

## ASSOCIATION FOR CHINESE MUSIC RESEARCH

## 中國音樂研究會

## NEWSLETTER

Volume 3, No. 1/Winter 1990

Editor: Bell Yung

Assistant: Helen Rees

From the Editor

Beginning with the first meeting in the Fall of 1987 in Rochester, New York, the Association for Chinese Music Research has entered its fourth year of existence. It may be timely to remind us of its purpose, and to summarize its activities to date.

The ACMR is an organization whose membership is to comprise anyone with an interest in the scholarly study of Chinese music, and whose purpose is to establish channels for communication and a forum for exchange of ideas and information. Catering mainly to those living in the U.S. and Canada, the group meets twice a year, in conjunction with the annual meetings of the Conference on Chinese Oral and Performing Literature (CHINOPERL) and the Association for Asian Studies in March-April, and the annual Society for Ethnomusicology meetings in October-November. Two Newsletters are published and distributed annually to create a wider network.

A summary of its semi-annual meetings with number of participants is as follows:

1st meeting	October 19, 1986, Rochester, NY	12
2nd meeting	April 12, 1987, Cambridge, MA	18
3rd meeting	November 5, 1987, Ann Arbor, MI	35
4th meeting	March 27, 1988, San Francisco, CA	14
5th meeting	October 20, 1988, Tempe, AZ	20 (estimate)
6th meeting	March 17, 1989, Washington D.C.	16
7th meeting	November 10, 1989, Cambridge, MA	35

A summary of Newsletters published with number of pages is as follows:

Newsletter No. 1, June 1987	6 pp
Newsletter Vol. 1, No. 2, December 1987	11 pp
Newsletter Vol. 2, No. 1, Summer 1988	12 pp
Newsletter Vol. 3, No. 1, Winter 1990	13 pp

Its mailing list currently stands at exactly one hundred.

The above record shows that the organization has continued to thrive in terms of its semi-annual meetings. However, the *Newsletter* has lapsed in its publication since its last appearance in the summer of 1988, edited by Fredric Lieberman. It will resume publication with this issue under the new editorship of Bell Yung, assisted by Helen Rees.

The short-term effectiveness and the long-term value of the *Newsletter* rely solely upon the active contribution of "news" items from ACMR members. Aside from reporting on the proceedings of the meetings and summaries of papers delivered, the *Newsletter* is a convenient channel for the recording and dissemination of the following kinds of information:

- Recently published books and articles on Chinese music
- Recently completed Ph.D. dissertations and M.A. theses
- Scholarly meetings of interest to ACMR
- Noted performances of Chinese music
- News of institutions -- establishment of a new program or major changes in an existing program in Chinese music; new students and faculty members, etc.

News of individuals -- publications, performances, fieldwork experiences, honors and awards, grants and fellowships, etc.

News on scholarly and performing activities from the PRC, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and overseas Chinese communities

Members are encouraged to submit information on any of the above categories. It goes without saying that only by pulling forces together can the "news" become truly comprehensive and useful. The *Newsletter* also serves as a forum for opinions and ideas. Members are therefore encouraged to send in short letters expressing your viewpoints on any matter that is relevant to ACMR.

At the end of this *Newsletter* will be found a membership form, which you are urged to fill in and submit. Please enclose a membership fee of \$5 which will be used to cover printing, mailing, and other expenses in the preparation, production, and distribution of the two newsletters of Volume 3. Students and unemployed readers may elect to waive the membership fee. All are urged to return the form (and to make copies of it and pass along to friends and colleagues) to help the future planning and development of ACMR. A complete and updated list of members will be included in the next *Newsletter*.

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This issue will summarize the proceedings of the last three ACMR meetings: in Tempe, Arizona, in Washington D.C., and in Cambridge, Massachusetts respectively; nine reports were presented altogether, three in each meeting. Summaries of six of the reports have been submitted by the presenters, and are printed in the following pages. The issue also contains a report on three meetings of relevance to ACMR held in December 1988 and January 1989, and announces several future meetings in the coming months, including the next ACMR meeting to be held in Chicago in April 1990. A list of recent Ph.D. recipients who worked on Chinese music and titles of their dissertations are included.

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**The fifth semi-annual meeting of ACMR** was held on Thursday, October 20, 1988 from 7:30 to 10 pm in the Xavier Room, Sheraton Tempe Mission Palms Hotel in Tempe, Arizona. It was held in conjunction with the 33rd annual meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology.

Three reports were given:

Bell Yung (University of Pittsburgh)

Some thoughts on the transcription of *guqin* music into staff notation

Rulan Chao Pian (Harvard University)

The issue of vocal styles in China today

Fredric Lieberman (University of California, Santa Cruz)

De-mystifying the *lü*: the origami method

A short business meeting followed. About twenty people attended the meeting; unfortunately the record of attendees is not available to the editor at this point.

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**The sixth semi-annual meeting of ACMR** was held on Friday, March 17, 1989 from 1:30 to 4:30 pm, on the campus of George Washington University, Washington D.C. It was held in conjunction with the 21st annual meeting of CHINOPERL (Conference on Chinese Oral and Performing Literature) and with the 41st annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies.

There were three reports:

Raffaella Gallio (University of Venice and University of Pittsburgh)

The chapters on music in *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 (1044-1060)  
Siu-wah Yu (Harvard University)

The significance of the autobiography of Lui Puiyuan 呂培原 in the study of  
contemporary Chinese music

Puyang Mi (University of Maryland at Baltimore County)

What, if anything, is a *ling* 令? -- Some Aspects of the Study of *Hua'er* 花儿

A short business meeting followed. Aside from the speakers, the meeting was attended by Mercedes Dejunco, Nancy Guy, Alan Kagan, Pinghui Li, Yan-mai Liang, Chun-jo Liu, Lindy Li Mark, David Moser, Tung Shen, Bell Yung, Danny Yung, Sue Zheng, and Jingjing Zhao.

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The seventh semi-annual meeting of ACMR was held on Friday, November 10, 1989 from 5:30 to 9 pm in the Mezzanine Lounge, Student Center, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA, in conjunction with the annual conference of the Society for Ethnomusicology. Three reports were given:

Kyle Heide (Indiana University at Bloomington)

*Nanguan* 南管 music in five cities -- a field report

Nancy Guy (University of Pittsburgh)

Response to Ching-Hsi Perng's article "At the Crossroads: Peking Opera in Taiwan Today" in *Asian Theatre Journal* 6.2 (Fall 1989)

Daniel Ferguson (University of California at Berkeley)

Stage language change and the emergence of the *pinghau* 平喉 voice type in Cantonese opera

The meeting was honored by the presence of two distinguished guests: Mr. Luo Pinchao 羅品超, a professional Cantonese opera singer for sixty years who has recently immigrated to the United States, and Mr. Yu Xuehong 余雪紅, a *sheng* soloist from the Tianjin Song and Dance Company 天津歌舞團. Mr. Luo performed several excerpts from his vast Cantonese operatic repertory to the delight of all, and Mr. Yu demonstrated on a large "chromatic" *sheng* which he invented and constructed.

Aside from the speakers and special guests, those present included: Sauyan Chan, Peter Chang, Mingdao Chen, Der-hang Chin, Renee Colwell, Kuo-huang Han, Kyle Heide, Jane Henry, Alan Kagan, Frederick Lau, David Mingyue Liang, Terry Liu, Kathy Lowry, Puyang Mi, Steven Nelson, J.H. Kwabena Nketia, Christopher Pak, Arnold Perris, Rulan Chao Pian, Robert Provine, Helen Rees, Barbara Smith, Li Wei, Larry Witzleben, Wenguang Wu, Isabel Wong, Siu-wah Yu, Bell Yung, Wei-hua Zhang, and Jinmin Zhou.

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### Three recent meetings in Cambridge, Hong Kong, and Shanghai (Reported by Bell Yung)

Three conferences of interest to ACMR members were held in Cambridge (MA), Hong Kong and Shanghai respectively during December 1988 and January 1989. All three conferences were devoted either exclusively to Chinese music exclusively, or to Chinese music as the main focus. Another distinctive feature that the conferences share is that Chinese language was used exclusively in the presentation of papers and in the discussion.

The first was the Jiu Zhou Symposia held annually in the first weekend of December in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in which a group of scholars in various disciplines of the social sciences and humanites in the Chinese field gather to devote a whole day to papers and

discussion on certain chosen topics. For 1988, the symposium, held on Saturday, December 3rd, was organized by Rulan Chao Pian with the topics of "music" for the morning session and of "drama" for the afternoon session, within the central theme of "Performance and Context". Three papers on music and three on drama were presented to an audience of about eighty. A banquet followed the paper sessions and the film "Red Sorghum" was shown in the evening. ACMR members who read papers were Kuo-huang Han, Rulan Chao Pian and Bell Yung.

The second was the "International Colloquium on Chinese Music" held at the Chinese University of Hong Kong from December 27th to 31st, 1988. It was jointly sponsored by the Chinese Music Archive of the Music Department, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and the Society for Ethnomusicological Research in Hong Kong. Aside from formal opening and closing ceremonies and banquets, twenty-two papers were read in six sessions, entitled respectively "Relationship between music and its performance context", "Analysis of Chinese music", "Chinese music of the past", "Chinese music of the ethnic minorities", "Basic issues in Chinese music research I" and "Basic issues in Chinese music research II". One session was given to each participant's brief summary of his or her scholarly interests, and the last session was devoted to general and concluding discussions. In addition, participants were invited to a banquet and concert of Fujian *nanyin* (or *nanguan*) music on the evening of the 29th, and a tour of Hong Kong on the morning of the 31st. Among the twenty-two speakers, fourteen were from the PRC, one from Taiwan, three from the United States, and four from Hong Kong. Of those from the PRC, five were from Shanghai, six from Beijing, one each from Guangzhou, Jinan (Shandong), and Urumuqi (Xinjiang). ACMR members who read papers were Sau-yan Chan, Joseph Lam, Mingyue Liang, Rulan Chao Pian, Poon-yeh Tsao, Larry Witzleben and Bell Yung.

The organizers of the conference, Sau-yan Chan, Joseph Lam, Poon-yeh Tsao, and Larry Witzleben, who are faculty members in Chinese Music at the Chinese University of Hong Kong as well as core members of the Society for Ethnomusicological Research in Hong Kong, must be congratulated on one of the best prepared, organized, and run conferences that this writer has attended. A *Proceeding* for the conference papers has been planned.

The third conference was the "Guanyu dongfang yinyue de fengge wenti" [On the question of "style" in Oriental music]. Sponsored by the Dongfang Yinyue Xuehui [Oriental Music Association] of Shanghai, the conference was held at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music from January 5th through 8th, 1989. Thirty-four papers were read in five sessions, which were titled respectively "General issues on musical style", "On the compositions and performance of Chinese music", "On Chinese music of the past", "On the musical styles of various countries in the Orient", and "Independent papers". Two afternoons were devoted to general discussions. In addition to the formal events, there was a "jam session" of *guqin* music [seven-string zither] on the evening of the 5th, a concert of *Jiangnan Sizhu* ["Silk and bamboo" instrumental music of the Jiangnan area] on the evening of the 6th, a concert of *zheng* music [movable-bridge zither] on the afternoon of the 7th, and a business meeting for the Oriental Music Association on the afternoon of the 8th. There were also several banquets and smaller dinners for foreign visitors. I have enclosed a copy of the program in this report.

Among the thirty-four who read papers, four were from the United States, two from Japan, one from Holland, and the rest from various parts of China, including Beijing, Fuzhou (Fujian), Nanning (Guangxi), and Wuhan (Hubei). The majority were from the Shanghai area, representing the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Fudan University, Shanghai Normal University, the Shanghai *Kunqu* Troupe, and the Shanghai National Music Orchestra. The conference was also attended by about thirty observers. ACMR members who read papers were Kuo-huang Han, Rulan Chao Pian and Bell Yung.

This is one of the first truly "international" conferences on Chinese music held in China. While the focus was on "style", a broad range of issues on musicological research was raised and discussed. The conference was significant to the foreign visitors because it brought them into direct contact with a large number of scholars from different parts of China for exchange of

ideas and research methods. It was significant to the Chinese scholars because, through the few foreign participants, they learned of some of the basic philosophies and concepts of music and musicological research current in the West, together with new features in methodology. Through open and discreet exchanges, the participants also discussed how a conference could be run effectively under difficult conditions. A *Proceeding* will be published in the near future by the Oriental Music Association.

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### Next ACMR Meeting

The eighth semi-annual meeting of ACMR will be held on Friday, April 6, 1990 from 6 to 8 pm in Room PDR#5 in The Palmer House in Chicago (where AAS will meet). The meeting will be held in conjunction with the 22nd annual meeting of CHINOPERL and the 42nd annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies. Anyone interested in giving a report please contact Bell Yung. Graduate students are particularly welcome to participate. As usual, ACMR encourages reports on research in progress, fieldwork experiences, and in-depth discussion on narrowly focused subjects.

### Other forthcoming meetings of interest (Compiled by Kuo-huang Han and Bell Yung)

The Fourth International Chinese Ethnomusicological Conference, organized by the Graduate Institute of Music, National Taiwan Normal University, under the sponsorship of the Government Council for Cultural Planning and Development, will be held from April 16 to 21, 1990, in Taipei. The main theme of the conference is "The music of China and Asian area [sic!]", with the sub-theme of "The stability and adaptability of traditional music." Chairman of the conference is Dr. Liang Shang-yung; vice-chairman is Prof. Hsu Tsang-Houei. For information, write to:

Prof. Hsu Tsang-Houei  
No. 63, Lane 26  
Chung-Siao E. Rd., Sec. 4  
Taipei, Taiwan, ROC

The Editorial Department of Zhongguo Yinyue Nianjian 中國音樂年鑑 [Chinese Music Annals], part of Research Institute of Music, China Academy of Arts, will sponsor a national meeting at the Xi'an Conservatory of Music during the first half of June, 1990. The two themes of the meeting are: 1) The editing of *Chinese Music Annals* and issues in relation to the documentation of contemporary musical events; and 2) The future of Chinese musicological research. For information, write to:

Editorial Department of Chinese Music Annals  
Research Institute of Music  
China Academy of Arts  
West Building No. 1  
Xin Yuan Li, Dongzhi Menwai  
Beijing 100027, PRC

The fourth conference on the Music of the Chinese National Minorities will be held in Baotou, Inner Mongolia, in August 1990. For information, write to:

Yuan Bingchang  
Wenyi Yanjiusuo

Zhongyang Minzu Xueyuan  
Beijing  
PRC

A joint conference on the life and compositions of Jiang Wenye 江文也 and on the history of Chinese new music will be held from September 10 to 15, 1990 at the University of Hong Kong. For information, write to:  
Liu Jingzhi  
Center for Asian Studies  
University of Hong Kong  
Hong Kong

Zhongguo Chuantong Yinyue Xuehui 中國傳統音樂學會 [The Society of Chinese Traditional Music] will hold its sixth annual meeting during the second half of December 1990 at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. Its two major themes are 1) The role and effect Chinese traditional music should have in Chinese music education and how it should be taught; 2) The study of *gongdiao* [scale and mode] in the current practice of Chinese traditional music. For information, write to:

Planning committee for the sixth annual meeting of The Society of Chinese Traditional Music  
Shanghai Conservatory of Music  
20 Fenyang Road  
Shanghai, PRC

The International Council for Traditional Music will hold its next biennial meeting in Hong Kong during the first half of June of 1991. The emphasis of the meeting will be on musicology in China, and one of the major themes of the meeting will be "Hong Kong's Role in the Innovation and Modernization of Chinese Music". For information, write to:

International Council for Traditional Music  
Department of Music  
Columbia University  
New York, New York

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### Establishment of the European Foundation for Chinese Music Research (Reported by Helen Rees)

Despite an increasing number of scholars and graduate students engaged in Chinese music research, Europe has so far had no equivalent of the ACMR. Consequently, on January 4 1990, six of us met in Leiden to set up a European Foundation for Chinese Music Research. Those present were: Steve Jones, Frank Kouwenhoven, Francois Picard, Helen Rees, Antoinet Schimmelpenninck and Rembrandt Wolpert. It was agreed that a major aim is to facilitate communication among European scholars and dissemination of information and advice about Chinese music research, including practicalities of fieldwork. With this in mind, a newsletter, *Chinese Music Europe*, abbreviated *Chime*, will be produced. The first issue will be sent free of charge to an initial mailing list of about two hundred individuals and institutions, some from Europe, some outside. Anyone interested is invited to contact Frank Kouwenhoven at Vliet 35, 2311 RD Leiden, Netherlands.

## Summaries of Reports from ACMR meetings

### Fifth semi-annual meeting on October 20, 1988

"Some thoughts on the transcription of *guqin* music into staff notation"

Bell Yung

University of Pittsburgh

The extensive repertory of the seven-string zither is preserved in its own tablature notation in about 150 collections. One of the earliest among them is the collection of 1425 called *Shenqi Mipu* 神奇秘譜, with sixty-three compositions in three volumes. The tablature notation does not give explicit instructions on the rhythm and phrasing of the music; to perform from notation requires the zither player to carry out a process called *dapu* 打譜, in which he has not only to research into the meaning of the symbols, but also to interpret their rhythmic and phrasal implications. To that extent the musician must exercise his own creativity in bringing the music to life. My current research has been the study of the repertory of *Shenqi Mipu* as interpreted and performed by the noted contemporary zither player, the late Yao Bingyan 姚丙炎 of Shanghai. By comparing Yao's performance with the notation, I investigate Yao's reading of the notation, interpretation of its rhythmic and phrasal implications, and his personal creative input into the music.

At the ACMR meeting, I addressed a methodological issue that arises during the research: that of using staff notation to transcribe, and inevitably to interpret as a consequence, Yao's performance as given in the recording. I specifically discussed the question of regular pulse versus free-rhythm, and metrical structure. Yao's performance on the recording offers different interpretations to different listeners; transcription into notational form (staff notation in this case) limits and prioritizes the interpretations.

The original tablature notation, which gives little more than finger positions and plucking methods, leaves much to the individual interpretation of the performer. Through the *dapu* process, the performer "fleshes out" the shape of the music by adding rhythm and phrasing to the finger movements. However, different zither players interpret the notation differently; even the same player inevitably varies in his interpretation to different degrees in different performances. Such variants are acceptable in the zither tradition, and the nature of the tablature notation facilitates and indeed encourages them.

In transcribing a performance (or performances) back to a notational system, particularly one such as staff notation with relatively unambiguous pitch and rhythmic specifications, the flexibility of interpretation as embodied in the original tablature notation is suppressed. One may of course provide alternate versions in the transcription in order to suggest flexibility. There is nevertheless a basic difference between "leaving something unsaid" and "offering a few alternates to suggest flexibility".

It is in this context that the function and value of the tablature notation for the seven-string zither should be reassessed. The tablature notation of the seven-string zither has been criticized as inadequate because of its being imprecise in rhythmic and other kinds of direction. When one understands the high value that the zither tradition places on the personal interpretation of the notation by individual zither players, one sees that the "imprecision" is precisely what allows such personal interpretation to occur and develop.

### Sixth semi-annual meeting on March 17, 1989

"Two Chapters on Music in the *New History of the Tang Dynasty* --  
Problems and Methods of Historiographical Research in Chinese Music"

Raffaella Gallio  
University of Pittsburgh

The Tang dynasty of China (618-906) is considered by many as the most glorious period of Chinese culture, including that of music. An extensive amount of source material about the music of the period, written by both contemporaries and later scholars, has been preserved, including special treatises on music as well as writings of a general nature that include chapters on music. The *New History of the Tang Dynasty*, written by the Song dynasty scholar Ouyang Xiu (1007-1072) between the years 1044 and 1060, belongs to the latter kind.

Gallio recently completed an annotated translation of the two chapters on music in the *New History of the Tang Dynasty* (for a Ph.D. degree in Oriental Studies, University of Venice, 1988). Based on this study, she discusses the problems and methods in research on the musical historiography of China. The paper outlines the aims of the study, reasons for the choice of this text, methods of research, the format and presentation, and the special problems posed by the nature of the text and the context of historiographical research in Chinese music.

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"Annotated Autobiography of Lui Puiyuan 呂培原"

Siu-wah Yu  
Harvard University

Lui Puiyuan is best known as a virtuoso player of the Chinese lute, *pipa*. He came to Hong Kong from Shanghai in 1951. After that he was active as a professional musician in Hong Kong until he emigrated to the United States in 1973.

I have translated and annotated an autobiography of his which was published in a program of his recital given in Taiwan in 1980. The significance of this autobiography lies in that it is an invaluable source on the Chinese music activities of the 30's and 40's and subsequently the music activities in Hong Kong of the 50's to the 70's. It reveals the thoughts of a Chinese musician who was trained in a traditional Chinese environment before 1951 when he came to Hong Kong. It also shows how he adapted to a new environment and to a different market for his music playing. From his autobiography we know how Mr. Lui became involved in the Hong Kong film industry, and how he subsequently organized a Chinese music ensemble for movie soundtracks and popular Mandarin song recordings. He describes how he trained pianists, drummers, trumpeters etc. to play Chinese musical instruments for the purpose of making movie soundtracks and popular Mandarin song accompaniments. There was also the need for a new musical system: that is, equal temperament, as well as a new aesthetics, in order to play in a Western orchestra. Mr. Lui was also very conscious of the fact that he was a professional musician in the sense that he earned his living by playing music.

What Mr. Lui did with his ensemble is similar to those changes in traditional Chinese musical instruments that were already taking place in mainland China, Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysian Chinese instrumental groups. His activities in promoting orchestras and school education in Chinese music are important to the development of Chinese music in Hong Kong in the past thirty years. The translation of his autobiography is only the beginning of a study of the development of Chinese music in the mid-20th century.

Mr. Lui was trained in the tradition of the Silk and Bamboo Ensemble Music *Jiangnan Sizhu*. Since he has been actively involved in ensembles and orchestras of Chinese music in Shanghai



before 1949 and in Hong Kong after 1951, how he looks at the kind of Chinese ensemble music which has been popular in the last forty years would be revealing and of great significance.

As a renowned *pipa* soloist, Mr. Lui on the one hand mastered the traditional repertoire, and on the other, followed closely the "new development" of *pipa* music in mainland China. From my experience of working under Mr. Lui in his Chinese ensemble from 1969 to 1973, I know that he is an expert in both the old and new repertoires, and is certainly familiar with the development of the new *pipa* repertoires in the past forty years. It is my plan to interview Mr. Lui in more detail about his opinion of the *pipa* music of the past forty years in relation to the traditional repertoire which he learned in Shanghai.

Moreover, during my days in Boston since 1985, my nostalgia for Hong Kong induced me to indulge myself in some Cantonese opera recordings. Surprisingly, I found Mr. Lui's name among the musicians in some Cantonese operas. This shows that although Mr. Lui is a native of Jiangsu province, he proved himself to be competent in genres with great regional stylistic differences. His involvement in the recordings of Cantonese opera, which certainly is not his native tradition, would be an extremely interesting case study of internal acculturation among different genres of Chinese music.

A case study of Mr. Lui Puiyuan involves the following possible topics:

1. *Pipa* repertoires, the traditional and the modern (post 1949).
2. The role of Chinese musical instruments in the popular Mandarin songs of the 50's and 60's in Hong Kong and Taiwan.
3. The adaptation of a new musical system, i.e. equal temperament, introduction of harmony and counterpoint, with music composed, arranged and written down, versus an oral tradition and heterophonic improvisation.
4. The idea of ensemble music, from small chamber group to the big "symphonic" Chinese orchestra.
5. Film music, recording and concert setting, mixed orchestra of Western and Chinese instruments.
6. Internal acculturation among various genres: on a general level, among *Jiangnan Sizhu* and Cantonese music, and even *Chaozhou Yinyue*. On a specific level, among *Tanci pipa* style and Mr. Lui's own *pipa* style.
7. Zither (*qin*) music in relation to *pipa* and to the other genres of more popular Chinese music. How does an established *pipa* player like Mr. Lui feel about playing *qin* and *kunqu* music?
8. Finally, Chinese ensemble music in Shanghai before 1951.

It can be summarized as the study of tradition and changes in Chinese music in the mid-20th century. Mr. Lui's autobiography serves as a document of some of these changes and the context in which these changes took place.

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"What, if anything, is a *Ling* 令? -- Some Aspects of the Study of Hua'er 花儿"

Puyang Mi

University of Maryland, Baltimore County

In the study of the Northwest Chinese folksong genre *hua'er*, "flower", the term *ling* presents a terminology problem. The generally accepted modern meaning of *ling* is "tune" or "tune type". It is often stated that there are about a hundred separate tunes in the *hua'er* repertory; and indeed there are about that many *ling* names. The problem is that in *hua'er*--as in many folk traditions round the world--a given tune may have different names, and conversely, the same name may be applied to several different tunes.

The study of *hua'er* tunes, as opposed to textual analysis, is a fairly recent phenomenon. One can find different approaches to naming a *hua'er* tune: a name can be derived from a pre-existing

tune; names can be derived from different parts of the text; and a name can be arbitrarily applied by the collector.

Charles Seeger has reminded us that there is no way of naming a tune except by an associated text. In *hua'er* text collections there are orderly four- (or six-) line verses, the *zhengci* 正詞. In performance, the *zhengci* is improvised and is only part of the song text. There are two other levels of text: *chenci* 襯詞. Some *chenci* are exclamations such as *a*, *ya*, *ye* or *yo*. But another level, the "key passage", is made up of poetic phrases which are less subject to change and would seem to be a better candidate for naming the tune.

The earliest use of *ling* was in the 1940's by Zhang Yaxiong who described it as "idiomatic verbal interludes or passages" which varied from one area to another. For example, *Age de rou ling* ("Brother's Flesh") is so called from the *ling* (key passage) *a ya ge de ge rou*. If one substituted *age de han rourou*, the song would be called *Han rourou ling*, but the tune would remain the same.

Today this tradition still exists. Li Shenghui, a peasant from Huzhu county, deliberately sings multiple texts to the same tune. Thus the tune he uses, the commonly recognized *Bai mudan ling* ("White Peony *Ling*"), has five different *ling* names and the term *ling* is still used to identify the different key passages rather than the tune. This traditional circumstance--a "living fossil"--points out the inadequacy of the modern usage of *ling* to mean tune. There are song names which are related to places or national minorities, but most of the traditional names are derived from the key passages, the *ling*.

From the above observations our earlier conclusion can be verified: traditionally, different *ling* -- key passages -- could be applied to a given tune, and thus one tune would have different *ling* names. Conversely, the same *ling* could be applied to different tunes and thus different tunes would have the same name.

It is clear that one cannot just count *ling* names to arrive at the extent of the repertory. Over the past thirty years there has been a growing tendency to use the term *ling* to mean simply "tune". But we must be aware that there are still occasions when the older meaning is retained.

### Seventh semi-annual meeting on November 10, 1989.

#### "Nanguan 南管 Music in Five Cities: A Field Report"

Kyle Heide  
Indiana University

During the 1988-89 school year, I was a research student in music and anthropology at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. While in Hong Kong, I was able to conduct some part-time preliminary fieldwork with a local *nanguan* ensemble. In May, June and July of 1989 I visited fifteen different *nanguan* associations in the cities of Xiamen, Quanzhou, Taipei and Manila. My primary purpose throughout these wanderings was to choose a site for my fulltime dissertation research, and to define some possibly relevant research questions.

Although the groups I encountered shared a common traditional repertoire, the way in which their performance practices are organized socially and conceived of aesthetically differs greatly. *Nanguan* music thus provides an ideal opportunity for comparative research within one tradition, since its practitioners are spread among different kinds of Hokkien Chinese communities in several nations of East and Southeast Asia. In this brief report, I can mention only a couple of the issues which are worthy of investigation.

The first is style migration and change. *Nanguan* associations outside mainland China often describe their style as coming from one of the traditional rival centers of Quanzhou or Xiamen. Migrations of musicians in recent decades -- for example, from Quanzhou to the primarily Xiamen-influenced Manila groups, or from Manila to Hong Kong and Taiwan -- have

complicated the picture considerably. Also, since the contemporary styles of *nanguan* in Fujian have changed a great deal since the turn of the century, musicians use complex metaphors of time, place, and person (past teachers or performers) to identify with the mainland traditions.

A second area for research, the distinction between amateur and professional, is one of longstanding interest to scholars of Chinese music. Both Quanzhou and Xiamen have professional ensembles, as well as a wide range of amateur groups. Taipei has a number of amateur groups (I visited six) which differ greatly in their membership according to age, gender, professions, reasons for involvement with *nanguan*, and so on. Naturally, the musicians in all of these settings hold different notions of what *nanguan* is, and what its future will or should be.

As for other ethnomusicological concerns, there are enough in *nanguan* to keep several dozen researchers busy for their lifetimes. I (we) welcome the interest of more scholars; if anyone is ever in an area where *nanguan* is played, stop in to listen and consider sending ACMR a report.

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"Response to Ching-Hsi Perng's article 'At the Crossroads: Peking Opera in Taiwan Today'"  
Nancy Guy  
University of Pittsburgh

The essay was written in response to Ching-Hsi Perng's article "At the Crossroads: Peking Opera in Taiwan Today" which appeared in the Fall 1989 issue of the *Asian Theatre Journal*. In his article, Perng asserts that the unpopularity of Peking Opera is due to weaknesses in the form. He advocates that Peking opera should be reformed in order to make it more popular, even if the resulting theatrical form is no longer Peking opera. Perng lists four major areas in which he feels that Peking opera is inadequate and in need of change. The main focus of this response is to reply to Perng's criticism of Peking opera's music and of what he called "deficient dramatic scripts" (Perng, 131). The other two areas which Perng finds to be inadequate are briefly mentioned and several questions raised relating to these issues.

Perng maintains that the general audience often cannot comprehend the words of the arias or of the spoken text. If the incomprehensibility of the language makes the enjoyment of Peking opera impossible, how is it that it apparently serves as no barrier to the enjoyment of American pop tunes or to the appreciation of Western operas, both of which are sung in languages certainly less familiar to the average Chinese than the stylized Chinese heard in Peking opera? The other charge of weakness levelled by Perng is that due to its subject-matter and thematic concerns Peking opera "suffers from a total lack of relevance to the modern world" (Perng, 131). This point could be argued from a number of different angles; however, I would simply like to ask, why is it, if Peking opera holds no relevance to contemporary society, that its performance continues to be subject to censorship? A few months ago, in August 1989, the performance of a Peking opera, based on a script from the mainland, was banned by the R.O.C. Ministry of Education just two days before its Taiwan premiere.

Perng says, "music is certainly one of the areas most in need of reform" (Perng, 131). As Elizabeth Wichmann says, "Aural performance is the most dramatically and aesthetically important aspect of the total performance of Beijing opera . . ." (Wichmann diss. abstract). Peking opera performers and connoisseurs do not say they are going to the theatre to "watch a play"; rather, they say they are going to "listen to theatre". The usage of the phrase *tingxi* or "listening to theatre" is not accidental, but is a key to the understanding of how many aficionados appreciate Peking opera.

Perng seems to have completely overlooked the importance of musical symbolism in Peking opera. Musical symbolism is certainly as integral to the whole system of convention and symbolism in Peking opera as is any other component, including gesture and movement, face painting and stage properties. Perng seems to have been only *looking* for symbolism and not *listening* for it, and consequently has missed one entire stratum of meaning. This lack of

sensitivity to, and understanding of the music is the prime obstacle to his appreciation of the theatrical form.

Besides music, one of Perng's other chief complaints about Peking opera is of its "deficient dramatic scripts" (Perng, 131). Perng's criticism of the lack of dramatic content in Peking opera is directly related to his lack of appreciation for its music. The audience does not attend the performance to find out how the story turns out: they already know. Instead, they go to listen and see the beauty with which the story is executed. As Rulan Chao Pian noted, "when you [went] to hear Mei Lan-fang you [didn't] go to hear him get involved in intrigue of some kind, you [went] to hear him sing". (In *Chinese and Japanese Music-Dramas*, edited by J.I. Crump and William P. Malm, p. 39.)

Perng appears to feel that the only answer to the problem of Peking opera's fading popularity is for it to change, even if this means it must change to the point where "it's no longer Peking opera" (Perng, 139). Unlike Perng, I believe that the current lull in the popularity of traditional Peking opera in Taiwan is not due to some intrinsic deficiency in the art form, but rather, for very complex social reasons there currently is a lack of interest in developing the art of appreciation required in order fully to enjoy this indigenous Chinese theatrical form.

Traditional Peking opera should be allowed to live on and be available for future generations who may once again learn to love and appreciate it. Peking opera and any other theatrical forms which may generate from it should be able to coexist; one does not need to be destroyed in order for others to flourish.

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#### Doctoral dissertations on Chinese music from U.S. institutions since 1985 (Compiled by Kuo-huang Han)

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- Nora Yeh, "Nanguan Music in Taiwan: A Little Known Classical Tradition" Ph.D., Music. University of California, Los Angeles, 1985. (Advisor: Peter Crossley-Holland)