* playing styles of the pipa create a dramatic contrast throughout the concerto. The main Chinese tune that is introduced at the end of the first movement is a perfect example of *wenqu* style with its soft, lyrical quality. This is in stark contrast to the other sections of the work that include dramatic percussive sounds and fast, improvisatory sections. The orchestra emulates both *wenqu* and *wuqu* qualities. Example 4.4 above includes the second violins accompanying the pipa solo. The violins are not as capable of bending notes like the pipa, so Tan emulates this sound by writing multiple glissandi in the accompaniment. This creates a similar lyrical quality and complements the *wenqu* style.

The dramatic effects of wuqu style are emulated in the orchestra in several sections throughout the work. Example 4.9 above shows how Tan indicates that the orchestral strings are to be played in a manner similar to the pipa. The up and down bows represent the direction of the strumming or bowing, while the circled plus symbol indicates the musicians to hit the fingerboard with their palm, creating a percussive thump. The addition of a plus symbol indicates that the musicians perform a left-hand pizzicato, but instead of only one finger, as is typical with a left-hand pizzicato, all available fingers on the left hand are used to strum the four strings. When all these varying techniques are used in succession, it creates a vividly percussive sound that strongly accentuates the solo pipa wuqu style.

### **Performance Considerations**

Since the pipa's sound decays quickly and the overall power of the instrument is not as strong as that of an orchestra, it is required by the composer that the pipa solo is amplified by a single speaker. This allows differently sized orchestras to accompany without worrying about overpowering the soloist. The soloist should be located in the standard position between the conductor and the first violins. It is also necessary that the conductor understand all the various notations and markings that are used by the pipa in order to successfully emulate the sounds as necessary in the orchestra.

### **Conclusions**

This research has shown through each of the preceding examples how important the establishment of an open tonality is when using Chinese melodies and harmonic techniques. A pattern has begun to emerge that composers create this open sound by avoiding triadic harmony for the majority of a work. This can be achieved in two distinct

ways. The first is by utilizing only open fifths to complement the modal nature of a work. This is particularly crucial in the opening moments. The second is to raise or lower the third by a whole step, creating a suspended second or fourth scale degree above the root. This produces a distinct chordal nature that accompanies the Chinese modes. Tan utilizes a multitude of colorful and percussive effects to create memorable melodic content that in part serves as the connective tissue throughout the work. The Chinese tune's serene and calming effect portrays vivid contrast against the bends, slides, and pops of the strings, often emulating the sounds of the pipa. Both the melodic and harmonic elements support the programmatic nature of the work and impart Taoist laments and funeral traditions to the listener. Tan Dun has created in his pipa concerto a world of rich color and textures, lyrical melodies, and aggressive energy. Each movement expresses a different character, and the spiritual journey is held together by Tan's repetition of the Chinese theme and sliding motives. These ideas represent a harmony between East and West that come together to create a concept that takes the hearer from beginning to end on a journey of multiple cultures.

## CHAPTER 5

### BRIGHT SHENG – *THE SONG AND DANCE OF TEARS* FOR PIPA, SHENG, VIOLINCELLO, PIANO, AND ORCHESTRA (2003)

#### 5.1 BRIGHT SHENG – AN OVERVIEW BIOGRAPHY

In the same class of “New Wave” artist from China as Tan Dun, Bright Sheng enjoys an accoladed and diverse body of compositions from orchestral works to operas. Born in Shanghai on December 6, 1955, Bright Sheng started his musical training on the piano at an early age. At the age of 15, he was sent to Qinghai near Tibet during China’s Cultural Revolution. In Qinghai for seven years, Bright Sheng was a pianist and percussionist for the provincial music and dance theater. During this time, he was exposed to a wide range of folk instruments and music. When Shanghai Conservatory of Music reopened in 1978, he was admitted as a composition student and graduated in 1982. He soon left for the United States to pursue graduate work and earned his masters from Queens College, CUNY, and his doctorate in 1993 from Columbia University where he studied with Chou Wen-Chung, Jack Beeson and Mario Davidovsky.<sup>130</sup>

Bright Sheng's music integrates Asian and Western culture without compromising the integrity of either. His musical influences stem from his early experiences in China and exposure to folk traditions like those found in Tibet. He has held several composer-in-residence positions including the Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Seattle Symphony

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<sup>130</sup> “Bright Sheng | Composer, Conductor & Pianist,” accessed December 27, 2017, <http://brightsheng.com/bio.html>.

Orchestra. His awards include Guggenheim, Naumberg, Rockefeller, and MacArthur fellowships, and he has received both the Kennedy Center award and an ASCAP Concert Music Award.<sup>131</sup>

## 5.2 DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SHENG

The sheng is a windblown reed instrument that likely predates all reed instruments, including the organ and the accordion.<sup>132</sup> The word sheng has been found in historical texts in China dating back to the seventh century BCE. The historical construction of the instrument utilized a half bowl-shaped shaft with a long or short mouthpiece attached. Inside the shaft was placed a varying number of pipes, arranged in an incomplete circle to represent the closed wings of the Phoenix. Secured to the bottom of the pipes were free-beating reeds. Small holes in the pipe are covered by the performer and either inhaling or exhaling through the mouthpiece causes the reeds to vibrate.

When the PROC was established, the sheng was improved and expanded throughout the *guoyue* movement.<sup>133</sup> This time saw increases in the instrument's volume output, range, and chromatic capability via the addition of more pipes, larger instrument bodies, and keys to facilitate playing. The modern-day *guoyue* sheng, or keyed sheng as it is sometimes called, comes in various sizes to produce either soprano, alto, tenor, or bass ranges.<sup>134</sup> The higher pitched shengs have a soft and melodious timbre, while the lower ones can produce loud, reedy sounds.<sup>135</sup> They can be played continually due to the ability

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<sup>131</sup> Zhang Weihua, "Sheng, Bright," *Grove Music Online*, 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.42546>.

<sup>132</sup> Hong Kong Philharmonic, *The Song and Dance of Tears* (Naxos, 2013), n. CD insert.

<sup>133</sup> See Chapter 1 for a detailed description of this movement.

<sup>134</sup> Alan R. Thrasher, "Sheng," *Grove Music Online*, 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.25623>.

<sup>135</sup> Xi, *Chinese Music and Musical Instruments*, 23–26.



for the reed to vibrate on both the inhale and the exhale and serves many roles as an accompanying instrument, ensemble instrument, or more recently within the last 50 years, a solo instrument.

### 5.3 EXAMINATION OF EASTERN AND WESTERN CHARACTERISTICS IN *THE SONG AND DANCE OF TEARS* FOR PIPA, SHENG, VIOLINCELLO, PIANO, AND ORCHESTRA

Bright Sheng's *The Song and Dance of Tears* is the result of a trip to China he took for two months in 2000 to experience and collect the music of the ancient Silk Road. Commissioned by the New York Philharmonic, the piece was first performed on March 5, 2003, with an all-star cast of Wu Tong, sheng; Wu Man, pipa; Yo-Yo Ma, violincello; Emanuel Ax, piano with David Zinman conducting. The work was later revised in 2012 and was recorded by Hong Kong Philharmonic in 2014, with Bright Sheng conducting.<sup>136</sup>

Sheng has often said that his music is 100 percent Chinese and 100 percent Western.<sup>137</sup> In this light, *The Song and Dance of Tears* follows this idiom in that it goes beyond merely borrowing ideas from Eastern and Western cultures but assimilates them seamlessly. Sheng takes much of his inspiration from the music of Bartók. In 1997 Sheng wrote an article titled, "Bartók, The Chinese Composer" where he discusses Bartók's influence on his compositions, as well as the work of many other Chinese composers.

This [Bartók's assimilation of Hungarian folk music] is nationalism in its truest sense. It is why Bartók's music has such strong resonance in the music of some Chinese composers like myself. It is the spirit of his approach to composition and the essence of his deep understanding of both the folk and classical tradition that I

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<sup>136</sup> "Bright Sheng | Composer, Conductor & Pianist," accessed February 1, 2018, <http://brightsheng.com/works/orchestra/songdancetears.html>.

<sup>137</sup> Chang Peter, "The Music of Bright Sheng: Expression of Cross-Cultural Experience," March 5, 2006, <http://brightsheng.com/articles/essayfilesaboutbs/PeterChang-MusicofBS.pdf>.

find meaningful. This goes beyond the immediately apparent similarities - such as the pentatonic scale - shared by Hungarian and Chinese folk traditions.<sup>138</sup>

Following his trip in 2000 recording the folk music of China, including the music of his hometown, Qinghai, Sheng chose the New York Philharmonic commission to reflect on these experiences and feelings. The program notes on Sheng's website summarize how Sheng took these experiences and assimilated them into this work:

In *The Song and Dance of Tears* I did not attempt to recreate the scenes and music I heard during the trip. Rather, the work serves as an evocation of the impression and emotions that stayed with me deeply. The tune I constructed for the last section of the work, *Tears*, was based on materials of several folk songs I heard during the trip. One of them was titled *Tears*, in which an old man laments his lost youth.<sup>139</sup>

Much in the vein of Bartók, full of modal mixture and polytonality, this work does not sound anything like the other works that have been discussed in this research. The music is challenging to describe as Western or Eastern. It has characteristics of both, but neither seems to dominate. What most prominently is felt is the character of the work and the emotions that span cultures. As Sheng puts eloquently at the end of his "Bartók, the Chinese Composer" article, "A true musical fusion can only happen at its deepest level when both elements retain their original qualities, and when the composer possesses the most profound understanding and knowledge of both cultures. Thus the music of earth never dies."<sup>140</sup> By freely mixing Western and Eastern modes, scales, colors, and twentieth-century harmonic techniques, Sheng achieves this profound understanding of

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<sup>138</sup> Bright Sheng, "Bartok, the Chinese Composer," 1997, [www.brightsheng.com/articles/essayfilesbybs/BARTOK.pdf](http://www.brightsheng.com/articles/essayfilesbybs/BARTOK.pdf).

<sup>139</sup> "Bright Sheng | Composer, Conductor & Pianist."

<sup>140</sup> Sheng, "Bartok, the Chinese Composer."

both cultures and creates a musical fusion that retains each culture’s characteristics but is also distinctive on its own as a fusion work.

### **Programmatic Elements and Form**

The work is a tone poem that is broken into three main sections, “The Song,” “The Dance,” and “Tears.” Each section has a distinct character and harmonic framework. There is a brief introduction that dramatically begins the work. The brass introduces a fortissimo minor seventh that is played between a rapid glissando, and an intense, shrill opening character is created. This introduction intensifies, even more, when the sheng comes in at m. 5. Playing a meandering melody in perfect fourths accompanied by quartal harmony in the orchestra, the sheng reaches a harmonic breaking point at m. 13 when perfect fifths are paired against tritones and chromatically shift downward. This heightened tension prepares for the graceful and sweeping song that follows.

### **The Song**

“The Song” is the first major section of the work and lasts from mm. 17-104. There are three smaller sections of “The Song” that are identified by changes in texture and orchestration, as well as by harmonic content. Table 5.1 below outlines the three primary sections of “The Song” and its identifying characteristics regarding key and orchestration.

Table 5.1 Form and Characteristics of “The Song”

<i>The Song</i>	<i>S1</i>	<i>S2</i>	<i>S3</i>
mm.	17-58	58-77	78-104
Modes and Key Centers	Major, Mixolydian, Dorian. A-flat, G-flat, and D-flat	Major, Mixolydian A-flat	Major, Mixolydian B-flat, A, G, G-flat
Orchestration	Soloist focus, solo instruments in strings and winds	Tutti strings, solo ensemble, sparse winds	Tutti orchestra, no solo ensemble

The primary focus of this first section is the solo cello which sings as the name of the section implies. Example 5.1 shows the main melodic content of the “The Song,” including its modal characteristics and singing like qualities. Notice the dramatic shifts in octave as well as the introduction of G-flat in the A-flat major scale indicating a shift to a mixolydian character. Various instruments add color and texture to the solo cello, but most notably the pipa joins the solo cello in a vivid duet on a perfect fourth.

Example 5.1 Bright Sheng, The Song and Dance of Tears, The Song, mm. 17-23

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This section is also lightly scored and usually only incorporates one solo violin, viola, or cello playing counter melodies to the song found in the soloists with sustained bass accompaniment. There are inclusions of a solo wind instrument, first the clarinet at m. 17, and then the piccolo at m. 35 which introduces a short, bird-like call. When the piano joins at m. 47, there is a harmonic shift and a slight increase in texture that now includes a solo horn with tutti orchestra. The piano’s character is entirely different from that of the solo cello or pipa and plays exclusively long, winding scalar passages that

freely mix between different modes. These modes, which continually shift throughout “The Song” include major, mixolydian, and dorian scales whose key centers also mix freely.

The second section is from mm. 58-77 and shifts the melodic content away from the soloists and instead moves these melodic ideas through the strings, gradually mixing the soloist back in with the orchestra. The piano continues its scalar passages throughout and only briefly includes harp and bassoon at m. 70 when the strings fade out, and all four solo instruments are playing together. This latter part creates an added intensity that transitions into the final section of “The Song” from mm. 78-104.

The third and concluding section of “The Song” brings the entire orchestra together without the solo ensemble and mixes the melodic content first introduced by the solo cello, played by the horns, with the modal scales in the winds and countermelodies in the strings. This mixing of different thematic ideas also incorporates harmony as shifts in tonality take place in each section independently. This polytonality is distributed throughout each section. Woodwinds, brass, and strings all freely modulate to new areas independently. This includes shifts within the woodwinds, brass, or strings. An excellent example of this is m. 94 (Example 5.2), where, after a brief lydian scale on D, the upper strings shift to G mixolydian, while the low strings play A-flat mixolydian. This mixing creates a clash of minor seconds, sevenths, and tritones producing a unique mixture of sound until a flourishing of A-major in the woodwinds transitions “The Song” into the second section of this work.

Example 5.2 Bright Sheng, The Song and Dance of Tears, The Song, mm. 94-97

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**The Dance**

“The Dance” has a character that is strikingly different from the flowing melodies of “The Song;” and, as the name of this section implies, this section is fast, dramatic, and has primitivistic qualities. Table 5.2 below outlines the major sections and characteristics of “The Dance.”

Table 5.2 Form and Characteristics of “The Dance”

<i>The Dance</i>	D1	D2	D1-repeat	D3	D4	D5	D6	Introduction - Recap
mm.	105-139	140-168	169-188	189-265	266-292	293-334	335-363	364-371
Modes and Key Centers	Mostly octatonic mixed with C-min./G-min.			Octatonic mixed with D-min and D-dorian		Octatonic with A-maj./A-mixolydian	Octatonic with A-maj. Introduction atonal	
Orchestration	Solo Ensemble with light winds, tutti repeat.	Octatonic scale goes from single notes to double notes. Heavy solo ensemble scoring with light winds/brass. Repeat of D1 occurs in string/winds instead of solo ensemble.		Focuses primarily on solo ensemble. Winds/brass provide coloristic effects, followed by climatic tutti at m. 266.		Solo ensemble focus with light scoring in winds, soft transition.	Similar to D1 with fortissimo call and response between orchestra and solo ensemble. Introduction same as beginning in new key area.	

Of the eight sections of “The Dance,” all contain similar material but are varied by harmonic context and orchestration. The most immediately striking difference between “The Song,” and “The Dance” is the octatonic framework which persists throughout “The Dance.”

First introduced in the piano, the octatonic scale centers around a group of four notes that repeat in different variations until ascending by one scale step. This pattern repeats continuously as the overall pitch moves higher. Example 5.3 shows this upward movement of the octatonic scale in the piano.

Example 5.3 Bright Sheng, The Song and Dance of Tears, The Dance, mm. 105-111

**The Dance**  
♩ = 138-152

Pno. *ff savage*

(8)

*fff*

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The orchestration of section D1 becomes additive as the octatonic scale is passed around the orchestra, continually growing higher. Finally, at m. 125, the horns enter with a melody reminiscent of S2 in “The Song” (Example 5.4) as the octatonic scale continues in the winds and strings.

Example 5.4 Bright Sheng, The Song and Dance of Tears, The Dance, mm. 125-129<sup>141</sup>



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This horn melody signals a brief transition of dissonant chords that segue the music into the next section which is similar harmonically but changes the octatonic scale to now play doubled notes in the scale instead of single (Example 5.5).

Example 5.5 Bright Sheng, The Song and Dance of Tears, The Dance, mm. 140-147

Musical notation for Example 5.5, Pipa and Piano parts. The top system shows the Pipa part in 2/4 time, marked *ff*, with a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The bottom system shows the Piano part in 2/4 time, marked *ff*, with a dense texture of chords and moving lines in both hands. The notation includes various accidentals and dynamic markings.

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What follows this section is a repeat of D1, but the orchestration has shifted from the piano and other soloists to the strings and winds. This short repeat brings a drop in the orchestration to only the solo ensemble that continues the octatonic motive. The orchestra

<sup>141</sup> Excerpt is transposed to the key of F.



adds light, coloristic effects with solo instruments in the strings, brass, and winds. The strings and brass accompany this octatonic scale with dissonant chords accentuating the piano's scalar passages with rhythmic intensity. This section (D3) continues from mm. 189-265 which is quite substantial compared to the other sections. This added length allows time for all the solo instruments to play and develop the characters of "The Dance," before the entire orchestra picks up its energy from mm. 266-292. This climatic D4 section incorporates the octatonic motive in the winds and strings, while the brass sustains long, dissonant pedal tones. Following a sustained fortissimo in the brass from mm. 289-292, a moment of silence is interrupted by the solo ensemble.

In section D5, the solo ensemble attempts to restart some of the ideas already introduced in the movement. The harmonic area has shifted to A-major and A-mixolydian with the octatonic scale still used by the solo ensemble. The solo ensemble is unsuccessful in its attempt to create energy, and the momentum sputters to a halt with clicks and taps in the pipa and solo cello. Dramatically, the following section (D6) springs to life, reviving the same motives first heard in D1 and quickly grows to a fortissimo. This ushers in a new compositional technique to this piece, but one that has often been discussed in this research, a dynamic call and response between solo ensemble and orchestra. Incorporating elements from the previous "Dance" sections, as well as the motivic glissandi from the introduction, the music segues directly into a truncated version of mm. 1-16. This repeated introduction culminates similarly to the beginning of the work with the strikingly dissonant chords of the sheng moving downward until the sound fades away into the final section of the work, "Tears."

## Tears

Over an open fourth between F-sharp and B in the strings, the cello laments inspirations of a tune that was heard by Bright Sheng during his journey on the Silk Road titled “Tears.” This lament, which recounts the agony of an elderly’s lost youth, is similar in shape to the more optimistic melody heard in “The Song,” but the B-minor context of “Tears” over the open fourth in the strings creates an inert, disparaging atmosphere (Example 5.6).

Example 5.6 Bright Sheng, The Song and Dance of Tears, Tears, mm. 372-378

Tears  
Molto adagio ♩=40 (♩=80)  
con sord.

Solo Vc.

Vln. I  
ppp  
last 3 players, con sord.  
free bowing

Vln. II  
ppp  
con sord.  
free bowing

Vla.  
ppp  
con sord., div free bowing

Vc.  
ppp  
con sord., div free bowing  
1 solo, pizz. (con sord.)

Db.  
ppp  
con sord., div free bowing  
1 solo, pizz. (con sord.)

poco

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Compared to “The Song” and “The Dance” sections of this work, “Tears” is only a small fraction of the overall measures from mm. 372-427, but its dirge-like tempo and almost timeless feel, portrays a depth of emotion that comes full circle. Keeping the

contents of the character similar throughout this section adds to its sense of stasis as the key centers slowly shift from B-minor, to eventually C-sharp, that ends the piece with a sense of loss. Other than the initial melody introduced at the beginning of “Tears,” the rest of this section affects a mood of sadness and regret. A reduced string section continually plays high harmonics while the piano repeats short bursts of minor chords with added tritones. There are a few bright moments that lighten the mood, like when the clarinet at m. 402 plays a short duet with the piano in A-major, but this is offset by the pedal G and D in the low strings that clash with the A-major tonality of the rest of the orchestra. What started as a beautiful song and dance has transformed into a lament of sadness and ends in pattering sobs accentuated in the harp, cello, and bass, fading into nothing.

### **Melodic and Harmonic Content**

The work could be considered three separate character pieces, with each portraying an emotion and containing distinct harmonic framework. Melodically, Sheng’s phrasing in “The Song” and “Tears” is long and endless, often flowing from one instrument to the next rather than being broken into groups of phrases. This endless melody is a product of Sheng’s usage of modes in both “The Song” and “Tears.” By avoiding evident triadic harmony, tendency tones are avoided, and instead, different modes create a circular harmonic structure allowing long, winding sections that focus on energy and character more than melody and phrase. Sheng still makes an effort to develop his ideas and does so freely throughout the work, but writing catchy melodies was undoubtedly not Sheng’s objective with this work. Example 5.1, as discussed earlier in this chapter, is an excellent example of Sheng’s long, endless melodic writing.

Because Sheng was creating original melodies inspired by the folk songs he gathered during his journey on the Silk Road, there are some hints at the framework and scales Sheng is referencing when writing this work. When Sheng visited Xi'an in northwest China, he attended a performance of Qin opera and wrote about it in his journal stating:

I found some answers while attending a performance of Qin opera, whose history can be traced back to as early as the Qin Dynasty (2<sup>nd</sup> century BC)...The dramatically charged singing music is divided into two categories: happy and sorrowful tunes. The happy tunes, commonly believed to derive from folksongs of Shaanxi and Gansu, are based on pentatonic scales (i.e. five notes in each octave), like most mainstream Chinese music. What fascinates me the most are the unusual sorrowful tunes, which, I suspect older, appear to have a closer relationship with the music cultures from Central Asia, and share many of their traits. These tunes are based on the scale of eight pitches in an octave, a phenomenon peculiar for Chinese music. Highlighting the exoticism, sorrowful melodies emphasize the dissonant intervals of the scale—tritones and major and minor sevenths and ninths. In addition, Qin opera possesses other Central Asian characteristics, such as microtonal pitch bending, and the fiercely heartfelt singing style which sometimes resembles shouting more than singing.<sup>142</sup>

Although Sheng does not mention that he uses these types of sorrowful scales explicitly in this particular work, the quote above describes several central ideas found in *The Song and Dance of Tears*. The emphasis on dissonant intervals such as the tritone and major and minor sevenths is found in the opening bars of the work. The brass announces the opening call with a dramatic mix of major and minor sevenths. The climatic downward scale of the sheng is a combination of tritones and fifths (Example 5.7, 5.8).

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<sup>142</sup> Bright Sheng, "Melodies of the Silk Road," 3, accessed February 16, 2018, <http://brightsheng.com/articles/essayfilesbybs/MELODIES%20OF%20THE%20SILK%20ROAD%20.pdf>.

Example 5.7 Bright Sheng, *The Song and Dance of Tears*, mm. 1-2<sup>143</sup>

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Example 5.8 Bright Sheng, *The Song and Dance of Tears*, mm. 13-16

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The 8-tone scale that Sheng mentions being used for sorrowful tunes in Qin opera is discussed in Yayao Uno Everett's book, *Reconfiguring Myth and Narrative in*

<sup>143</sup> Excerpt is transposed to F in the Horns and C in the Trumpets.

*Contemporary Opera*. According to Yayao this scale, called *kuyin* or “bitter tone” uses all seven scale tones with a flattened third and seventh scale degree, creating a dorian mode that centers around scale degrees 4, and 7.<sup>144</sup> There is evidence of Sheng using this type of scale throughout the work, but the melodic content of the pipa and solo cello from mm. 47-57 (Example 5.9) gives a good representation of the dorian mode being used while also highlighting scale degrees 4 and 7.

Example 5.9 Bright Sheng, *The Song and Dance of Tears*, *The Song*, mm. 47-57

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Notice how the pipa and solo cello work in close relation with each other, shifting from C-sharp dorian to C-sharp minor freely, a product of Sheng's creative brilliance using these modes interchangeably to create the intensely emotional character of “The Song.” It

<sup>144</sup> Yayoi Uno Everett, *Reconfiguring Myth and Narrative in Contemporary Opera: Osvaldo Golijov, Kaija Saariaho, John Adams, and Tan Dun* (Indiana University Press, 2015), 177.

is hard to say how much of the modal framework in this piece is melodic and which is harmonic, but it is certain that they are used freely within each section creating several moments of unique interplay between dissonance and consonance.

Sheng, like the other composers discussed in this research, additionally uses a common tactic to subvert triadic harmony by replacing the third of a chord with either the second or the fourth. This allows quartal harmony and pentatonic modes to work seamlessly together. Although Sheng is not using exclusively pentatonic modes, he does often use quartal harmony as support for many of the sharply dissonant sections of the work. Mm. 6-13 demonstrate this quartal support for the intensely dissonant melody in the sheng (Example 5.10).

Example 5.10 Bright Sheng, The Song and Dance of Tears,  
 Quartal Harmony and String Reduction, mm. 6-7

The musical score for Example 5.10 is presented in two systems. The first system, labeled 'Quartal Harmony', shows a piano accompaniment in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats. The right hand plays a series of chords, and the left hand plays a corresponding quartal harmony. The second system, labeled 'String Reduction mm. 6-7', shows a string reduction of the same material. The dynamics are marked as *ff* (fortissimo) and *ppp* (pianissimo), with a crescendo leading from *ppp* to *ff* and a decrescendo leading from *ff* back to *ppp*.

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### Performance Considerations

Because this work has a group of soloists rather than only one, it is essential to approach each soloist equally. Sheng does not favor one solo instrument over another and approaches the work as a solo ensemble within the larger orchestra. Because of this, it is vital to distinguish this in the set up by keeping these instruments together, in front of the

orchestra. Sheng suggests this is accomplished by putting the sheng, pipa, and cello in the crook of the piano in front of the orchestra and pushing back the first violins to accommodate for the size of the piano. The pipa should also be amplified by a single speaker and microphone set up, rather than through the house speakers. This is important because without the amplifier the pipa's sound would be covered by the orchestra. Utilizing any house speakers to amplify the sheng or the pipa would ruin the balance between soloists and orchestra.

### **Conclusions**

Unlike the emulation of Chinese instruments in *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* or Tan's pipa concerto, Sheng's work keeps the focus on the musical aspects. Sheng's use of the sheng and pipa are primarily for their colors and sonic characteristics, rather than their attachment to Chinese music history. This is also related to how Yin Chengong used the piano in *Yellow River Piano Concerto*. The history and the origin of the instrument should not be the focus of the discussion. Instead, the music itself and the unique characteristics each instrument can bring to the work.

Sheng is exceptional in his mixing of Chinese and Western techniques because both techniques freely intermingle. So much so that it is hard to pinpoint where one technique stops and another begins. His usage of modes points strongly to Hindemith, and the influence of Bartók is almost glaring. More subtly, there are elements of Qin opera, and the open, non-triadic harmony that gives the work its Eastern flavor. The programmatic aspects of this work are strongly Chinese and tell a dramatic story that encompasses several emotions. Chinese music is not known for its dissonance, but it is clear in these examples that Sheng is taking the laments and sorrowful songs he heard



during his journey on the Silk Road and synthesizing them using all the colors in his musical palette.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

#### 6.1 CONCLUSIONS

Of the five pieces discussed, each brings a distinct perspective of how Western and Eastern elements combine to create something new. At the center of this is a concept central to Chinese aesthetics called *yijing*. Edward Ho, in his article titled, “Aesthetic Considerations in Understanding Chinese Literati Musical Behaviour” describes *yijing* in the following way:

It is an inner vision about something seen vividly in the imagination of the human mind. It is abstract. It can be described as *xianwai zhi yin*, which means an extra-musical (philosophical, cosmological or literary) idea that lingers on after the performance of a piece of music...*yijing* requires the emotional involvement and imagination of the listeners as well as the performer’s understanding of this aesthetic principle.<sup>145</sup>

Expressive imagery, through both the soloist and the orchestra, is key in realizing *yijing* in each of the works. Regardless of the Eastern or Western origin of the instruments used, the imagery expressed is crucial in the eyes of Chinese aesthetics. For *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*, this imagery is of metamorphosis; for *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, it is the majestic struggle of the waters and the people that live around it; for *Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra*, it is the spirit of the Han Chinese; for *Concerto for Pipa*

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<sup>145</sup> Edward Ho, “Aesthetic Considerations in Understanding Chinese Literati Musical Behaviour,” *British Journal of Ethnomusicology* 6 (1997): 46.

*and String Orchestra*, it is communicating with spirits, and lastly, for *The Song and Dance of Tears*, it is the journey from joy, to excitement, to sorrow. The musical instruments used as the soloist are the chief vehicle to portray and achieve the highest state of *yijing*, and through their unique sonic characteristics bring the listener closer to achieving that understanding of what lingers past the end of the performance.

The importance of *yijing* and the study of the cultural influences in each piece, including the political environment, gives the listener a crucial piece of the puzzle in understanding “why” behind a piece of music. What many scholars and researchers often neglect is “how.” Isolating the important programmatic, melodic, harmonic, and instrumental factors that made early Chinese concerti with Western orchestra work, and applying those concepts to three differing examples, has been the central focus of this research. From each category, some important conclusions can be made.

Programmatic factors most closely link to *yijing* and are the central driving force in the narrative of each piece. In the first two examples, the narrative was defined by either the close adherence to Western form or the direct avoidance of it. The three later examples used form less and less as a central tool and relied on the programmatic aspects of the work to drive the music forward. *Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra* was the piece most closely linked to a Western form, while *Concerto for Pipa and String Orchestra* and *The Song and Dance of Tears* used more isolated character pieces within a set to define the formal construction of the work at large.

Melodic content in *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* and *Yellow River Piano Concerto* was greatly influenced by Chinese modes and folk songs. This category shows some of the deepest connections between all five works. These connections revolve

around the history and importance of Chinese *diao* and the folk songs that are constructed using this language. While *Concerto for Bamboo Flute and Orchestra* and *Concerto for Pipa and String Orchestra* both contain melodies that can be described using Chinese *diao*, *Concerto for Pipa and String Orchestra* and *The Song and Dance of Tears* also include varying levels of Western melodic writing that take the essence of the folk song and continue that idea to new levels, blending and shaping melodies that contain both Western and Eastern elements.

Harmonic content is also deeply connected between each piece and shows an astonishing level of Western technique that is shifted and changed to fit the needs of each composer. One of the most central factors identified in this research is the avoidance of triadic harmony, with *Yellow River Piano Concerto* being an exception due to its extensive use of late nineteenth-century harmony. The open and non-progressive character created by avoiding thirds in chords goes hand in hand with the Chinese melodic framework that allows melodies to progress without the aid of a strong harmonic framework. Even though static harmony in Western music is relegated to some certain genres, in Chinese music, it allows the character of the work to become the central focus.

The last factor discussed in this research is the usage of Chinese instruments within the scope of a Western orchestra. In *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* and *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, Chinese instruments were emulated to a great extent instead of used directly. This gave both works a strong Eastern flavor without the usage of Eastern instruments. In the examinations of the three later works the flavor and character of each of the Chinese instruments created exciting and complex dynamics between soloist and orchestra. The unique colors of Chinese instruments foster an interesting dialogue when it

comes to the ears of the Western audience. John Winzenberg touches on this subject in his article titled, “Spanning the Timbral Divide: Insiders, Outsiders, and Novelty in Chinese-Western Fusion Concertos” saying,

An entire subgenre of late twentieth-century Chinese-Western fusion concertos embodies an increasing tension between insiders and outsiders in terms of cultural-timbral novelty. This occurs metaphorically when the Western concerto is infused with Eastern elements, seemingly reflecting a new sociohistorical reality.<sup>146</sup>

The idea that a Chinese instrument is novel to Western audiences is slowly diminishing over time and gaining more acceptance as more works contain these instruments. At the same time, the unique sounds that Winzenberg explains as insider-outsider continue to create a paradoxical relationship between Chinese instruments and Western orchestras. It is the nasal, buzzing quality of the bamboo flute that makes it stand out from the orchestra, while the bending and sliding of tones on the pipa create interesting opportunities for blending and experimentation with the strings. The sheng’s reedy, organ-like sound pairs it most closely with instruments already Western, but the shape and instrument’s history distinctly set it apart. How these instruments are successful when paired with a Western orchestra is less about the shocking differences visually and aurally, and more about the cultural and musical concepts that can be shared and integrated into each composition. In the bamboo flute concerto, Ma Shui-long used the bamboo flutes energy and lively tone to bring out those similar characteristics in the orchestra. In the pipa concerto, Tan Dun used the opposing playing styles of *wenqu* and *wuqu* to create a compositional dialogue that glued the piece together between movements. In *The Song and Dance of Tears*, Bright Sheng used multiple levels of

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<sup>146</sup> Winzenburg, “Spanning the Timbral Divide,” 188.

interplay, the interplay between Chinese and Western solo ensemble; and the interplay between solo ensemble and orchestra, to create a multilayered dialogue that takes the listener on a sonic journey. Over time, just as the world has become more connected and blended, so too will the music of diverse cultures become shared and experienced so that sounds are no longer novel but embraced for what they each bring to the music.

## 6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

This research only explores three works from the emerging genre of “fusion concerto” and the musical elements that make each function. There has been a wealth of research on the social, political, and cultural aspects of Eastern music, but little research on the direct analysis of these types of works, specifically music that contains both Western and Eastern instruments. There is immense value in understanding these works from an analytical standpoint, and the music of Ma Shui-long, Tan Dun, and Bright Sheng presents opportunities for further musical analysis, not just cultural and historical studies. The broader topic of “fusion concerto” is becoming increasingly popular in the mainstream repertoire, and how this genre will continue to develop warrants continued study. Lastly, the concept of cultural blending and the effects of works like the ones discussed in this research have on society is a fascinating topic, and perhaps one that requires more time to pass before it can be adequately analyzed.

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## APPENDIX A – COPYRIGHT RELEASES

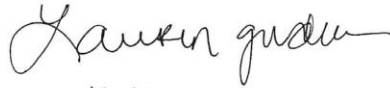
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Mr. Alex Wise  
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Pitkin, CO 81241

RE: Xian Xinghai YELLOW RIVER Piano Concerto  
Movement I, solo piano, mm. 17-20  
Movement I, solo piano, mm. 51-58  
Movement I, flute and oboe, mm. 84-87  
Movement II, Horn and Trumpet reduction, mm. 61-64  
Movement IV, solo piano, mm. 19-30  
Movement I, orchestra reduction, mm. 1-5  
Movement III, solo piano, mm. 55-57  
Movement III, solo piano, mm. 64-69  
Movement III, solo piano, mm. 2-15

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Mr. Alex Wise  
February 1, 2018  
Page 2

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By: Caroline Kane  
Caroline Kane, Vice President  
Licensing and Administration

By: Alex Wise  
Alex Wise



Alex Wise <alexwise3@gmail.com>

---

**Re: The information of Ma Shui-Long**

---

**SpringAutumn Music** <springautumnmusic@gmail.com>

Sun, Feb 4, 2018 at 12:52  
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February 20, 2018

Alex Wise  
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Pitkin, CO 81241

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Will Adams  
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## APPENDIX B – RECITAL PROGRAMS



UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTH CAROLINA**  
School of Music

*presents*

**ALEX WISE, conductor**

**in**

**DOCTORAL RECITAL**

**Wednesday, November 12, 2014**

**7:15 PM • Room 016**

Serenade

I. Preludium  
II. Andante espressivo  
IV. Marcia

Dag Wirén  
(1905-1986)

Two Elegiac Melodies

I. Herzwunden  
II. Letzter Frühling

Edvard Grieg  
(1843-1907)

Cantique

Samantha Marshall and Emily Stumpf, *flutes*

Jules Massenet  
(1842-1912)

Psalm and Fugue

I. Andante  
II. Allegretto

Alan Hovhaness  
(1911-2000)

*Mr. Wise is a student of Donald Portnoy.  
This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Conducting.*



UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTH CAROLINA**

School of Music

*presents*

**ALEX WISE, conductor**  
**in**  
**DOCTORAL RECITAL**

**Monday, February 16, 2015 • 7:30 pm • Recital Hall**

Nonet for Strings	Aaron Copland (1900-1990)
Dover Beach	Samuel Barber (1910-1981)
Jonathan Trotter, <i>baritone</i>	
Appalachian Spring – Suite for 13 Instruments	Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

**USC Kamera Orchestra**

\*Andrew Jones, *concertmaster*;  
Samuel Breitenbach; Seán Heely, *violin I*  
\*Hannah Schendel, Nusheen Farahani, *violin II*  
\*Travis Baird, Emily Quandahl; \*\*Zoe Rosner, *viola*  
\*Jung Chieh Hsu, Ryan Knott; \*\*Jordan Bartow, *cello*  
Joseph Gaskins, *bass*  
Lauren Watkins, *flute*  
Zachary Bond, *clarinet*  
Daniel Wolfe, *bassoon*  
Hye Jee Jang, *piano*

\*Member of string quartet

\*\*Additional member for Nonet

*Mr. Wise is a student of Donald Portnoy.  
This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirement  
for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Conducting.*



UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTH CAROLINA**

School of Music

*presents*

**ALEX WISE, *conductor***  
**in**  
**GRADUATE RECITAL**

**USC Kamera Orchestra**

**Monday, October 26, 2015**  
**4:30 PM • Koger**

Piano Concerto No. 23 in A Major, K. 488 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
I. Allegro (1756-1791)  
II. Adagio  
III. Allegro assai

Claudio Olivera, *piano*

Symphony No. 8 in F Major Ludwig van Beethoven  
I. Allegro vivace e con brio (1770-1827)  
II. Allegretto scherzando  
III. Tempo di Menuetto  
IV. Allegro vivace

*Mr. Wise is a student of Dr. Donald Portnoy.  
This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Conducting.*

University of  
South Carolina

School of Music

*Presents*

Alex Wise, Conductor

In

Lecture-Recital

Thursday, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016

7:30 PM – Rm. 006

When East Meets West:  
Considerations for Performing Traditional Chinese Music

Alex Wise

Dance of the Yao People (瑶族舞曲)

Mao Yuan/Liu Tieshan  
(b. 1926)

Liang Xiao (Beautiful Evening) (良宵)

Liu Tianhua  
(1895-1932)

Nyamsaikhan Odsuren, Andrea Vogt – Violin I  
Buddy Fiorillo, Worth Lewallen – Violin II  
Carson Dixon, Hayden Denesha – Viola  
Jordan Bartow, Hannah Riley – Violincello  
Logan Lysaght – Double Bass

*Mr. Wise is a student of Dr. Donald Portnoy. This lecture-recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in Orchestral Conducting.*