


Spring 2024

Twentieth Century Reforms in Traditional Chinese Music

Jinou Dong
Bard College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/senproj_s2024

 Part of the [Asian Studies Commons](#), [Chinese Studies Commons](#), [Ethnomusicology Commons](#), [Musicology Commons](#), [Near Eastern Languages and Societies Commons](#), and the [Other Languages, Societies, and Cultures Commons](#)



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 4.0 License](#).

Recommended Citation

Dong, Jinou, "Twentieth Century Reforms in Traditional Chinese Music" (2024). *Senior Projects Spring 2024*. 72.

https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/senproj_s2024/72

This Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Bard Undergraduate Senior Projects at Bard Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Senior Projects Spring 2024 by an authorized administrator of Bard Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@bard.edu.

Twentieth Century Reforms in Traditional Chinese Music

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of Social Studies
of Bard College

by
Jinou (Anastasia) Dong

Annandale-on-Hudson, New York
May 2024

Dedication

Dedicated to myself

for the resilience throughout five years of college

for never giving up on my dreams

a journey that began in the fall of 2019 and will conclude at the end of May 2024

At 22 years old, I celebrate the laughs and the tears

grateful for the kindness, courage, strength, and passion that have guided me thus far

Dedicated to my parents,

who brought me into this world

introduced me to the meaning of home and love

and supported every decision I made

—you are the reason I dare to be brave

Dedicated to my instrument—Pipa,

who has been with me since I was five years old

our time and effort spent together

brought me both pride and tears

each note that leaps from every string

bears witness to my growth

—one day, I want the world to know you

Acknowledgements

This Senior Project marks the end of my last year of undergraduate journey that I could not have completed without the dedicated support of my advisor Robert Culp for consistently inspiring, guiding, supporting, and encouraging me—thank you for your patience, help, empathy, and academic expertise. I would like to give my appreciation towards professor Maria Sonevytsky who encouraged me to focus on my instrument Pipa, and provided references for me to shape my Senior Project. Along with all the professors for enlightening my path and guiding my journey. I am fortunate to be their student, and I wish them all the best.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my friends and everyone who has brought warmth and happiness into my life: thank you for saving me time and again when I was on the verge of collapse, confusion, and despair. Your companionship and encouragement have repeatedly helped me to keep my courage. Having you all in my life is a blessing. A specific thanks to one of my best friends, Melonie Bisset, who changed me, embraced me, supported me, and celebrated unforgettable moments with me, providing laughter and solace during the most challenging times.

Now, as I approach the conclusion of my undergraduate college journey, I also want to thank all the experiences I have had and the people I have met. Each encounter, no matter how brief or profound, has been shaping me into the person I am today.

青葱五年，落笔为终。

愿吾永怀赤诚，初心不变，一生坦荡，一生纯善。

愿汝长安久乐，岁月无恙，他日凌云，万事胜意。

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Chapter One: From 1911 to 1949.....	5
Chapter Two: From 1949 to 1966.....	25
Chapter Three: From 1966 to Today.....	53
Conclusion.....	64
Bibliography.....	66

Introduction

This historical research project explores the transformation of Chinese national music in the twentieth century and the reforms in traditional Chinese music, including its education and performance from 1911 to the present under different political and social backgrounds. It focuses on the impact of different ideologies of music reform, the fusion of Western music with Chinese national music in terms of compositional techniques, musical forms, and Western music theories, as well as the path of Chinese music reform. This inquiry takes as its primary example the Pipa, a traditional four string plucking instrument that has been played for thousands years in China, as it was gradually developed from folkloric to formalized, professionalized, and systematized over the past century.

The first chapter of this project discusses the period of change in the reimagining of Chinese national music from 1911 to 1949, a period of substantial socio-political upheaval and cultural change. This chapter focuses on how the May Fourth Movement, as well as the influence of Western music and the return of overseas scholars, such as Xiao Youmei, played a crucial role in shaping the evolution of Chinese national music with Pipa music as an example. In contrast, Liu Tianhua represents the scholars who did not study abroad and worked on the reform of Chinese traditional music, under the influence of a changing social environment. Their varied experiences led Xiao and Liu to establish two different schools of reform ideology, keeping the debate on the best way to reform Chinese national music with the increasing influence of Western music open until Chairman Mao Zedong took power in 1949. This era witnessed the rethinking of traditional Chinese music through incorporating Western musical forms and theories, a process largely facilitated by the rise of School Songs, which were widely circulated songs based on Western tunes, but with lyrics refilled by Chinese musicians to convey the spirit of patriotism and to praise heroism. School Songs played a key role in the spread of Western music in China, influencing the public's musical

tastes and the development of music education, further demonstrating the relationship between music and politics. This chapter also describes the impact of various folk music groups and societies that emerged during this period, which played an important role in preserving traditional Chinese music and promoting new forms of music. These groups, such as the Institute for the Promotion and Practice of Music at Beijing University (Beijing daxue yinyue chuanxi suo) and the Shanghai Cosmos Performing Music Society (Datong yuehui, 1920–1940s), were instrumental in promoting music education and the formation of new musical identities reflecting the influences of both contemporary Chinese and Western cultures. Finally, the chapter explores the broader impact of these developments on the artistic expression of the Pipa through two representative individuals, Liu Tianhua and Hua Yanjun.

The second chapter examines the development of "New National Music" in the People's Republic of China (PRC) from 1949 to 1966, a period following the establishment of the PRC and heavily influenced by Mao Zedong's political thought and music reform ideology. From Mao's 1942 "Talks at Yan'an Forum" to the 1956 "Talks with Music Workers", Mao Zedong further clarified the direction of the reformation of the New National Music and unified the two schools of thought on the reform of Chinese music, represented by Liu Tianhua and Xiao Youmei. Mao emphasized the combination of the characteristics of traditional Chinese music with Western musical forms and techniques, as well as the service of music to the people. Significant reforms during this period included the establishment of music conservatories that led to professional music education and the standardization and formalization of traditional instruments such as the Pipa. This led to the enrichment of the Pipa repertoire, triggered innovations and improvements in the construction of the instrument, and consolidated the Pipa's role in embodying a Chinese musical aesthetic that

incorporated Western music theories and forms. This period marked a critical transition in Chinese musical culture and set the stage for the future development of Chinese musical art.

The third chapter explores the impact of social-political changes on Pipa music from the beginning of the Cultural Revolution in 1966 to the Reform and Opening period that started in the late 1970s. The chapter describes the severe restrictions on musical creativity during the Cultural Revolution, when only performance of Eight Model Operas was approved, leading to stagnation in Pipa composition and performance. After the Cultural Revolution, the situation began to improve with the ideological shift towards liberalization under Deng Xiaoping, which emphasized "building a socialist society with Chinese characteristics" (Bao 2012, 5). This shift fostered a revival of traditional music and cultural expression, particularly through national competitions that promoted the revival and innovation of Pipa music. This chapter also details how these reforms revitalized traditional musical forms, and inspired modern compositional techniques and Western musical influences into Pipa music more broadly. Innovations in Pipa repertoire and performance during this period were characterized by more professional composers combining elements of traditional Chinese culture with Western composition techniques. With these changes, the Pipa was further brought to the world stage and became globally recognized as a representative of Chinese culture and Chinese music.

This project attempts to examine the complex process of how Chinese music has reformed, developed, and innovated under the various political and social environments of different time periods. It also contributes to academic discussions on cross-cultural exchanges in musicology. In addition, the project emphasizes the role of music as an ideological expression and an enhancer of national self-confidence and cohesion during periods of major political and social change in China, that is, shaping and reflecting cultural and national identity through Chinese music. The project aims to answer several key questions: How did

different contexts influence the development of Chinese music? How did Western musical techniques merge with traditional Chinese music? What role did music education and institutional support play in the spread of "New National Music"? What role did important figures in the music industry play in the evolution of music reform and music education in China? How did traditional Chinese music, such as the Pipa, make its way onto the global stage?

Chapter One: From 1911 to 1949

The 20th century was a critical period in the development of the Pipa art. Along with the Xinhai Revolution and the May 4th Movement, the art of the Pipa gradually took shape with the social and cultural changes and socio-economic development. During the period between 1911 and 1949, China experienced instability due to warfare and the multiple transfers of power from late Qing Dynasty to eventually the People's Republic of China (PRC). This era was also characterized by an influx of western ideologies and returning Chinese scholars educated abroad. This resulted in a flourishing of various ideas on how traditional Chinese should be reformed, especially interacting with western music culture. These changes, together, shaped the development of Pipa music. Thus, the Pipa's development process was deeply influenced by the historical field, including the society, culture, and individuals of the time.

School Songs

The spread of Western music in China was not primarily facilitated or forced upon the Chinese people by foreign imperialist powers, but by Chinese nationalists. School Songs is the start of the Western music influence in China. At the end of the Qing Dynasty and the beginning of the Republic, the school music, a kind of singing culture that emerged with the establishment of the new-style schools, took anti-feudalism and the glorification of the new life as its theme, and emphasized patriotic spirit and social reforms. These songs were made by using foreign tunes and filling in new lyrics with noble patriotic ideology and the desire for social reforms. It adopted western musical forms, which was welcomed by the public at that time. The popularity of the school songs promoted the development of music education in China and brought Western musical forms and theories to more people: "These songs and classes also served to familiarize Chinese with a range of heretofore unknown aspects of Western musical practice: public concerts and composition using Western notation...In the

years after 1911, these sort of tunes spread well beyond the confines of new-style schools" (Jones 2001, 34). This demonstrates how school songs extended beyond their educational context into broader public life, influencing the musical preferences and practices of the general population.

At that time, in addition to a few school songs published in domestic and foreign newspapers and magazines, the vast majority of them were published in songbooks of various types. Most of these songs were printed in small quantities, and their contents were mainly for teaching purposes; the forms of recording these songs were not uniform, ranging from those using "Western notation", to those using "numbered musical notation" to those using both "Western notation" and "numbered musical notation" (Wang and Hu 2006, 50). "Some of the songbooks also contain brief introductions to Western music theory, basic knowledge of music notation, and basic piano or organ playing techniques" (Wang and Hu 2006, 50).

With the spread of school songs, Chinese nationalists gradually confirmed the power of music and the importance of conveying thoughts and feelings through music, as the content of school songs was to promote the patriotic spirit of "enriching the country and strengthening the army (富国强兵)", and resisting bullying by foreign powers from different perspectives (Wang and Hu 2006, 46). School songs thus served several different ideological ends: one saw music as a method by which the intellectual and moral "quality of citizenry" could be elevated to advance the nationalist cause; it also served to enforce collective discipline, "rituals of unity" (Jones 2001, 34). Wang and Hu noted that the themes of "enriching the country and strengthening the army" resonated deeply with national aspirations to resist foreign domination and enhance national pride. This thematic focus effectively merged with the nationalist agenda, using the emotive power of music to foster a sense of unity and purpose among the Chinese populace. Jones discusses the broader ideological impacts, where music was seen not just as entertainment but as a strategic means

to elevate the intellectual and moral caliber of citizens, illustrating a deliberate and sophisticated use of cultural tools to build a robust national identity. Through these songs, music transcended its traditional boundaries, becoming an integral part of the political and educational structure of the nation. "The most significant function of these songs was the dissemination of progressive and nationalist ideologies" (Jones 2001, 34). These functions of School Songs reflect their role in cultural renaissance and social progress. They not only promoted the popularization of Western music in China, but also the development of music education in China. As Yu states in his book *History of Chinese Music*, "the creation and development of School Songs is an important symbol of the initial stage of development of New Music culture" (Yu 2010, 122). Therefore, School Songs can be said to be the beginning of Western music's huge influence on China. The integration and dissemination of School Songs during this transformative era in Chinese history highlights how music served as a potent vehicle for nationalist and ideological expression. These songs, adapting Western musical forms to Chinese contexts, not only educated and united people across different regions but also laid the groundwork for a modern Chinese musical identity that embraced aspects of Western music theory and practice.

However, the rapid expansion of music education through school songs revealed significant gaps in the availability of professionally trained music educators relative to the burgeoning student population. "According to incomplete statistics in 1916, the number of various types of ordinary schools in China was close to 130,000, and the number of students was close to 40 million, but there were only about a hundred professionally trained music teachers, including Shen Xinguang and Li Shutong, who had devoted themselves to music education since the beginning of the 20th century" (Wang and Hu 2006, 67). The main problem was that the number and quality of professional music teachers engaged in school music education did not keep up with the development of school education.

Fortunately, after the May 4th Movement in 1919, despite years of political turmoil and economic depression, there was some steady progress in the development of education. In 1922, the Ministry of Education carried out a comprehensive reform of the school system with reference to that of the U.S., and music education was incorporated into the scope of general education and became an important part of the "aesthetic education (美育)" of young people (Wang and Hu 2006, 67). Therefore, the development of China's own professional music education and the training of teachers for general school music education became an urgent social need. The popularization of general school education since the 1911 Revolution and the establishment of a large number of new music associations under the influence of the May 4th New Culture Movement opened the way for the establishment of a new type of professional music education institution in China (Wang and Hu 2006, 67).

From 1919 to 1927, musicians focused on establishing new channels for music education, research, and publishing (Yu 2010, 111). Much of this activity was centered around Beijing University and was either academic or amateur in nature. In 1927, due to increasing political restrictions in Beijing and a belief that funding musical education was not a wise use of national resources, the focal point of influence moved south to Shanghai for political and economic reasons (Cai and Melvin 2015, 40).

May 4th Movement-Music Groups

The outbreak of the May 4th Movement in 1919 and the official founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in 1921 gradually set China's mass revolutionary struggle and the building of a new culture on a path of sustained development, as China's social development entered a new stage (Yearbook of the PRC). In the area of literature and art, "opposing feudal restraints, pursuing individuality and liberation" was a major concern of the intellectuals at that time. Many of these intellectuals were freelancers who studied in Europe and the United States and worked in various cultural and educational organizations; as such,

they inevitably adopted the Western model of "learning from the West" in order to carry out their own changes (Wang and Hu 2006, 61). Under the influence of the New Culture Movement, a new direction focused on education and academic research emerged in Chinese music societies.

The Beijing University Music Research Group (Beijing daxue yinyue yanjiu hui, 1919–1922) was formally established in January 1919, with Cai Yuanpei as its president (Yu 2010, 129). "In 1921, the group became the first modern music department in China and was renamed the Institute for the Promotion and Practice of Music at Beijing University (Beijing daxue yinyue chuanxi suo)" (Jones 2001, 36). In addition to providing guidance to its members in their musical studies, this group also organized a number of public concerts in Beijing. The repertoire of these concerts basically implemented the mission of "integration of Chinese and Western elements", which set a precedent for China's national music and Western music to be performed on the same stage (Wang and Hu 2006, 68). This Group also focused on music publishing, editing, and releasing fifteen issues of *Music Magazine* (*yinyue zazhi* 音乐杂志), as the earliest systematically published and distributed music journals in China (Yu 2010, 129).

Furthermore, the Shanghai Cosmos Performing Music Society (Datong yuehui, 1920–1940s) was a large-scale, long-established amateur music society in China that focused on the study of Chinese folk music (Yu 2010, 129), with the aim of "specializing in the study of Chinese and Western music, preparing for the performance of 'Great Unity' music, and promoting the world cultural movement" (Wang and Hu 2006, 71)¹. The main activity of this Society was to provide guidance on music performance to its members. For this purpose, "it hired Wang Yuting (Pipa), Liu Yaozhang (Pipa, violin), and Cheng Wuga (Pipa, guqin), and trained a number of famous folk music talents, such as Pipa master Wei Zhongyue" (Yu 2010,

¹ "本会专门研究中西音乐、筹备演作大同音乐, 促进世界文化运动"

129). The Society also engaged in experimenting with Chinese traditional music ensembles (Wang and Hu 2006, 71), for example, proposing a new type of folk orchestra with instruments for Chui (woodwinds & brass), La (string), Tan (plucked) and Da (percussion), and "adapting Chinese traditional music ensembles such as 'Spring on the Moonlit River (*Chun Jiang Hua Yue Ye* 春江花月夜)', 'General's Command (*Jiang Jun Ling* 将军令)', and 'The Moon High Above (*Yue Er Gao* 月儿高)' " (Yu 2010, 129).

In addition, the more prominent one is the Society for the Reform and Advancement of Traditional Music (*Guoyue gaijin she* 国乐改进社, 1927–1932), founded by Liu Tianhua (Yu 2010, 130), a Chinese composer best known for his reformatory work for the Chinese traditional instrument, that focused on "organizing summer music lessons, concerts by Chinese and foreign musicians, and publishing *Music Magazine*" (Yu 2010, 130).

These music groups' common feature was that they mainly taught their participants knowledge and skills of Chinese and foreign music, and some of them also founded music publications to popularize music and promote academic research on a wider scale to the society. Around that time, a large number of such music societies emerged not only in these two regions, but also in cities along the coast of China. "The establishment and activities of these music groups played an enlightening and initial role in enlivening the musical life of the urban population in China since the May 4th Movement and in promoting the development of a new type of music education" (Wang and Hu 2006, 71).

Publishing was a significant aspect of the establishment of "music reform groups" and the periodicals covered a wide variety of topics: the role of music in education reform, information for music education professionals, profiles of Western composers, proposals for musical reform, theory and new composition, and news and views of general interest to amateur musicians and listeners (Jones 2001, 37). "Many of the articles reflect an interest in Western musical technique and technology. They include introductions to key elements of

Western musical culture (harmony, instrumentation, and the like), and translated treatises on acoustics and the 'material foundations of music' " (Jones 2001, 37). Jones underscored the multifaceted role that publishing played in the music reform movement in China, serving not only as a platform for theoretical and educational discourse but also as a conduit for introducing and integrating Western musical techniques and technologies into Chinese music culture. The focus on Western music techniques within these publications demonstrates a clear intention to synthesize Western advancements with Chinese musical traditions, aiming to create a hybrid music education system that would incorporate Western elements and elevate the quality of Chinese music.

In addition, public performances of music were an important factor in spreading the reform. In Shanghai, Harbin, Dalian, Qingdao and other places where foreigners lived, music performance groups formed, mainly composed of foreign musicians, to perform for foreigners. "The most influential of these groups was the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra (SMO), which was founded in the 1920s under the direction of the famous Italian musician Mario Paci (梅百器)" (Wang and Hu 2006, 73). The group was first established in 1881 as a wind band called the Shanghai Public Band (Wang and Hu 2006, 73). It was only after Mario Paci, a world known Italian conductor and pianist, became its permanent conductor in 1919 that it was considerably expanded and improved (Wang 2009, 73). In 1923, it was officially established as an orchestra of a specific size and standard; the orchestra emphasized regular public performances and specialized shows for many years, gaining significant influence in Shanghai and at one point, it was recognized as "the best orchestra in East Asia" (Wang 2015, 163-164). The strategic incorporation of a renowned foreign conductor not only elevated the performance standards of the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra but also symbolized the broader acceptance and integration of Western music practices within Chinese society and the Chinese music industry. This orchestra became a cultural landmark, showcasing how Western

music could be successfully integrated and appreciated within the existing Chinese musical environment, thus reinforcing the ideas promoted by music reform movements.

Revival of "New National Music (*xin guo yue*)"

The term "national music" (*guoyue* 国乐) in the early twentieth century primarily denoted traditional Chinese music; the term implied traditional as opposed to Western music, and generally reflected regional style rather than any new national synthesis (Jones 1998, 39). "It served not only to distinguish Chinese music from Western influences but also to align music with the broader project of nation-building" (Lau 2008, 30). However, as many scholars returned from their studies in the West, with the growing influence of Western musical and scientific concepts in China, the desire to elevate traditional Chinese "ancient music" to a new level emerged. This aspiration led to the revival of interest in creating a distinctly Chinese form of music that could rival Western counterparts. Scholars and musicians began to envision a "New National Music" (*xin guo yue*) that would draw upon both traditional Chinese musical heritage and the innovations of Western music (Wang 2009, 357). This concept reflected a shift from merely preserving regional styles to synthesizing a cohesive national musical identity that could resonate with the aspirations of modern China.

At that time, the social trend was that "Western music culture was superior to China's traditional 'ancient music', and the idea of 'taking the West as a teacher' (even including taking the road of 'Westernization') was put forward, believing that in order to improve China's 'ancient music' and establish China's 'new music', it was necessary to make use of the experience of the West" (Wang 2009, 330). The adoption of Western music, framed as a necessary step for the modernization and improvement of China's musical heritage, illustrates a broader inclination towards Westernization in various aspects of Chinese society and culture at that time.

Xiao Youmei and Zhao Yuanren, as a representative music reform school, believed that the new music that China should build was not the restoration of the traditional "national music", but the establishment of "advanced/scientific music" like that of Western countries. For example, Xiao Youmei, who studied abroad in Japan and Germany, founded the first professional conservatory in China (*guo li yin zhuan* 国立音专) in 1927 (Yu 2010, 132), made significant contributions to music education and composition. In his doctoral dissertation "A Study of the History of the Chinese Orchestra before the Seventeenth Century (17 Shiji Yiqian Xhongguo Guanxian Yuedui De Lishi De Yanjiu 17世纪以前中国管弦乐队的历史的研究)", completed in 1916, he stated that "if Chinese musical instruments are improved according to European technology, they can be further developed. Therefore, I hope that one day a uniform notation and harmony will be introduced to China, and that Chinese music, which is rich in melody, will usher in a new era of development. Chinese music will be given a new birth while retaining its Chinese flavor" (Wang 2009, 331)².

In addition, Zhao Yuanren, another important figure had the same ideology as Xiao, who composed more than a hundred choral and instrumental compositions, wrote in the preface to his *New Poetry Collection (xin shi ge ji* 新诗歌集): "to compare the similarities and differences between Chinese and Western music, we must distinguish which parts are differences in essence and which parts are merely differences in degree. My point is that we must first attain a passing level in the world of music, and then we can add our own personal or Chinese special flavor to it, as a contribution of individuality...this is the goal of Chinese music development" (Zhao 1928, 2)³. Their view of the relationship between Chinese and Western music is more in favor of learning from advanced Western music first, using Western

² "在中国, 没有得到欧洲音乐一样向多样化更进一步的发展。然而, 中国人民是非常富于音乐性的, 中国乐器如果依照欧洲技术加以完善, 也是具备继续发展的可能性的。因此我希望将来有一天会给中国引进统一的记谱法与和声, 那在旋律上那么丰富的中国音乐将会迎来一个发展的新时代, 在保留中国情思的前提下, 获得古乐的新生。"

³ "要比较中西音乐的异同, 得要辨清哪一部分是不同的不同, 哪一部分是不及的不同。我所注重的就是咱们得在音乐的世界里先学到了及格的程度, 然后再加个人或是中国的特别的风味在上, 作为有个性的贡献...要达到这种情形, 是中国音乐发展上应取的目标。"

music as a target template, and then considering China's music. They emphasize the policy of "inclusive development" and seek to construct a new type of Chinese music that is similar to world music. That is, the new Chinese music to be constructed should be the same as Western music in terms of its system, form, and variety, but should have Chinese characteristics in terms of its style.

Some musicians, represented by Liu Tianhua and Wang Guangqi, were of a different school of thought on musical reform. They focus on inheriting the national tradition while drawing on foreign experiences, "aiming to 'improve national music' and establish a 'New National Music' that has distinct national characteristics from content to form" (Wang 2009, 332). They were more concerned with creating a "New National Music" with the characteristics of the times and incorporating certain Western experiences. Based on his understanding of the New Culture Movement and his own working experience in music, Liu Tianhua put forward his idea of improving national music. "It is necessary to both embrace the essence of one's own culture and accommodate foreign influences. By harmonizing and cooperating between the East and the West, we can pave a new path forward and truly make progress" (Liu 1927 b, 2)⁴. Liu underscores a central theme in the discourse on cultural rejuvenation during the New Culture Movement: the synthesis of national and international elements to forge a new, modern identity for Chinese music. His perspective highlights a dual approach in cultural development that preserves the intrinsic qualities of traditional Chinese music while also integrating beneficial aspects of Western music. As he states further, "we aim to introduce Western music as an aid for improvement, adopt Western practices in harmony and polyphony, and incorporate Western instruments to compete on par with world music" (Liu 1927 b, 2)⁵. This emphasizes that his concept for improving the "New National Music" is that cultural inheritance should not simply be imitated or remain in the old ways,

⁴ "必须一方面采取本国固有的精粹，一方面容纳外来的潮流，从东西的调与合作之中，打出一条新路来，然后才能说得到进步两个字。"

⁵ "我们想介绍西乐，以为改进的辅助，并效法西乐配合复音，并参用西洋乐器，以期与世界音乐并驾齐驱。"

but should uphold the essence of China's culture while absorbing the influences of foreign cultures. He also recognizes the need for Chinese music reformation in order to have a place at the world stage, hinting at music's close connection with politics.

These two types of musicians have different concepts of the need to draw on foreign influences to build new music with Chinese characteristics; one is to build world music with Chinese characteristics based on Western music; the other is to use Chinese music as the basis to add Western musical techniques, both of which eventually formed the "New National Music", "as conceived by May 4th era music theorists, would utilize indigenous musical elements (such as pentatonic melodies) as markers of ethnicity within a predominantly western harmonic structure" (Jones 2001, 40).

However, with the rising status of Western music in the minds of the people and the esteem in which Chinese musicians hold it, the debate between "Yang culture" and "Tu culture" emerged. "In the 1930s and 1940s, a major arena for the debate between foreign and indigenous (yang and tu) cultures was the CCP base at Yan'an, far inland in northern Shaanxi" (Jones 1998, 40). In educated urban circles, modernization was a hot topic, and learning Western music was considered a sign of status. But in the "poor and cold" countryside of the Northwest, where modernization often seemed absurd, and where even solving basic survival issues was a problem, modernization was simply out of reach (Jones 1998, 40). As a result, the primitive folk material to which urban-educated Communists were exposed in the countryside often seemed to them backward, "anachronistic," oversimplified, and even feudal and superstitious (Jones 1998, 40). This is still true today for many young Chinese: "the words "unscientific" and "tu" are often used to describe the countryside culture" (Jones 1998, 41).

"For many urban educated Chinese, Western features such as temperament and instrumentation were to some extent part of a new self-esteem, the revolutionary spirit;

traditional music might appear an obstacle to progress, detracting from national pride" (Jones 1998, 40). This viewpoint was influenced by a belief in the superiority of Western science, technology, and culture. In contrast, traditional Chinese music, with its deep roots in history and culture, was sometimes seen as outdated or primitive in comparison to Western music. "It was valorized and respected by local Chinese musicians because they equated Western music with the supremacy of Western science and technology" (Lau 2008, 31). Against this cultural backdrop, Chinese music was considered by Chinese musicians as unscientific and backward. Learning Western music became not only a fad but also as a way to embrace the concept of being modern and to redefine one's social status. This perception led to a prioritization of Western music in educational curricula, while traditional Chinese music was often overlooked or marginalized. Western music popular with the general public, like School Songs with simple chord accompaniments, was taught in schools. In contrast, Chinese music, which was part of their own culture, was not taught. One key reason is that the lack of standardized notation systems and pedagogical methods for traditional Chinese music could have contributed to its exclusion from school curricula. Western music, with its well-established notation system and teaching methodologies, may have been perceived as easier to teach and to integrate into formal education settings. This might be why Liu states that it is necessary to reform Chinese music with improvement of notation to harmonize it with world music.

Thus, Chinese music of the period was faced with two paths. "To resist the adoption of Western music, some traditionalists proposed a new Chinese national music by restructuring the practice of traditional Chinese music using only Chinese instruments" (Lau 2008, 31). The other path was to establish a "New National Music" based on Western music. Some rejected the 'backward', 'feudal' culture completely, and sought to modernize Chinese music by wholesale Westernization (Jones 1998, 38). "They were in favor of using European

music and instruments as the foundation of a 'New National Music' " (Lau 2008, 31). As Western music gained prestige and became further integrated into urban cultural and educational systems, it challenged the status quo of traditional Chinese music, pushing it to either adapt or risk being seen as outdated. Thus, the prestige of various Western music in big cities and in music education, as well as whether it was better to be "yang" or "tu", remained heatedly debated.

Therefore, in the macro historical field mentioned above, during the turbulent years spanning from the 1920s to the 1940s, China experienced profound social and cultural transformations fueled by the "New Culture" movement. This movement, driven by a desire to embrace Western advancements while challenging traditional feudal customs, cast a wide net of influence across various facets of Chinese society.

Pipa - Heritage Period

Chinese musicians are faced with the difficult decision of whether to maintain their historical traditional music style or keep up with modern musical innovation against the backdrop of social unrest at that time. Inspired by the "New Culture" movement, Pipa music composers embarked on a path of artistic experimentation, attempting to fuse traditional Chinese music and Western music into their works. They innovate by integrating new performance techniques while maintaining the traditional structure and tuning, resulting in compositions that are both rooted in tradition and reflective of the changing times.

Notable figures in Pipa music during this period, such as Liu Tianhua and Hua Yanjun, epitomized this fusion of tradition and modernity in their works. Their compositions, "marked by a profound emotional depth, echoed the somber tones and introspective themes prevalent in the societal discourse of the time" (Chen 2010, 1). Their music not only incorporated a blend of traditional and modern musical styles, but also deeply reflected the emotional and thematic currents of their era, which can connect listeners more intimately to

the music. As a result, in addition to being creative musically, their pieces have emotional and cultural significance.

The fall of the Qing Dynasty and the entry of Western forces in the early twentieth century marked a turning point in Chinese society. "The sprouting of capitalism shifted the center of China's economy from Guangzhou to Shanghai" (Fu 2019, 8). Shanghai, functioning as a bustling port city, facilitated extensive international trade, establishing it as China's premier hub for imports and exports during the Republican era (Fu 2019, 8). It also became the country's most populated metropolis. The economic momentum generated by Shanghai's trade activities spurred growth in the surrounding regions of Jiangsu and Zhejiang as well. Therefore, "most of the folk artists began to turn to the Jiangsu and Zhejiang areas centered on Shanghai to make a living, and the fusion and exchange of Chinese and Western cultures made this area the cultural center of China" (Fu 2019, 8).

In this environment, Pipa music showed a prosperous development trend, and there were many famous Pipa musicians. For example, Shen Zhaozhou (1858-1930), in 1920 first recorded the pieces "Ambush From All Sides (*Shi Mian Mai Fu* 十面埋伏)", "Autumn Moon over the Han Palace (*Han Gong Qiu Yue* 汉宫秋月)", and "Zhaojun's Bitterness (*Zhao Jun Yuan* 昭君怨)". His performance also was praised by Sun Yat-sen as "a masterpiece of the art" (China Nationalities Orchestra Society 2016, 516). Also Wang Yuting, in 1920, taught in the Shanghai Cosmos Performing Music Society (Datong yan yue hui), which made the Pipa's right-hand five-fingers rolling techniques (轮, similar to tremolo) change the order of finger movements (Wu 2013, 147). Instead of the *Xia Chu Lun* (下出轮), starting from the index finger and proceeding in sequence to the middle finger, ring finger, and little finger, has been changed to *Shang Chu Lun* (上出轮) that start from the index finger, then middle finger, ring finger, little finger, and finally the thumb, which has become a dominant technique to this day.

In 1923, Yang Mengliu and Chen Dingjun co-edited the first collection of the "Pipa's Proposal of Adding Sound Post to the Pipa (Pipa Shang Tian She Zhu Wei Zhi Ti Yi 琵琶上添设柱位之提议)", which was "the earliest proposal in the history of the Pipa to utilize the equal temperaments" (China Nationalities Orchestra Society 2016, 516), and try to make a Pipa with more frets, such as six-xiang (相, frets for lower notes), eighteen-pin (品, frets for higher notes) Pipa. In addition, in 1925, Liu Yaozhang adapted the Wang School Pipa piece "Moon over Xunyang at Night (Xun Yang Ye Yue 浔阳夜月)", which is "Flute and Drum at Sunset (*Xi Yang Xiao Gu* 夕阳箫鼓)", into a silk and bamboo piece called "Autumn River Moon (*Qiu Jiang Yue* 秋江月)", which was later titled "Spring on a Moonlit River (*Chun Jiang Hua Yue Ye* 春江花月夜)" by Zheng Jiwen and has become the most famous Chinese folk orchestra piece until today (China Nationalities Orchestra Society 2016, 516).

After that, from 1927 to 1929, Liu Tianhua composed three Pipa pieces, "Prelude to Song and Dance (*Ge Wu Yin* 歌舞引)", "The Sound of Emptiness (*Xu Lai* 虚籁)", and "Improved Etude (*Gai Jin Cao* 改进操)", which opened the door to the creation of modern Pipa compositions (Li 2008, 114). In 1931, Li Tingsong performed with the world-famous violinist Jascha Heifetz, which was the first time a Chinese traditional music performer and a Western musician performed on the same stage (China Nationalities Orchestra Society 2016, 516). In 1933, at the inauguration ceremony of Shanghai's Daguang Cinema, Wei Zhongyue became famous for his performance of *Ambush from All Sides* and became the most famous Pipa virtuoso of that time (China Nationalities Orchestra Society 2016, 516). In 1941, Pipa masters Cao Anhe and Yang Yinliu first adopted the new geometric Pipa fingering notation system to compile Pipa music scores, opening the way for the recording of Pipa fingerings in the new fingering notation (China Nationalities Orchestra Society 2016, 516).

Representative Individuals

Born into a family of scholars, Liu Tianhua (1895-1932) developed a keen interest in music from an early age, learning to play a military instrument in middle school, and at the age of 18, influenced by the Nanchang Uprising, he aspired to become a music teacher (Li 2009, 144). Afterward, he went to Shanghai with his brother to work for the Kaiming Theater Company, where he was exposed to a large number of Western instruments (Li 2009, 145). After returning to his hometown to teach, he studied Erhu, Pipa, and Guqin and was invited by President Cai Yuanpei to teach Pipa at Peking University in 1922, during which time he studied violin and opera (Li 2009, 145). In 1927, Liu founded the Society for the Reform and Advancement of Traditional Music (Guoyue gaijin she) and the *Music Magazine* (Wang 2009, 111).

He made great contributions to the inheritance and development of Chinese folk music. Take "Prelude to Song and Dance (*Ge Wu Yin* 歌舞引)", one of the Liu's three Pipa compositions as an example, which is the first Pipa solo piece, was composed in 1927, inspired by the performance of a Italian Song and Dance Troupe at the Xiehe Auditorium (Li 2008, 114). The rhythm of the whole piece is light and lively, which is completely different from the ancient traditional Pipa works in terms of subject matter, playing style, and musical expression. Most of the ancient traditional Pipa pieces depicted the state of mind or the beauty of nature, with softer music, more lyrical melodies, and more delicate emotions, such as the ancient Chinese Pipa's traditional suite "The Moon is High (*Yue Er Gao* 月儿高)".

In terms of compositional techniques, Liu Tianhua, on the one hand, adopted the Western compositional technique of recapitulation: going back to the musical figure at the beginning of the theme. On the other hand, Liu retains the variations used in traditional Chinese music: a single melody as the main theme, with free additions like glissando, vibrato, trillo, and variations according to the characteristics of the instruments, which fully demonstrate the distinctive features of the linear melody of traditional music. This

combination of Western and traditional approaches is exactly what Liu admires as the "adapt Western practices for Chinese use, integrate both Chinese and Western elements (*Yang Wei Zhong Yong* 洋为中用 *Jian Shou Bing Xu* 兼收并蓄)" (Chen 2010, 38) concept of musical thought. He used the same technique to compose "Improvement Etude," a Pipa piece written in December 1927 to commemorate the founding of the Society for the Reform and Advancement of Traditional Music. Liu Tianhua's Pipa piece has many innovations in compositional and performance techniques and "draws on Guqin's 'portamento (*Chuo Zhu*⁶, 绰注)' technique, improving the Pipa's compositional and performance level to a great extent" (Li 2008, 115).

From the two characters 'gaijin' (改进, improvement) in the title of this piece, it can be seen that Liu Tianhua wanted to improve Chinese music and promote it. The last character 'cao (操)' implies playing a musical instrument and a form of Guqin music, mostly used as the end word of the score's name. But in ancient interpretations, 'cao' often connotes experiencing misfortune or having lofty ideals that cannot be realized. Therefore, Liu Tianhua's use of the character "cao 操" in the title of the piece also refers to his inner feeling about the difficulty of practicing his ideals of Chinese music reform. The structure of this piece is based on the typical Chinese ancient music structure of "free, slow, moderate, fast, and free" (Li 2008, 114), with tempo changes controlling the structure of the whole piece, and also adopting the Western compound trilogy structure.

In addition, "The Sound of Emptiness (*Xu Lai* 虚籁)," is the third solo Pipa piece created by Liu Tianhua in 1929. "Xu" means emptiness, and "Lai" refers to sound. The intention is to imply silence. This piece starts slowly and solemnly before becoming brighter. When composing this piece, Liu was facing a bottleneck period in the development of

⁶ Chuo Zhu, 绰注: Chuo means that the left hand slides upwards from the base of the lower note of the original position to the original note. Zhu means that the left hand slides from the base of the upper note of the original note to the lower note of the original note.

Chinese music. While he was hopeful for the future, he also recognized the challenges ahead, so he used this piece to capture his feelings at that moment (Jiang 2019, 191). From a compositional technique perspective, similar to "Improved Etude," this piece also draws inspiration from the guqin's technique in performance. Additionally, it incorporates a plethora of left-hand techniques, such as "*tui, la, yin, rou, da, dai* (推、拉、吟、揉、打、带)" enriching the overall flavor of the piece. Through a variety of left-hand techniques, the composer expresses the complex psychological changes he was experiencing at the time.

Liu Tianhua always adhered to his determination to revitalize traditional Chinese music and boldly applied Western compositional techniques in his Pipa music works. Upholding the principle of "using Western methods for Chinese purposes and integrating Chinese and Western elements" (Chen 2010, 38), he absorbed Western music without complete Westernization. In doing so, he preserved more of the characteristics of traditional Chinese multipart and variation forms, integrating Western techniques into traditional Chinese music, which is "precisely the characteristic of Liu Tianhua's musical compositions and also a demand at that time" (Liu 2008, 114).

Another representative figure is Hua Yanjun (1893-1950), also known as "Blind A Bing", folk musician and Taoist priest of Lei Zun Dian, lost his mother at a young age and followed his father to learn flute, erhu, Pipa, and other musical instruments at the age 8 (Wang 2009, 30). Because of his talent in music and diligent practice, he was able to play a variety of musical instruments, "he was honored as the 'Little Celestial Master' by the Wuxi Taoist music community" (Sun 2002, 22). Forced by circumstances, he became a wandering street performer, transitioning from a "little celestial musician" to a blind performer, which marked the first turning point in his life's journey (Sun 2002, 22).

Through his street performances, he extensively engaged with folk music, honing his skills and even composing music. He had a deep understanding of society, advocated for

justice, and was known for speaking out against injustice, earning popularity with the masses. In his later years, Hua witnessed the liberation of the country, and his artistic achievements gained recognition from the Communist Party and the people (Wang 2009, 30). Throughout his life, plagued by poverty and misfortune in tumultuous times, Hua lived at the bottom rung of society. His tragic upbringing and chaotic surroundings deepened his understanding of life. Abing's life experiences gave rise to a variety of emotions, all of which are reflected in his pieces (Wang 2009, 30).

From the 1920s to the 1940s, the cultural environment was greatly influenced by political and economic factors. Intellectuals with progressive ideas raised the banners of "science" and "democracy," advocating for the study of Western advanced culture and opposing traditional feudal culture (Wang 2009, 82). In such an environment, the creation of Pipa music was also deeply affected. There were not a lot of new pieces, and the creative techniques were relatively simple, either taken from Guqin's playing techniques or kept the ancient traditional Pipa playing techniques.

One major reason for this was the underground social status of folk artists. In the turbulent times, China's economy declined, and few people paid attention to or appreciated folk art activities. The livelihood of folk artists was cut off. For example, Hua Yanjun, was a master of the Pipa and the erhu, as well as of composition. However, it was only after the liberation of the country that his works were compiled and included by Yang Yinliu and Cao Anhe of the CCOM, and only six of them were preserved before he died of illness (Ju 2010, 28).

In addition, the progressive intellectuals of the time favored Western music, and traditional instrumental music was not given the same attention. From the development of the School Songs and Pipa songs, the music composition of the time was more focused on the indictment of the status quo and the promotion of new ideas (Wang 2009, 358). Liu

Tianhua's brother Liu Beimao once said, "Liu Tianhua excelled in both Chinese and Western music. Despite their origins in different cultural domains, Chinese and Western music shared similar interests in musical concepts. However, at that time, many scholars tended to favor new musical forms and held a disdainful attitude towards traditional music. But Tianhua believed it was his responsibility to promote the exchange and integration of both musical traditions..." (Liu 2004, 140)⁷. During these tumultuous times, there were very few individuals dedicated to advancing Chinese music, with scholars showing a greater preference for Western music over traditional Chinese instrumental music.

Prior to the establishment of the PRC in 1949, the debate between the westernization and nationalism of "New National Music" (*xin guo yue*) led to two different reform ideologies which both significantly influenced the development of Pipa music. The debate was left open as Mao took power, and the PRC continued to shape the transformation of the national music culture.

Chapter Two: From 1949 to 1966

⁷ "天华以国乐西乐, 方域虽殊, 理趣无异, 而当时士子, 每重新声, 鄙夷旧物, 贯通之责, 难望他人"

After the establishment of the PRC in 1949 under the lead of Mao Zedong, the debate between the Westernization and nationalism of "New National Music" (xin guo yue) came to a new stage with Mao's revolution ideology. During the early years of the PRC, Mao Zedong's thought shaped policy regarding musical art through his 1942 "talk at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art" and the 1956 "Talk with Music Workers". The conflict between two opposing reform ideas for music reform gave way to Mao Zedong's ideological approach, which largely followed Liu Tianhua's reform philosophy that promoted a synthesis of East and West China's traditional music culture, which would be the basis for absorbing Western music forms, composition techniques, and music theory, thus leading to the creation of a "New National Music" with Chinese characteristics. Accordingly, China's music industry "unified" its reform goals, taking Mao's speeches as the direction for a new era of reform in theory, music education, and application of reform of Pipa. Under the guidance of Mao, professional music conservatories and ethnic music research groups were founded across the country, paving the way for the reformation of New National Music and the formalization of traditional Chinese music education, which had a profound impact on the systematic study and teaching of the Pipa. For instance, the structure of the Pipa was improved, including the introduction of artificial nails, the use of metal and nylon-wrapped steel strings, and the implementation of equal temperament semitone frets. These measures not only enriched the Pipa's repertoire by allowing the performer greater artistic flexibility with more durable nails, louder volumes, and larger tonal range, but also reflected a positive response to Mao Zedong's thought, integrating the aesthetics of Chinese traditional music with Western music theory and structure, leading to innovation and enhancement in Pipa playing techniques. Thus, the Pipa music and instrumental manufacturing entered a new era of reform due to the societal background of that time.

I. Unifying Reform/Theory

In 1942, Mao in the "Talk at Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art", which thereafter became the guiding ideology for music creation and life in the liberated areas during that period, emphasized music's role in the revolution: "they operate as powerful weapons for uniting and educating the people and for attacking and destroying the enemy, and that they help the people fight the enemy with one heart and one mind" (Mao 1942). The concept of music as a weapon continued to evolve, forming the theoretical core of the new music movement under Mao's leadership, embedding deeply the notion that music is a vital tool in the heart of the populace. This redefined music from being merely a personal form of entertainment to a lively instrument serving the people while asserting that music must serve political purposes, be rooted in national traditions, embody the aesthetics of being nationalized and popularized, and essentially cater to political needs. Following the establishment of the People's Republic of China, this musical perspective generated certain issues within the music community, restricting music's role and function to some extent.

Represented by Xiao Youmei, who studied in Japan and earned his doctoral degree from Leipzig University in Germany in 1916, a school of thought believed that the development of Chinese music should draw from and adopt Western music forms, techniques, and systems to display and express Chinese content and spirit, which he termed "Chinese application" (Yu 2010, 137). Consequently, his concept of music reform can be called "Western form, Chinese application"(Wang 2009, 335). "Thus, Xiao Youmei's vision for new Chinese music can be summarized as: Western music techniques as the body, and Chinese national spirit as the soul. That is, to adopt the techniques of Western music, to build on traditional music, and to express the modern national spirit" (Wei 1998, 38). He emphasized creating new music with Chinese characteristics through Western music techniques and forms, which may resemble Western music in form but is deeply rooted in Chinese cultural soil in content and expression. Therefore, it can be said that "Xiao was

trying to establish a Chinese music school akin to the Russian National School" (Ju 2010, 332), also known as Kuchka or The Mighty Five—five prominent 19th-century composers who worked together to create a distinct Russian national style of classical music (Doub 2019, 5). Xiao's visions were to directly integrate Chinese music into the world system dominated by Western musical genres.

Represented by Liu Tianhua, who received his music education in China, another school of thought was dedicated to improving and developing traditional Chinese music around the 1920s (Wang 2009, 333). He focused on starting from the "Chinese form" of traditional Chinese music while adopting "Western application" (Wang 2009, 333)—that is, adopting Western composition techniques and musical concepts to enrich and develop the expressiveness and technique of Chinese music. Liu not only integrated Western techniques into his compositions but also introduced Western concepts to the reform of Chinese musical instruments and music education, aiming to rejuvenate and develop new Chinese music (Wang 2009, 333). He modernized the performance capabilities of national instruments, making them capable of competing with modern Western musical instrument techniques. For example, the piece "Flight of the Bumblebee," which is played on the violin and piano, can also be competently performed on a reformed Pipa. Additionally, he introduced modern Western music genres to Chinese traditional music, such as the Pipa pieces "Prelude to Song and Dance", "The Sound of Emptiness" mentioned in the previous chapter. This path has been the main direction for the development of traditional Chinese music composition since the beginning of the 20th century.

Mao Zedong expressed his ideas to music workers on several occasions, among which his conversation with music workers in 1956 had the most significant impact (Ju 2010, 47). In this discussion, he emphasized the nationality of Chinese music, further clarifying what he meant in his 1942 talk. "Music can adopt reasonable foreign principles and foreign

instruments, but it must have national characteristics, its own unique style, and stand out..." (Mao 1956, 3)⁸. Mao notes that the fusion of different musical elements should always be based on a sense of Chinese cultural identity. This reflects his idea of music as a way of enhancing Chinese cultural confidence and nationalism. It can be seen as part of a cultural strategy to boost national identity and unity through music, especially during a time of great social change.

On the other hand, this can maintain cultural independence and prevent cultural homogenization, thus allowing Chinese culture to stand out and win a place on the world stage, rather than being overwhelmed by foreign cultures. Mao also underscored that it is essential for Chinese people to support their own cultural expressions. "Of course, we advocate for national music. As Chinese, not advocating for Chinese national music is unacceptable" (Mao 1956, 4)⁹. This emphasized the importance to take pride in and preserve national culture. From Mao's perspective, music is not merely a form of entertainment or aesthetic enjoyment, but an important vehicle for traditional cultural heritage, nationalism, national resilience, and the development of distinct cultural identities.

He stated the importance of adopting foreign elements to serve Chinese purposes, becoming more Chinese in the process: "we should learn from foreign modern advancements, and after learning, study China's own..." (Mao 1956, 6)¹⁰. The emphasis on absorbing knowledge from "foreign modern advancements" and then studying "China's own" suggested a selective absorption method. The aim is to internalize and adapt foreign elements to strengthen local traditions. This means that rather than being fully assimilated, Chinese culture can be preserved while incorporating Western aspects in a customized way. Besides that, a significant point made by Mao is that "the goal should be to become more Chinese, not

⁸ "艺术的基本原理有其共同性, 但表现形式要多样化, 要有民族形式和民族风格..."

⁹ "我们当然提倡民族音乐。作为中国人, 不提倡中国的民族音乐是不行的。"

¹⁰ "我们应该学外国的近现代的东西, 学了以后来研究中国的东西..."

more Westernized" (Mao 1956, 6)¹¹. This underscores a broader cultural assertion that while globalization allows for the easy exchange of cultural elements, the essence and distinctiveness of national and cultural identity should be reinforced and not diluted.

Additionally, Mao believed that art should have various forms of expression to reflect the public. "Forms of expression should differ, as in politics, so in art... Art involves issues of form and nationality; it cannot be separated from the people's habits, emotions, and even language, nor from the national history" (Mao 1956, 6)¹². He advocated diversity and innovation in art, while emphasizing the priority of accessibility and relevance to people's daily experience. This perspective allows for a variety of creation, hybrid forms of art that might better reflect the evolving identity of a modernizing China, rather than restricting cultural expression to traditional or foreign categories.

Mao's stress on how instruments are used as tools highlights his pragmatic approach to music that focuses on output and performance rather than being bound to tradition. "Instruments are tools. Of course, the quality of tools matters, but how to use them is fundamental. Foreign instruments can be adopted, but composition should not simply copy foreign works" (Mao 1956, 4)¹³. Mao clearly stated his acceptance of foreign musical instruments, viewing instruments as tools where the key lies in their usage. Mao's ideology is focused on the music's quality and impact rather than the origins of the instruments used. In addition, Mao concluded by acknowledging that foreign instruments can be incorporated into Chinese music, but cautioned against indiscriminate copying foreign musical compositions. This suggested an openness to global influences in terms of instrumentation while still insisting on originality in composition, which encouraged innovation in music that integrates international influences but maintains a distinctively Chinese character.

¹¹ "应该越搞越中国化, 而不是越搞越洋化。这样争论就可以统一了。"

¹² "表现形式应该有所不同, 政治上如此, 艺术上也如此...艺术有形式问题, 有民族问题, 艺术离不开人民的习惯、感情以至语言, 离不开民族的历史。"

¹³ "乐器是工具。当然工具好坏也有关系, 但如何使用工具才是根本的。外国乐器可以拿来用, 但作曲不能照抄外国。"

Mao Zedong's thoughts encompass the nationality and diversity of Chinese music, as well as the absorption and sinicization of foreign musical forms. His guiding direction in music reform was to inherit the traditions of the past, to promote the rich culture of the Chinese people, and to make formal reforms in accordance with the development of the times, but the core spirit remained true to traditional Chinese culture. These views resonate to some extent with the musical philosophies of both Liu Tianhua and Xiao Youmei, but align more closely with Liu's ideas. Both Mao and Liu emphasized the nationality and independence of Chinese music. Liu advocated for a critical inheritance of traditional Chinese music. He stated in an article called "*guoyue gaijin she yuan qi* 国乐改进社缘起 (the Society for the Reform and Advancement of Traditional Music Declaration)" that was published in 1927: "a country's culture cannot simply imitate the superficial aspects of others... nor can it cling to old methods and be obstinate. It must, on one hand, adopt the essence inherent to its nation and, on the other hand, welcome foreign trends. Only by harmonizing and cooperating with both Eastern and Western elements can a new path be forged, and then can we talk about 'progress' "(Liu 1927 a, 2)¹⁴. He believed that the development of national music should involve adopting the essence inherent to China while accommodating foreign trends, to forge a new path and synchronize the Chinese national music with the world. At the same time, Liu pointed out that music should express people's artistic ideas, advocating for music that could awaken the national spirit of China. This aligns closely with Mao Zedong's idea of using foreign elements to serve Chinese purposes, ensuring that Chinese music retains its fundamental national characteristics while absorbing beneficial foreign elements, achieving modernization and diversification of music.

Mao Zedong's thought also possessed unique perspectives. Mao emphasized that Chinese music should have a distinct nationality and be close to the masses, capable of

¹⁴ "一国的文化,也断然不能抄袭些别人的皮毛以算数...也不能死守老法,固执己见就可以算数。必须一方面采取本国固有的精粹,一方面容纳外来的潮流,从东西的调与合作之中,打出一条新路来,然后才能涉及到'进步'这两个字..."

reflecting the lives and emotions of the people. He believed that music is not only a form of artistic expression but also an important component of the cultural life of the people, and should serve the interests of the broadest masses. In other words, Mao highlighted the role of music in politics and society, whereas Liu Tianhua was more concerned with the development of Chinese music and music education itself. In terms of handling foreign elements, although both advocated for the absorption of foreign elements, Liu tended to integrate these elements from an artistic and technical perspective, while Mao focused on how to make these elements serve the nationality of Chinese music and the development of socialist culture.

The differences in their perspectives can largely be attributed to the different historical backgrounds and social statuses of Liu Tianhua and Mao Zedong. Liu Tianhua lived during the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China, a period when China was facing a severe crisis of national sovereignty and cultural identity, with traditional Chinese culture being challenged by the impact of Western culture. Liu, as a musician and music educator, personally experienced the limitations and challenges facing traditional Chinese music in this context. Therefore, his musical thoughts focused on how to improve and develop traditional Chinese music so that it could retain its national characteristics while absorbing advanced Western musical techniques, thereby enhancing its artistic expressiveness and social status. Mao Zedong, on the other hand, lived through a critical turning point for the nation, namely the transformation from a semi-feudal, semi-colonial society to a socialist society. As a politician, his musical thoughts were influenced by his political ideology, as well as the impact of the October Revolution, Marxism, and Leninism. Hence, he emphasized that music should serve the construction of socialism, reflect the lives and struggles of the people, and promote the development of socialist culture.

Mao Zedong's musical thoughts also share connections with Xiao Youmei's concepts, particularly in the absorption and sinicization of foreign musical forms. However, Xiao Youmei's practice focused more on borrowing forms and techniques, which might differ in implementation from Mao's emphasis on becoming increasingly Chinese. It's acknowledged that Mao Zedong, Liu Tianhua, and Xiao Youmei all believed that Chinese music should maintain and strengthen its nationality while absorbing foreign musical elements to a certain extent to promote the development of Chinese music. However, their attitudes towards foreign elements differ.

Additionally, their paths to realization are different. Both Mao and Liu stressed starting from traditional Chinese music and sinicizing foreign elements. Xiao explored new forms of Chinese music on a broader basis of integrating Western music forms. Interestingly, the music reform ideas of all three have been practiced in different music genres. Xiao's thought, represented by Western-trained Chinese musicians, adopted works like "The Yellow River Cantata" and the violin concerto "Butterfly Lovers" as successful examples of this path. However, Chinese national music did not take this idea as a direction for reform but was primarily influenced by Liu Tianhua's thoughts, supplemented by Mao Zedong's personal ideas. Examples include Pipa solo pieces with revolutionary heroism or Chinese national characteristics like "The Five Heroes of Langya Mountain (*Lang Ya Shan Wu Zhuang Shi* 狼牙山五壮士)" and "Dance of the Yi People (*Yi Zu Wu Qu* 彝族舞曲)".

Thus, during this period, starting from Mao's 1942 talk to his 1956 talk, Chinese national music continued to develop with Mao Zedong's personal thoughts on art and literature, which expanded on Liu's ideology, while focusing on music's role in politics and in the people's daily lives, promoting greater artistic freedom, and undertaking reforms in various aspects including the structure of instruments, music composition, and performance forms, as well as in music education.

II. Music Education

"The Shanghai Conservatory of Music (SHCM), formerly the National Conservatory of Music, was founded by Cai Yuanpei and Dr. Xiao Youmei on November 27, 1927 as China's first music education institution of higher learning" ("About SHCM" 2021). This institution laid the preliminary foundation for professional music education in China and trained a group of professional musicians. The CCP Central Committee leadership planned and prepared for the reception and transformation of music colleges, as well as the creation of new professional music education institutions for the PRC. "On December 18, 1949, the Central People's Government decided to officially name the newly established higher music institution the "Central Conservatory of Music (CCOM)" (Ju 2010, 21). On June 17, 1950, the CCOM was officially established in Tianjin ("School History ", n.d.). Then, the East China Branch of the Central Conservatory of Music was changed to Shanghai Conservatory of Music in 1956 (Yu 2010, 245). Thus, the establishment of the earliest two higher music institutions, SHCM and CCOM in the PRC was announced as complete.

Furthermore, "in response to the swift growth of the PRC's music cultural framework and the pressing demand for specialized musical expertise, the government implemented centralized planning and equitable allocation of higher music education nationwide" (Ju 2010, 21). The Government has successively established conservatories or music departments in art colleges or universities in Northeast, North China, Northwest, Southwest, Central, East and South China, that are key administrative regions of China (Ju 2010, 21). Mao Zedong's endorsement for the foundation of music education contributed to the development of musicians and also provided crucial support and stability for folk artists.

The establishment of the conservatories solved the survival problem of folk artists. Before the founding of the PRC, folk musicians often lived a precarious existence, relying on street performances and the support of a few enthusiasts to make ends meet. The founding of

several music conservatories across the country allowed folk artists, who once struggled on the margins of society, to receive unprecedented attention and respect, as well as financial support. The prospects for the survival of folk musicians, who were like blind A Bing, were much brighter than they were before 1949. The music conservatories established by the government actively embraced Mao's musical theories, inviting folk artists and potential musical talents to teach traditional Chinese music, imparting musical knowledge and skills. As a result, these individuals were able to move away from their previously unstable and marginalized living conditions to become respected music educators. They not only gained material security but, more importantly, their social status and personal dignity were significantly enhanced. The attention to music education by Mao's government recognized the value of folk music as an integral part of China's cultural heritage. By providing folk musicians with opportunities for formal education and stable employment as teachers, the government helped ensure the survival and transmission of traditional music forms.

In order to further promote the preservation and transmission of traditional Chinese music, at the beginning of the Central Conservatory of Music a research department was also established, which was later expanded into the Chinese Nationalities Music Research Institute of the CCOM (中央音乐学院民族音乐研究所) ("School History ", n.d.). This institute specialized in the collection, organization, and study of the developmental history of traditional Chinese music and the surviving ethnic folk music (Ju 2010, 23). Years of war before 1949 caused tremendous destruction to the national economy, leading to extreme hardship for the vast majority of folk artists. Organizations such as the CMA and the Chinese Nationalities Music Research Institute of the CCOM recognized that many ancient local music genres were on the verge of extinction due to the impacts of war and economic hardship; many folk music pieces, songs, and genres gradually disappeared with the passing of the folk artists (Ju 2010, 23). Even more were left in a precarious state of existence,

urgently needing rescue and protection. "With the formation of music conservatories, the Musicians' Association, and a national network of cultural institutions headed by the Ministry of Culture, a concerted and unprecedented attempt was made to collect and research the Chinese musical heritage. Central musicologists, notably Yang Yiliu, the master of Chinese musicology, led much fieldwork and research. Yang was ever assisted by his cousin and lifelong companion Cao Anhe. Local scholars, though often working in trying circumstances, collected much material..." (Jones 1998, 52). The then Chinese Music Research Institute of the CCOM was responsible for much fieldwork. "Yang Yinliu led thorough studies of genres in Jiangsu, Hebei, and Hunan, and published several influential monographs" (Jones 1998, 53). Through this collection and rescue operation of folk music, many forms of folk music and their ancient genres were preserved and passed onto future generations, such as Chaozhou music, Fujian Nanyin, Cantonese music, and Jiangnan Sizhu (Ju 2010, 26). The establishment of the Institute owes much to Mao Zedong's call for music reform, which is to reform and improve Chinese music while also inheriting the essential elements of the nation's rich traditional culture; the establishment of a professional institute for collecting the musical works of folk artists is a way to ensure the practical implementation of Mao's agenda.

The establishment of music conservatories, the focus on folk artists, and the measures to rescue and protect folk music all signify a new beginning for traditional Chinese music education. In this new era, traditional music is no longer a folk art that circulates in the streets and alleys but is systematically and academically incorporated into the formal professional education system, becoming an important component of national cultural construction. The establishment of music conservatories has provided a systematic and professional platform for learning, which has promoted the innovation and development of their artistic forms. For instance, the teaching and performance levels of traditional instruments like the Pipa, have

been significantly enhanced, and the creation of Pipa music and performance forms have become more abundant and diverse.

The development of the Pipa owes much to Lin Shicheng, who is acclaimed as a "grandmaster of the Pipa". He studied the Pipa under Master Shen Haochu, the fifth-generation master of the "Pudong School," becoming the authentic sixth-generation successor of this lineage (Lin and Lin 2011a, 76). In September 1956, Lin was invited by Yang Yinyu and Cao Anhe to join the traditional music department at the CCOM to teach the Pipa (Lin and Lin 2011a, 77). Lin is hailed as a grandmaster of the Pipa not only because of his superb playing skills but also due to his significant contributions to Pipa education—he developed the Conservatory's Pipa teaching syllabus amid a lack of specialized Pipa education in China, which resulted in the Pipa having a systematic approach to instruction for the first time. Wang Cizhao, a professor of CCOM affirmed the importance of this syllabus in his article: "This was China's first professional Pipa teaching syllabus. It played an irreplaceable and crucial role in the construction and development of Pipa teaching in our country" (Wang 2013, 7). In his teaching, Lin not only passed on traditional techniques but also incorporated Mao Zedong's thoughts into it. He utilized the concept of major and minor scales from Western music to compose one hundred and fifteen Pipa etudes encompassing twelve keys (Lin and Lin 2011b, 72). In these etudes, he emphasized the playing and connection of chords, breaking away from the tradition in Pipa music where polyphonic techniques were only used as an accompaniment (Lin and Lin 2011b, 72). In addition, he studied the Western music education system, emphasizing the importance of basic playing skills. As Lin Shicheng states in his paper about his teaching and performing experience that "although fingering techniques are subordinate to performance, if a performer has excellent musical cultivation and extensive theoretical research in performing arts but fails to achieve the required sound effect with some basic fingering techniques, it is impossible to bring out

the intended charm and spirit of the music, resulting only in being overly-ambitious" (Lin 1996, 26)¹⁵.

With the emergence of the first complete system of Pipa teaching, and the development of science and technology, and the popularization of printing and audio-visual materials, the art of Pipa gradually shifted from "oral teaching from the instructor and understanding from the students (Kou Chuan Xin Shou 口传心授, Xin Ling Shen Hui 心领神会)" teaching method transmission to professionalized teaching. Since 1948, Lin Shicheng has dedicated decades to adapting, arranging, and composing Pipa music, and has recorded multiple sets of music CDs for instruction (Lin and Lin 2011b, 72). Since then, students have not only a systematized Pipa textbook, but also audio as performance examples for reference. Besides compiling the first professional Pipa teaching syllabus, he also authored several Pipa teaching textbooks, such as "Pipa Music Scores" published by Music Publishing House in 1956, "The Method of Pipa Playing" published in 1959, "Instrumental Method for Folk Orchestra (Pipa Section)" in 1963, "Thirty Lessons for Pipa" in 1982, "Selected Pipa Music by Lin Shicheng" published by Hong Kong Shanghai Book Co. in 1986, "Selected Pipa Etudes" in 1990, "General Score of Famous Jiangnan Sizhu Ensemble Pieces" in 1998, and "Brief Discussion on Famous Pipa Pieces" in 1999, all by People's Music Publishing House, among others (Lin and Lin 2011b, 73).

Mao Zedong's openness to culture and the arts, his emphasis on tradition and modernity, the fusion of East and West, and his view of the arts as a service to the people and the community undoubtedly provided Lin Shicheng and his colleagues with a broad ideological background and policy support, which were reflected in their educational and musical practices. Mao's advocacy of the fusion of Chinese and Western cultures had a significant impact on Lin Shicheng's introduction of Western music theory into Pipa teaching,

¹⁵ 尽管指法从属于表演, 但如演奏者音乐修养极好, 表演艺术的理论研究得很多, 假使他的某些基本指法没能做到应有的发音效果要求时, 不可能奏出乐曲应有的曲趣与神韵, 只是"眼高手低"、心有余而力不足而已。

his composition of one hundred and fifteen Pipa exercises covering twelve keys, and his emphasis on the importance of chord playing and connection in Pipa teaching (Lin and Lin 2011b, 73). This coincides with Mao's idea that artistic creation and development should go beyond simple East-West confrontation and imitation.

Another person who has contributed greatly to Pipa education is Wang Fandi. Born into a working-class family in Shanghai, Wang had to drop out of school due to financial difficulties and began working in the music industry (Han and Zhang 2010, 16). With music talent and hard work, he not only mastered traditional instruments like the Pipa but also joined the Beijing Film Orchestra in 1953, marking the start of his music career (Han and Zhang 2010, 17). His transformation and growth reflect the emphasis on and cultivation of artistic talent after the founding of New China. Especially after the gradual establishment of conservatories across China, Wang was entrusted with a significant role as a Pipa professor of China Conservatory of Music, another higher music education institution and CCOM (Han and Zhang 2010, 17). This opened up new horizons not only for his personal development, but also further improved the Pipa education system after Lin Shicheng.

Wang Fandi's outstanding contribution in the field of music education is manifested in his professional exploration of Pipa teaching. Throughout his teaching career, he continually summarized his Pipa-playing experiences. Wang believed that "a teacher's comprehensive quality has a decisive impact on the future of a subject, and thus devoted a great deal of effort to researching teaching theories and basic principles" (Li 2003, 28)¹⁶. He extensively read materials on psychology, physiology, as well as domestic and Western instrumental performance and teaching methods (Han and Zhang 2010, 19), deeply analyzing from a scientific perspective the relationship between human anatomy, physiological functions, psychological effects, and playing techniques.

¹⁶ "教师的综合素养对一个学科的未来有着决定性的作用, 并为此花费大量的精力对教学理论和基本规律进行研究。"

Through continuous self-study and practice, he made new breakthroughs in both theory and technique, achievements that were recognized by the music and academic communities both domestically and internationally. In 1981, the China Record Corporation released a Pipa solo album recorded by him, which was distributed both in China and abroad. Subsequently, his academic paper "The Basic Theory of Pipa Performance Techniques and Teaching" was published in the *Chinese Music* magazine in 1983, which was translated in full into Japanese by Nakamura Kakusho, a Japanese Pipa scholar, and serialized in the journal of the Japanese Pipa Society (Han and Zhang 2010, 20). In 1985, he published the paper "The Relationship between the Right Hand Motion Form and Tone Quality of Pipa"; in the same year, he delivered an academic lecture titled "A Preliminary Exploration of Teaching Language and Teaching Relationships" at the National Higher Art Colleges Teaching Experience Exchange Meeting, training professional faculty for nearly ten of China's major professional music colleges (Han and Zhang 2010, 20). This scientific approach to teaching enabled the new generation in China to become music talents who not only understand the essence of traditional Chinese music but also possess modern scientific knowledge.

Additionally, Wang Fandi also focused on Chinese Xinjiang folk songs, adapting songs with traditional ethnic colors into Pipa solos using Western harmony and other composition techniques around 1960s, such as "Spring of the Tianshan (*Tian Shan Zhi Chun* 天山之春)" and "Send Me a Rose (*Song Wo Yi Zhi Mei Gui Hua* 送我一支玫瑰花)" (Han and Zhang 2010, 22). Since the late 1980s, Wang has tirelessly visited the Philippines, Japan, Taiwan, Europe, and other regions and countries to lecture, research, and perform (Han and Zhang 2010, 15). This greatly promoted traditional Chinese music, especially Pipa music, not only enhancing his own artistic attainments but also facilitating cultural exchanges between nations.

The establishment of conservatories marks the beginning of the institutionalization of traditional Chinese music education, providing a solid foundation and broad stage for the survival and development of folk artists. Against this institutionalized backdrop, Lin Shicheng and Wang Fandi, two outstanding Pipa educators, through their efforts and contributions, not only exemplified the professionalization of traditional Chinese music education but also propelled the systematic and scientific development of Pipa education. Lin Shicheng created a comprehensive Pipa teaching system, incorporating Western music theory and emphasizing basic skill training, leading Pipa education towards systematization. On this basis, Wang Fandi further explored by engaging in interdisciplinary study and research, enhancing the professionalism of Pipa education and emphasizing the crucial role of a teacher's comprehensive quality for the future of the discipline. Guided by Mao Zedong's musical thoughts, China's traditional music education and performing arts experienced a significant transformation from oral transmission to institutionalization and professionalization. The educational practices and performance experiences of Lin Shicheng and Wang Fandi laid a solid foundation for showcasing the educational development of China's national music.

III. Application of theory of Pipa (Pipa - Innovation Period)

Starting with the foundational contributions of individuals like Lin Shicheng and Wang Fandi, Pipa education, repertoire, and instrument structure entered a new phase of reform. Influenced by Mao Zedong's musical ideology and supported by Mao's government, there was not only a transition of the Pipa towards professionalization and systematization but also improvements in Pipa repertoire and the construction of the instrument. "They learned the instrument from traditional literati, modern intellectuals, or other professional players, and they usually worked in professional performing troupes or music conservatories. They played both traditional and modern composed pieces, and their major performance

arenas were concerts and mass-media events" (Wu 2023, 331). Thus, Pipa performers embrace the new techniques and elevate Pipa playing to a new level as they too moved up the social ladder and gained respect.

The 1950s can be considered the golden era of improvements for Chinese traditional musical instruments. At that time, the State Bureau of Light Industry established a pilot group for national musical instruments (Mo 2022, 22). Furthermore, in 1954, the precursor to the China Broadcasting Chinese Orchestra also formed an instrument group that began organizing and improving national musical instruments (Mo 2022, 22). The instrument group also conducted research and improvements on the Pipa, such as studying the impact of the bracing's position on volume and sound quality and determining the optimal material for the tailpiece, which was found to be bamboo (Mo 2022, 22).

In the 1950s, a number of new Pipa pieces and adaptations emerged, yet these pieces largely inherited traditional techniques without much innovation. Especially in terms of musical form, many works still keep the traditional methods and modes, lacking novelty in compositional techniques and playing skills. However, as the Pipa became a professional subject in central and local music conservatories and colleges across the country, the research and teaching of the Pipa embarked on a path of systematization, professionalization, scientification, and formalization, also cultivating a new generation of Pipa players and composers for New China. Around the 1960s, alongside the flourishing of China's music and arts, the Pipa entered another period of climax, witnessing the emergence of a batch of new works. These included Ye Xuran's "Hurrying to the Flower Festival (*Gan Hua Hui Gan Hua Hui* 赶花会)" (1960), Ma Shenglong's "Joyful Days (*Huan Le De Ri Zi* 欢乐的日子)" (1958), Wang Huiran's "Dance of the Yi Tribe (*Yi Zu Wu Qu* 彝族舞曲)" (1960), and Lv Shaoen's "The Five Heroes of Langya Mountain (*Lang Ya Shan Wu Zhuang Shi* 狼牙山五壮士)" (1960), and so on (China Nationalities Orchestra Society 2016, 517). "Despite

preserving links to traditional Chinese music, the Pipa music of the second modern period reveals stronger Western influences, as compared to the music composed earlier" (Wu 2023, 331). They extensively absorbed the structure of the Western ternary form, and modern compositional techniques such as variation, modulation, transposition, and the use of harmony and counterpoint were widely employed. The integration of these exploratory compositional techniques with Pipa's playing skills not only reflected the national style characteristics of the composition techniques but also elevated Pipa's performance to a new height. However, although these pieces were composed using Western music forms, the musical elements and the original melodies are from ethnic minorities in China. This reflects Mao's ideological emphasis on Chinese national music reformation, where its core values include the unique tonal qualities of the instrument, the distinctiveness of its playing techniques, and its role in Chinese musical storytelling.

A representative work is "Dance of the Yi Tribe" composed by Wang Huiran, based on Yi folk music elements, first published in the August 1962 issue of *Yinyue Chuangzuo* (Xv 24), a professional publication on music and art under the supervision of the China Federation of Literary and Artistic Associations and initiated by the CMA ("Musical Works", n.d.). With its beautifully lyrical melodies and robust, vigorous rhythms, the piece paints a picture of the enchanting night scenery of the Yi villages and the joyful scene of young people dancing. After a *rebato* introductory section, the music uses double-stringed five-fingers rolling (Lun 轮) to evoke the melodious sound of flutes, depicting the comfortable and misty night scene of the mountain village. This tune, derived from the Yi folk song "Haicai Tune," first appeared in the first section of this piece and then fully developed later in the piece (see Score 1).

悠扬地

双弦

【二】 ♩ = 60 优美地

pp

Score 1. "Haicai Tune" first appears in the first section

"Dance of the Yi Tribe (Yi Zu Wu Qu 彝族舞曲)"

The third and fourth sections develop from this theme and reappear in the ninth section. The sixth section contrasts with the previous and subsequent ones through its strong rhythm and bold temperament, reaching the climax of the piece through a gradual elevation in pitch. "Dance of the Yi Tribe" is inspired by life and folk traditions, embodying both the gentle and tender traditions of the Pipa's literary music and the unrestrained passion of martial music, achieving a balance between movement and stillness, strength, and softness (Xv 2014, 75). This piece not only inherits the tradition of Pipa performance but also advances the art of Pipa playing, becoming a model for the new era of Pipa art. It exemplifies Mao's call to incorporate ethnic elements and innovation to produce music that reflect modern China. As can be seen in this piece, the composer responded positively to Mao's idea of musical nationalism. The core of the new music piece was the distinctive tone of Chinese instruments, their unique traditional playing techniques, and a musical response to the life of

the Chinese people and their different ethnic characteristics, capturing the nation's diverse local indigenous cultures.

Another Pipa solo piece "The Five Heroes of Langya Mountain" was composed in 1960 by Lv Shaun, a third-year student of the Composition Department of the CCOM, for the eleventh anniversary of the founding of the PRC (Lian 2016, 1). It uses the narrative form of traditional Pipa martial music and, for the first time, draws inspiration from the Western sonata form structure, combining it with the national tonality and traditional techniques of the Pipa, achieving great success (Lian 2016, 1).

The music begins with the low and solemn sound of horns in the introduction, foreshadowing an imminent tragic and fierce battle. By supporting with firm and powerful index-finger strumming (*Sao* 扫) and five-fingers rolling, the multi-layered modulations are like horns echoing in the valley, strongly rendering a solemn and mournful atmosphere. Following this, a theme presentation in the style of a march, specifically fragments of the New Fourth Army's anthem (Zhou 2012, 146), emphasized broad and heroic tones, focusing on shaping the heroic image of the anti-Japanese soldiers who bravely fought against the enemy in the dense forests of the Taihang River. The secondary theme uses mechanical dotted rhythms and stark timbres in short tones to depict the fierce movement and stillness, strength, and softness of the battle scene. This piece not only inherits the tradition of Pipa performance but also advances the art visage of the Japanese invaders through the utilization of Western composition techniques (Zhou 2012, 144), further applying Mao's music ideology of taking Western music's strongpoints to elevate traditional Chinese music.

After presenting these two themes, the music enters the development section, where it employs numerous dissonant chords, frequent modulations and key changes, and triplet rhythmic patterns. Through the intertwining and conflict of the themes representing the enemy and ourselves, it depicts the cruelty and intensity of the battle. It breaks through the

traditional martial arts model and improves dramatically. In terms of Pipa techniques, the composers took advantage of all the traditional martial arts techniques, such as index-finger strumming, thumb strumming (*Fu* 拂), and four-string five-finger rolling (*Man Lun* 满轮), and even pioneered a series of new techniques, such as "liberating" the left thumb from its position that holds the Pipa to be used in fretting techniques (see Score 2), imitating Cello's fingering techniques (Lian 2016, 7). This innovation allows for more convenient playing of complex chords and tones, further enriching the Pipa's martial music style. The composer combines the story of the protagonist's heroic sacrifice in the war of resistance for his country and his people with traditional and innovative Pipa techniques, and presents it in a western musical form, effectively conveying a sense of national pride and collective identity, which resonates with Mao's directive that Chinese music should embody national stories and inspire the populace.

Score 2. Left thumb in using as fingering

"The Five Heroes of Langya Mountain (*Lang Ya Shan Wu Zhuang Shi* 狼牙山五壮士)"

The above two pieces are boldly innovative in terms of technique, rich and varied in subject matter, and rich in the atmosphere of that time, creating a new era of Pipa creation and greatly promoting other works of the same period. They are prime examples of Pipa repertoire of the 1950s and 1960s, which were based on Mao's thoughts, and heavily influenced by the institutionalization and professionalization of Pipa music under the leadership of Xiao Youmei and Liu Tianhua. These works, rooted firmly in Mao Zedong's

music reform ideology, underscore the critical role of cultural confidence and nationalism in shaping the arts. Mao's vision was not just to modernize traditional Chinese music to keep pace with the world; more importantly, it was to evoke a strong sense of national identity while adapting to the modernization of Chinese society, and to foster national pride through music.

Improvements in Pipa Manufacturing

In response to the constantly evolving demands of new Pipa compositions that utilized Western composition techniques such as music forms, harmony and chords, and various tonalities or modulations, the introduction of artificial nails, the widespread adoption of equal temperament semitone frets, and the replacement of silk strings with metal ones were instrumental innovations that became a necessity for Pipa performers. Improvements in the Pipa manufacturing facilitated the performance of new repertoires with richer harmonic content and more varied technical requirements that reflected Mao's music ideology in New National Music that incorporates Western musical elements.

As early as the 1920s, Zheng Jinwen and others who organized the Shanghai Cosmos Performing Music Society (*Datong yan yue hui*), and Liu Tianhua, who organized the Society for the Reform and Advancement of Traditional Music (*Guoyue gaijin she*), had already embarked on the path of improving traditional musical instruments (Mo 2022, 24). However, due to economic conditions and backward production technology, the manufacture of traditional instruments could not undergo significant enhancements or changes. With the growing influence of Western music and the experiences drawn from world music cultures since the May 4th Movement, there was a push towards diversification in musical composition. This led to increased demands on ethnic instruments, which were expected to accommodate polyphony and multiple tonalities in their performance capabilities. In the

1950s and 1960s, to meet the needs of new Pipa compositions, the manufacturing and construction of the Pipa gradually entered a period of improvement.

a. Artificial nails (pluck) replacing performers' nails

In the early 1950s, Pipa players traditionally used their fingernails to play the instrument (Kuang 2003, 29). However, as the repertoire of the Pipa expanded from traditional simple pieces to include more complex modernization Western formed compositions, and as performance techniques developed more diverse, the natural fingernails proved weak and unreliable. This led the players of the time to start brainstorming to try to solve the problem, which led to the development and production of artificial nails for Pipa players. At the beginning, "Li Tingsong adopted the method of applying nail polish to increase the durability of the performer's nails" (Kuang 2003, 29). "This nail polish was made by soaking celluloid in ethyl acetate until the celluloid completely dissolved, then applying it to the nails to form a protective layer, enhancing their durability" (Kuang 2003, 29), as Kuang Yuzhong, who made significant contributions to modern Pipa playing techniques and education, mentioned in his posthumous works that he also used this method.

In 1956, Liang Shikan, a Pipa player and pioneer of instrumental innovation in the Beijing Architectural and Cultural Affairs Troupe, made artificial nails out of celluloid, which Liang made with a hook on each side (Meng 2012, 94). Hooks on either side are clasped onto the performer's fingernail, with the rear end of the fingernail wrapped around the finger with adhesive tape. Such artificial nails can be securely fixed to the natural fingernails, facilitating performance. However, these artificial nails have shortcomings: their ends tend to be flat, which can produce unwanted noise, and the hooks on the sides of the nails are prone to breaking. Therefore, "during the 1950s, natural nails and artificial nails were used together" (Meng 2012, 94). Since the natural nails are not curved when they are long, the artificial nails do not yet match the natural nails, and it is not as sensitive as the natural nails. Thus, "natural

nails are still used in formal performances, and artificial nails are used only when practicing or when the performer's nails are broken" (Kuang 2003, 29).

It was later discovered that the artificial nails could still be used even if the hooks on the sides broke (Meng 2012, 94). Consequently, the design was changed to no longer include hooks on the sides, but rather to the now commonly used shape of fingernails, with the ends made oval. This design allows the nail to contact the string more closely during play, reducing noise (Meng 2012, 94). Especially after removing the hooks from the sides of the thumb's artificial nail, making the nail end protrude to the left, similar to a real thumb, this improved the plucking technique of the right thumb, playing a key role in the overall improvement of right-hand playing techniques (Meng 2012, 95).

Around 1958, the piano lesson was a required course for all the students at the Central Conservatory of Music Middle School as reflecting Mao's call of studying Western music theory to applied in Chinese music, so Shen Can, who was in charge of the piano course, suggested that "students who played the Pipa either cut their fingernails to learn piano or keep their nails and not learn piano" (Kuang 2003, 29). Kuang Yuzhong worried that it was a huge loss for students not to learn piano due to nail issues, as it was detrimental to their professional music education (Kuang 2003, 29). He experimented with cutting off his right-hand nails and playing the Pipa with artificial nails and to his surprise, he found that "playing with artificial nails after cutting his nails significantly increased sensitivity compared to playing with artificial nails over his own nails" (Kuang 2003, 29). This was because it allowed the artificial nails to fit more closely to the natural nails. This improvement was gradually accepted by more players, and subsequently, very few Pipa players kept their natural nails for playing, even until today.

b. Widespread use of equal temperament semitone frets

The reform of equal temperament semitone frets is a significant innovation in the development of the Pipa during the latter half of the 20th century (Meng 2012, 94). In the first half of the 20th century, Pipa performers commonly used the traditional Pipa, specifically with either ten or thirteen frets, which became the basis for the Pipa's unique tuning system.

In 1953, when Kuang Yuzhong entered the CCOM to study the Pipa, the instrument he used an improved version of the old-style Pipa (see figure A or B below) with ten tonal positions (*Yin Wei* 音位) and thirteen frets (Kuang 2003, 28). Influenced by Western music theory, especially during his study of the clarinet as a minor and practice of scales and arpeggios in various keys, he realized that the Pipa in use at the time could only play the seven-note scales of a few keys, due to having only four tonal positions and thirteen frets, lacking complete semitones (Kuang 2003, 28). To overcome this limitation, Kuang Yuzhong utilized the equal temperament tuning chart given by Chu Shizhu who was a student of Liu Tianhua, and had a Pipa made with six *Xiangs* (相, lower range frets) and eighteen *Pins* (品, middle and higher range frets), complete with semitones (see figure C below), by the craftsmen at the Tianjin Musical Instrument Factory (Kuang 2003, 28). This allowed the Pipa to play scales, arpeggios, and chromatic scales in various keys.

This new form of the Pipa gradually became widely used, especially with the establishment of professional national music ensembles and the demand for new musical compositions, making the six *Xiangs*, eighteen *Pins* Pipa more extensively adopted (Kaung 2003, 28). Although the concept of this configuration had already emerged under the innovation of Pipa performers like Liu Tianhua in the 1920s and 1930s (Yu 2010, 147), it wasn't until the 1950s, with the progress of professionalization of national musical instruments, that this reform was fully realized.

This reform process was summarized and affirmed by Yang Yinyu, the editor of the Dictionary of Chinese Music (*Zhongguo Yinyue Cidian*), who pointed out that "in recent years, some professional performers have added the previously missing semitone positions to the Pipa, resulting in twenty-four frets (six *Xiangs* and eighteen *Pins*), and have already applied them in performance with considerable success" (Institute of Chinese Music Studies of Central Conservatory of Music 1958, 13)¹⁷. With the development of musical practice, the instruments used nowadays have increased to twenty-five frets or even more (see figure D



A. four Xiangs, eleven Pins



B. four Xiangs, thirteen Pins



C. six Xiangs, eighteen Pins



D. six Xiangs, twenty-four Pins

above). The widespread application of equal temperament semitone frets has significantly enhanced the Pipa's range of performance and the richness of musical expression, marking an

¹⁷ 近年以来有些专业的演奏家们, 更进一步, 又补充了琵琶上原来缺少的一些半音柱位, 加成二十四柱(六相十八品)而且他们在演奏中间, 也已经予以实际运用而获得了相当的成功。"

important advancement in Pipa manufacturing and performance techniques, as well as meeting the need for new Pipa repertoires using Western compositional techniques and music forms.

c. Metal strings replace silk strings

"In the late 1950s, the traditional silk strings were replaced with steel strings by Kuang Yuzhong" (Meng 2012, 94), which produced a louder volume, longer sustained notes, and were less prone to breaking. However, their downside was the increased noise and a distinct metallic timbre. Subsequently, nylon-wrapped steel strings were invented to address this issue, retaining the advantages of metal strings while preserving the simple and pure tone of silk strings (Meng 2012, 94). Kuang Yuzhong initially experimented with metal-wrapped strings over silk ones, but the results were not satisfactory (Kuang 2003, 30). "After numerous tests, strings wrapped in silver foil provided the best sound, but the high cost of silver limited its use" (Meng 2012, 94). Later, a material called "German alloy" was discovered, which was cost-effective and produced a good sound, eventually being adopted nationwide (Gao 2017, 53).

Additionally, influenced by Western music, the structure of the violin, particularly its sound post, inspired a master of Pipa maker, Gao Zhanchun. Since the traditional Pipa without sound post-construction methods, when combined with improved strings, resulted in a shattered and hollow sound, after careful study of the violin's construction, Gao developed a method of placing two separate braces under the Pipa's inner area (Jiang 2021). This innovation, validated through extensive testing and endorsed by the PRC Ministry of Light Industry, then was widely adopted and the technique of adding a brace is still used today (Jiang 2021).

Mao's major speeches from 1942 to 1956, addressing the freedom and importance of New National Music with Chinese characteristics and cultural confidence, paved the way for

prominent musical reformers such as Xiao Youmei and Liu Tianhua to guide its development, incorporating both traditional Chinese elements and beneficial aspects of Western music theory and instrument construction. These reforms established a number of professional music conservatories, founded music research groups, solved the livelihood problems of folk artists, preserved and inherited dying folk arts, and strengthened and improved music education in the new China. Furthermore, the reform of the Pipa's repertoire and structure was a practical application of Mao's idea of musical reform, which diversified the traditional Chinese musical forms by utilizing the musical forms, genres, composition techniques of Western music and inspired by the Western instruments' construction. The reform of the instrument's structure developed new playing techniques and thus enlarged the range of its expression, enabling it to better adapt to the requirements of both traditional music and new compositions, and ultimately to promote and facilitate the development of Chinese traditional music. Therefore, this transformative period under Mao's leadership fundamentally shaped the New National Music, particularly the Pipa, through a series of reforms that were both innovative and rooted in tradition, thereby fostering a revival of Chinese traditional music while laying the groundwork for a profound evolution in the realm of Chinese music. During this period, Chinese music was revitalized through the fusion of traditional Chinese culture and musical elements with Western musical compositional techniques and musical forms. Despite incorporating elements of Western music theory and techniques, the reforms of the Pipa under Mao did not dilute its traditional essence; rather, they enriched its expressive capabilities and broadened its appeal both within China and internationally. This ensured that traditional forms of art remained relevant and vibrant in modern society.

Chapter Three: From 1966 to Today

The Cultural Revolution began in 1966, marking a decade of devastation for the arts community, with the creativity of artists strictly controlled. In 1967, the *Summary of the Forum on the Work in Literature and Art in the Armed Forces with which Comrade Lin Piao Entrusted Comrade Chiang Ching*, a collection of four historical documents published in prominent Chinese newspapers during the Cultural Revolution, stipulated that, apart from the model operas, nearly all drama and music works were banned from performance (Summary of the Forum on the Work in Literature and Art in the Armed Forces with which Comrade Lin Piao Entrusted Comrade Chiang Ching, 1968). Music groups were only allowed to perform the Eight Model Operas, which "in 1966 eight works were declared models: five Beijing operas, two dance dramas, and one symphony" and "formed the core of efforts to create a new popular culture", "were the artistic centerpiece of the Cultural Revolution" (Judd 1991, 266). This policy was undoubtedly a shackle on musical creativity at the time. "Music and other forms of cultural productions are supervised closely and monitored under the control of the central government" (Lau 2008, 133). As a result, whether it was CMA, music academies, or professional music conservatoires, all were impacted. From the start of the Cultural Revolution until 1976, "instrumental composition in China entered a state of stagnation" (Jing 1991, 86). Thus, due to the tense socio-cultural environment at that time, the creation of new compositions for the Pipa came to a standstill.

The situation gradually improved following the end of the Cultural Revolution. "For several years after the overthrow of the Gang of Four in 1976, traditional music and culture scarcely raised its head" (Jones 1998, 56). At the Third Party Plenum of the 11th Central Committee held in 1978, the ideological line of "emancipating the mind and seeking truth from facts" was established, marking the beginning of a new historical era of Reform and Opening (Jones 1998, 56). After the Cultural Revolution, Deng Xiaoping (1904–1997),

Chairman from 1978 to 1983, and one of the paramount leaders of the PRC, proposed the concept of "building a socialist society with Chinese characteristics" in 1982 (Bao 2012, 5). Deng stated that the Reform and Opening were not merely economic policy changes but also a significant liberation of thoughts and culture (Bao 2012, 5). This concept redirected national development, including the arts.

Following the Cultural Revolution, "in many places traditional music-making contexts only revived as late as 1982 or even 1985, having thus been silenced for twenty years or more" (Jones 1998, 56). When the silence was broken, the standstill of the music industry started to turn around because of several national competitions for traditional musical instrument performance and composition, which succeeded in driving the creation of new Pipa music at that time. This included the national Pipa competition of the "Shanghai Spring" in 1980, as well as the Sixth National Music Composition Awards (solo and ensemble of traditional instruments) in 1988, the first "Tianyun Cup" Pipa composition competition in 1993, and two national musical instrument composition competitions also held in 1993 (Liu 2006, 42). These competitions provided a stage for Pipa players to showcase their playing skills, encouraging them to continually enhance their performance abilities. During the Cultural Revolution, many traditional art forms were banned or severely restricted. After the Reforms and Opening, these competitions became vital platforms for the revival of traditional arts, helping to restore national interest and respect for traditional music. Through nationwide competitions, the artistic value of the Pipa and other national instruments was reaffirmed and promoted, which can be seen as a reclaiming of the national culture's confidence.

Additionally, the competitive environment motivated musicians to bring innovations to traditional repertoires, creating more modern and creative works. In the area of Pipa music composition, competitions also provided a platform for composers to showcase their work,

further promoting its development. Since the beginning of the 20th century, Pipa music has been composed by experienced Pipa players who have drawn on their own experience and cultural backgrounds to create beautiful musical works, which are melodious and relatively simple in form and compositional technique (Guo 2023, 6). After the 1980s, many professional composers began to contribute to Pipa music creation, such as Wu Houyuan, Zhu Jianer, Zhao Jiping, Tan Dun, Gu Guanren, Chen Yi (Liu 2006, 35). They combined Western compositional techniques with Chinese music elements in composition and created a series of skillful and modernized Pipa music repertoires. For instance, Chen Yi composed a piece called "The Points, for solo Pipa" in 1991. As she states in her article "Tradition and Creation": "the structure of The Points comes from the eight standard brushstroke movements of the Chinese character *yong* [eternal] in *Zhengkai* calligraphy. In this work, I integrated the essence of the traditional lyric and martial techniques... I also use nontraditional position jumps and string-spanning techniques borrowed from my Paganini violin repertoire" (Chen 2002, 64). Chen Yi's approach in her Pipa composition, "The Points," is a sophisticated blend of traditional Chinese musical elements with innovative Western techniques, showcasing a groundbreaking method in the world of contemporary music composition. By deriving structural inspiration from the brushstrokes of a Chinese character in traditional calligraphy, Chen integrates a deeply cultural and visual art form into the auditory realm, thus grounding her work in Chinese artistic tradition. At the same time, she adopts advanced violin techniques from Western classical music—specifically those associated with Paganini, such as nontraditional position jumps and string-spanning—to enhance the expressive capabilities of the Pipa.

As a result of the emergence of these new forms of music and culture, Pipa performance and composition have also manifested a diversified and coexisting form. While inheriting tradition, Chinese composers not only studied the compositional theories of

Western modern music, but also explored and innovated the absorption of compositional techniques and the use of new musical techniques in the creation of Chinese music.

For example, Liu Dehai (1937-2020) was a contemporary Pipa virtuoso, performer, and educator. As a student of Lin Shicheng, Liu benefited greatly from Lin's educational contributions in the mid-20th century, particularly the development of a professional Pipa syllabus and the incorporation of Western scales and chords into Pipa music. Lin Shicheng also authored several Pipa teaching textbooks, marking a significant shift in teaching and performance practice from tradition to modernization, and helping to transform Pipa education from an informal teacher-disciple transmission to a formal discipline that will nurture future generations of musicians. Liu not only received private teachings from Lin, but also instructions from famous masters of various schools, such as Cao Anhe, Sun Yude, and Yang Dajun (Guo 2023, 10). Educated in an environment where Pipa teaching had already been influenced by the fusion of traditional and Western techniques, Liu Dehai studied a variety of instruments other than the Pipa: "at the same time, he actively studied the Guqin, double bass, and other instruments" (Guo 2023, 10). This reflected the broadened approach to music education advocated by Lin and his contemporaries.

Liu has made significant contributions to the performance, composition, and theory of Pipa music. His works in the late twentieth century demonstrated examples of his continued innovation within the framework established by Lin Shicheng and others in the earlier period, particularly his introduction of new performance techniques. In terms of playing techniques, after absorbing the essence of traditional ancient tunes, Liu innovated and introduced new playing techniques such as "fan lun (反轮, five-fingers rolling in counter way)". He applied such new techniques in several of his compositions, pushing forward the new development of Pipa art. Around the 1980s-1990s, he composed works such as his "Life Collection (*Ren Sheng Pian* 人生篇)" pieces "Swan (*Tian E* 天鹅)" and "Spring Silkworm (*Chun Can* 春蚕)"

(Liang 2005, 4). He introduced the "upper string note (*Shang Xian Yin* 上弦音)," breaking the conventional understanding and practice that touching points on the strings are limited to between the frets. The "upper string note" refers to producing sound above the left hand's pressing position on the strings. This method of tone processing and playing technique is unique in its approach.

After entering the 1990s, reforms in economic and political systems led to continuous changes in China's cultural structures, deeply altering people's spiritual and value orientations (Xue 2010, 15). Once basic needs for survival such as food and shelter were met, people began shifting from material pursuits to seeking spiritual fulfillment. Consequently, societal aesthetic preferences also evolved with the changing social context, leading to increasing diversification in the forms and themes of national music: "from uniformity to differentiation, and from community activities to personal entertainment" (Xue 2010, 15). This change reflects a deepening of personal and collective identities, where individuals look beyond mere survival towards a richer engagement with life. This diversification is crucial as it allows national music to remain relevant by adapting to its audience's changing tastes and expectations.

Therefore, between 1991 and 1993, Liu Dehai responded to the changing social landscape of the time and created the "Pastoral Collection (*Tian Yuan Pian* 田园篇)," which includes four Pipa solo pieces: "Golden Dream (*Jin Se De Meng* 金色的梦)," "One Finger Zen (*Yi Zhi Chan* 一指禅)," "Heavenly Pool (*Tian Chi* 天池)," and "Journey to the Hometown (*Gu Xiang Xing* 故乡行)" (Xue 2010, 15). Each title reflects a theme of serenity, a spiritual quest, and a return to one's roots, which mirrors the cultural quest for deeper spiritual and aesthetic values. "At this time, the content of Pipa compositions increasingly focused on reflecting the authentic thoughts and ideas of modern individuals. They employed unconventional creative methods such as non-rhythmic, pan-tonal, and atonal techniques to

express abstract and profound emotional states of people" (Xue 2010, 15). The focus on capturing "authentic thoughts and ideas of modern individuals" reflects the shift of composer's thoughts from merely passing on traditional Chinese music to a more modernized focus on the experiences and emotions of modern people and society. Thus, during this period, Liu transitioned from the previous phase of "Life Collection," which focused on the pursuit and contemplation of traditional culture, to "a pursuit of nature and the countryside; in practice, he sought his spiritual solace among mountains and rivers" (Guo 2023, 6). This transition represents a deeper inner transformation of the artist in relation to the social environment and in response to the changes of the times.

In terms of composition, Liu Dehai arranged, adapted, and created nearly 68 pieces for the Pipa between 1960 and 2001 (Guo 2023, 5). Liu's adaptations and innovations mark the continuous development of the Pipa, which, while rooted in the traditional essence emphasized during the Mao era, continues to push the limits of what the Pipa can achieve, promoting the diversification of Chinese musical forms and the fusion and coexistence of Chinese and Western music. By the period represented by Liu Dehai, Pipa players were not only skillful in mastering traditional techniques, but were also adept at integrating and creating new techniques influenced by world music trends.

One of the most important in the history of Pipa repertoire development is arguably "Little Sisters of the Grassland (*Cao Yuan Ying Xiong Xiao Jie Mei* 草原英雄小姐妹)" composed by Liu Dehai, Wang Yanqiao and Wu Zuqiang from 1973 (Wu 2023, 331). Liang Maochun, a Chinese music historian and professor of the CCOM affirmed the contemporary significance of the piece: "'Little Sisters of the Grassland' pioneered the collaboration between the Pipa and Western orchestras. This piece expanded the artistic expressiveness of the Pipa and is a milestone in the development of Pipa art. Prior to this, there had never been

a precedent for cooperation between the Pipa and Western orchestras" (Liang 2005, 5)¹⁸. Therefore, the emergence of this first Pipa concerto broke the previous barriers between Chinese instruments and Western orchestras, exploring a new path that allows for a unified style and harmonious timbre between Chinese instruments and orchestras. Additionally, this concerto also achieved a breakthrough at the technical level. In the "Prairie Grazing" section of the piece, a large number of arpeggiated and chordal playing techniques were added (see score 3), which are generally not used in traditional music because they are challenging for the Pipa. These techniques enrich the acoustic effects of the Pipa, adding a contemporary feel to the music. Liu inherited the essence of traditional Pipa music and rhythms, while pioneering the Pipa concerto, making a significant contribution to the development of modern Pipa repertoire. Thus, the development of Pipa performance and composition after 1978 can be seen as a direct continuation of the educational and artistic reforms of the 1950s and 1960s. Lin Shicheng's contribution provided future generations, including Liu Dehai, with the tools to further explore and expand the Pipa's musical and technical capabilities. This continuity highlights the lasting impact of Mao's cultural reforms and demonstrates the importance of music education in promoting artistic innovation through music and preserving traditional culture and nationalism.

¹⁸ "《草原小姐妹》开启了琵琶与西方管弦乐队合作的先河, 这一乐曲拓宽了琵琶的艺术表现力, 更是琵琶艺术发展的里程碑。在此之前, 从未有过琵琶与西方管弦乐队合作的先例。"

18 Andante
行板

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled '18 Andante' (行板). The score is written for a piano and consists of two staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked 'Andante' (行板). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and ornaments. Dynamics include 'mp' (mezzo-piano) and 'dolce' (dolce). There are also markings for 'mp' and 'dolce' in the lower staff. The score is numbered 18.

Score 3 - Little Sisters of the Grassland

"(Cao Yuan Ying Xiong Xiao Jie Mei 草原英雄小姐妹)"

Throughout its development, the Pipa has continuously integrated its playing techniques and compositional styles with the evolving times. Liu Dehai's innovation has also inspired many Chinese composers nowadays to make bold explorations and attempts in the process of creative practice, and create an array of works with various forms and unique styles. Sun Jing, a young composer and Pipa player who graduated from the CCOM with a Bachelor's Degree in Pipa performance and a Master's Degree in Composition (Wu 2021, 3), wrote the piece "Silent Strings (*Jing Mo Zhi Xian* 静默之弦)" in 2018 and created a new playing technique "left finger pad string touch (*Zuo Shou Zhi Du Peng Xian* 左手指肚碰弦)" to imitate the sound of the Sitar (see score 4).

The modernized-traditional Pipa still keeps its traditional Chinese cultural roots, using the traditional playing techniques and emphasizing Chinese characteristics and nationalism, while incorporating Western music forms, composition techniques, and instrument structures. It follows Mao's call for the creation of modernized-traditional Chinese music that boosts cultural confidence. Notably, performers such as Zhang Qiang, Yang Jing, and Chen Yin, along with composers like Chen Yi, Zhou Long, and Tan Dun, have propelled Pipa music back onto the global stage. This has further expanded the cultural exchange between Chinese

and international music, positioning the Pipa to make a substantial global impact, generating a broad and profound influence.



Score 4 - "Silent Strings (*Jin Mo Zhi Xian* 静默之弦)"

Additionally, as the Reform and Opening deepened, a large amount of foreign art was introduced into China, and traditional music began to integrate with elements from foreign music (Wu and Liao 2023, 162). The wave of globalization ushered Chinese music development into a new era. The academic sphere actively engages with and incorporates advanced artistic concepts from the West. Meanwhile, as Western music influences enter China, modernized-traditional Chinese music is also gaining international exposure. In 1979, Liu Dehai collaborated with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Seiji Ozawa, to perform "Little Sisters of the Grassland," and subsequently, he toured globally with several orchestras, including the Berlin Philharmonic, performing in multiple countries and regions (Wu and Liao 2023, 162). These collaborations not only demonstrate the high regard in which Chinese musicians are held but also reflect the growing influence of Chinese music on the global stage, which can be seen as prominent examples of cultural exchange. While becoming the first musician of China's folk music to collaborate with a Western symphony orchestra, Liu also succeeded in showing the world the Pipa, an instrument representing traditional Chinese musical style and deep cultural heritage.

The influence of the excellent Pipa concertos of the 20th century continues to this day, as the Pipa stands on the international stage as one of the prominent symbols of Chinese culture. Wu Man, as a representative Pipa virtuoso in the world stage, was born in Hangzhou and graduated from the CCOM, moved to the U.S in 1990 and became a founding and active member of Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Project (Wu 2023, 334). In 2001, she premiered Tan Dun's "Concerto for String Orchestra and Pipa" with the Seattle Symphony Orchestra (Wu 2023, 335). "The gratifying achievements of Pipa music on the international stage have inspired creators and performers to pursue the 'internationalization' of Pipa music" (Wu and Liao 2023, 162).

Although the reform of Chinese traditional music stagnated during the Cultural Revolution and Pipa works were trapped in a blank period, after the Cultural Revolution, with the growing affluence of the people, the recovery of the economy and the growing strength of the country, Chinese national music entered a climax of development. Chinese modernized-traditional music is vibrant within China, as well as around the world, demonstrating its unique artistic charm and cultural value. Pipa, as one of the representatives of Chinese modernized-traditional musical instruments, has been changing in accordance with the development of the times, going through various reforms, and ultimately not only gained further importance in China, but also solidified its unique artistic elegance on the international stage. The first performance of Pipa with a Western symphony orchestra was a successful attempt at musical exchange, as well as an important milestone for Chinese national music globally. This event enhanced national and cultural confidence, all the while promoting the further modernization of Chinese music. With the unremitting efforts of more Chinese composers and performers such as Liu Dehai, Chen Yi, Zhou Long, and Tan Dun, Pipa music not only gained innovations in technique and expression, but also became widely recognized and acclaimed globally. These achievements demonstrate the rich connotation and

expressive power of modernized-traditional Chinese music and mark the active position and influence of Chinese culture in global cultural exchanges. Through these exchanges and demonstrations, the Pipa, as well as other modernized-traditional Chinese musical instruments, has become more deeply rooted in people's hearts, serving as a cultural bridge connecting China and the world. By embracing both the past and the present, the Pipa remains a vibrant and evolving Chinese instrument of musical expression, deeply rooted in tradition yet continuously unfolding in new and dynamic contexts.

Conclusion

In the process of reform and development of traditional Chinese music, maintaining and promoting its national characteristics has always been a key consideration. With the impact of the May Fourth Movement as a social backdrop, school music songs became the starting point for the influence of Western music. Although Pipa music did not undergo significant changes at that time, figures like Xiao Youmei and Liu Tianhua brought fresh ideas to the reform of Chinese music. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, Mao Zedong took power and clarified the direction of Chinese music reform from his 1942 Yan'an speech to his 1956 discussions with music workers, during which the influence of Western music began to expand significantly. Pipa players and composers started to modernize the instrument, actively responding to Mao Zedong's artistic leadership directives. After 1949, reforms in the structure and acoustics of the Pipa expanded its range and expressive capabilities, allowing the Pipa to enter the ranks of instruments capable of performing modern music, comparable to Western music. Figures such as Liu Tianhua, Lin Shicheng, Wang Fandi, and Liu Dehai advanced the development of the Pipa through different angles of teaching and performance theory research. For example they wrote numerous Pipa practice pieces based on Western harmony and established professional Pipa education programs, thus gradually professionalizing and modernizing Pipa techniques to adapt to Western performance styles. The 20th century advancements of the Pipa are the results of the integration of Western music with its traditional roots, where composers and performers attempted to blend Chinese and Western music while also contemplating the cultural identity of their national music (Wang 2009, 358). Ongoing reflections on modern Chinese music continue to push the topic of promoting cultural confidence within the industry (Wu and Liao 2023, 164). Musicians, generation after generation, emphasize and capture the importance of national characteristics through the creation of

modernized-traditional Pipa music, while the integration of Chinese and Western music continuously drives the development of the Pipa repertoire (Wu and Liao 2023, 164).

The successful development of the Pipa showcases its diversity and continuously strengthens the conviction of cultural heritage and boosts cultural confidence among the people. The reform and development of Chinese music is a historical process closely related to national policies and cultural self-assurance. From the innovative reforms of Xiao Youmei and Liu Tianhua to the clear direction for reform pointed out by Mao Zedong, and then to the full flourishing after the Reform and Opening, this process demonstrates the adaptability and vitality of Chinese music in modern society. Moreover, as Western music further spreads in China, modernized-traditional Pipa has become a symbol of Chinese culture stepping out onto the global stage. Several Pipa performers have toured numerous countries and regions worldwide, allowing global audiences to recognize, and gradually begin to accept and appreciate this Chinese musical instrument with a strong traditional Chinese aesthetic charm and reflective of China's modern culture. The development of modernized-traditional Chinese music is a result of the government leadership ideology, Western influence, music educators, and music performers, reflecting the social changes in 20th century China, with the goal of preserving traditional culture, promoting a distinct national cultural identity, strengthening cultural confidence, and increasing China's cultural influence on the global stage.

Bibliography

- Bao, Xinjian 包心鉴. 2012. "Lun Zhong Guo Te Se She Hui Zhu Yi De Dang Dai Jia Zhi 论中国特色社会主义的当代价值 [On the Contemporary Value of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics]." *Journal of China Executive Leadership Academy Yan'an* 5 (4): 5-26.
- Cai, Jindong, and Sheila Melvin. 2015. *Beethoven in China: How the Great Composer Became an Icon in the People's Republic*. Penguin Books.
- Zhong Yang Yin Yue Xue Yuan Zhongguo Yin Yue Yan Jiu Suo 中央音乐学院中国音乐研究所 (Institute of Chinese Music Studies of Central Conservatory of Music). 1958. *Min Zu Yin Yue Yan Jiu Lun Wen Ji Di San Ji 民族音乐研究论文集第三集* [Collection of Research Papers on Folk Music, Volume Three]. Music Publishing.
- Zhongguo Min Zu Guan Xian Yue Xue Hui 中国民族管弦乐学会 (China Nationalities Orchestra Society). 2016. *Hua Yue Da Dian: Pipa Juan. Wen Lun Pian 华乐大典: 琵琶卷. 文论篇* [Encyclopedia of Chinese Music: Pipa Volume. Theory and Criticism Sectio]. Shanghai Music Publishing House.
- Chen, Jing 陈晶. 2010. "Liu Tianhua Yu Hua Yanjun Chuang Zuo De Dui Bi Yan Jiu 刘天华与华彦钧创作的对比研究 [Comparative Study of the Works of Liu Tianhua and Hua Yanjun]." *Chinese Businessman* C:1.
- Chen, Jingya 陈婧雅. 2010. "Liu Tianhua Min Zu Yin Yue Si Ziang Yan Jiu 刘天华民族音乐思想研究 [Research on Liu Tianhua's Thoughts on National Music]." *Explorations in Music* 2:37-40.
- Chen, Yi. 2002. "Tradition and Creation." *Current Musicology* 67 & 68, 59-72.
- Doub, Austin M. 2019. "The Russian Five." In *The Research and Scholarship Symposium of Cedarville University*, vol. The 2019 Symposium.

- Fu, Xiaofei 付小菲. 2019. "20 Shi Ji Pipa Yin Yue Chuang Zuo De Li Shi Wen Hua Fen Qi Yu Yi Shu Feng Ge Yan Jiu 20世纪琵琶音乐创作的历史文化分期与艺术风格研究 [History and Culture in Stages and Artistic Styles of Pipa Music Creation in the 20th Century]." Master's Dissertation of Zhengzhou University, pp. 1-61.
- Gao, Hejie 高贺杰. 2017. "Zai Gai Zao Yu Rong He De Xuan Wo Zhong: 20 Shi Ji Zhong Ye Zhongguo De Yue Qi Gai Liang 在改造与融合的'漩涡'中:20世纪中叶中国的乐器改良 [In the 'Vortex' of Transformation and Integration: Instrument Modifications in Mid-20th Century China]." *Zhongguo Yinyue 中国音乐 China Music* 1: 83-94.
- Guo, Ziwei 郭紫薇. 2023. "Liu Dehai Pipa Qu Yan Zou Ji Fa Chuang xin Yan Jiu—Yi 20 Shi Ji 80 Nian Dai Zhi 90 Nian Dai Zuo Pin Wei Li 刘德海琵琶曲演奏技法创新研究——以20世纪80年代至90年代作品为例 [Research on the Innovation of Liu Dehai's Pipa Playing Technique: Taking the works of the 80s and 90s of the 20th century as an example]." Master Dissertation of Xi'an Conservatory of Music, 1-32.
- Han, Shude 韩淑德, and Zhinian Zhang 张之年. 2010. *Zhongguo Pipa Shi Gao: Zeng Bu Ben 中国琵琶史稿: 增补本 [History of Chinese Pipa: Supplement Edition]*. Shanghai Music College Publishing House.
- Jiang, Fang 姜方. 2021. "She Zhe | Pipa Zhi Zuo Gao Ji Ji Shi Gao Zhanchun Qu Shi, Pipa Shi Ta De Yisheng Suoai 逝者| 琵琶制作高级技师高占春去世, 琵琶是他的一生所爱 [Deceased Gao Zhanchun, Senior Pipa Maker, Dies; Pipa Was His Lifelong Love]." *Wen Hui Website 文汇网*.
<https://wenhui.whb.cn/third/zaker/202110/03/427083.html>.
- Jiang, Yiyan 姜义龔. 2019. "Qian Xi Liu Tianhua Zhong Xi Jian Bing Pipa Yin Yue Chuang Zuo Li Lian 浅析刘天华'中西兼并'琵琶音乐创作理念 [A Brief Analysis of Liu Tianhua's 'Integration of Chinese and Western' Pipa Music Composition Philosophy]". *Journal of Heihe University* 8:191-212.

- Ju, Qihong 居其宏. 2010. *Gong he guo yin yue shi 共和国音乐史 [History of Music in the Republic]*. Central Conservatory of Music Press.
- Jones, Andrew F. 2001. *Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in the Chinese Jazz Age*. Duke University Press.
- Jones, Stephen. 1998. *Folk Music of China: Living Instrumental Traditions*. Clarendon Press.
- Kuang, Yuzhong 邝宇忠. 2003. "20 Shi Ji Hou Ban Ye Pipa De San Xiang Zhong Da Gai Ge 20世纪后半叶琵琶的三项重大改革 [Three Major Reforms of the Pipa in the Second Half of the 20th Century]". *People's Music* 11: 28-30.
- Lau, Frederick. 2008. *Music in China: Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture*. Oxford University Press.
- Li, Hui 李辉. 2008. "Liu Tianhua Pipa Yin Yue Chuang Zuo De Te Dian 刘天华琵琶音乐创作的特点 Characteristics of Liu Tianhua's Pipa Music Composition". *Journal of Changsha University* 22 (4): 114-115.
- Li, Jing 李静. 2009. "Guo Yue Da Shi Liu Tianhua Yu Beijing Da Xue Yin Yue Jiao Yu 国乐大师刘天华与北京大学音乐教育 [Traditional Music Master Liu Tianhua and Music Education at Peking University]". *Journal of Peking University - Philosophy and Social Sciences* 46 (3): 144-148.
- Li, Jingxia 李景侠. 2003. "Tian Zhi—Wang Fandi Xian Sheng De Jiao Xue Si Xiang Yu Jiao Xue Shi Jian 天职—王范地先生的教学思想与教学实践 [Vocation — Mr. Wang Fandi's Teaching Philosophy and Practice]". *People's Music* 10: 24-28.
- Lian, Luxia 连陆霞. 2016. "Pipa Du Zou Qu Lang Ya Shan Wu Zhuang Shi Tan Wei 琵琶独奏曲《狼牙山五壮士》探微 [Exploring the Pipa Solo Piece "The Five Heroes of Langya Mountain"]". Master's Dissertation of Yunnan Arts University, pp. 1-18.
- Liang, Maochun 梁茂春. 2005. "Liu Pai Pipa Chu Lun—Wei 2004 Nian 12 Yue Hainan Liu Dehai Pipa Yi Shu Guo Ji Yan Tao Hui Xie 刘派琵琶"初论—为2004年12月海南"刘

- 德海琵琶艺术国际研讨会"写" [Initial Discussion on 'Liu Style Pipa'—Written for the December 2004 Hainan 'Liu Dehai Pipa Art International Symposium']". *People's Music (人民音乐)* 2:4-8.
- Lin, Shicheng 林石城. 1996. "Pipa Zhi Fa Yu Biao Yan Zhi Kui Jian 琵琶指法与表演之窥见 [Insights into Pipa Techniques and Performance]." *Journal of the Central Conservatory of Music* 1: 26-33.
- Lin, Shicheng 林石城, and Jiaqing Lin 林嘉庆. 2011a. "Wo De Pipa Li Cheng (Shang)—Lin Shicheng Hui Yi Lu 我的琵琶历程(上)—林石城回忆录 [My Pipa Journey (Upper)—Memoirs of Lin Shicheng]". *Instruments* 6: 76-79.
- Lin, Shicheng 林石城, and Jiaqing Lin 林嘉庆. 2011b. "Wo De Pipa Li Cheng (Zhong)—Lin Shicheng Hui Yi Lu 我的琵琶历程(中)—林石城回忆录 [My Pipa Journey (Middle)—Memoirs of Lin Shicheng]". *Instruments* 7: 72-75.
- Liu, Beimao 刘北茂. 2004. *Liu Tianhua Yin Yue Sheng Ya: Bao Di De Hui Yi 刘天华音乐生涯: 胞弟的回忆 [Liu Tianhua's Musical Career: Memories of a Younger Brother]*. People's Music Publishing House Co., Ltd.
- Liu, Jing 刘婧. 2006. "Er Shi Shi Ji Ba Shi Nian Dai Yi Lai Zhongguo Pipa Yin Yue Chuang Zuo De Duo Yuan Xing Chan Shi 二十世纪八十年代以来中国琵琶音乐创作的多元性阐释 [Interpretation of the Diversity of Chinese Pipa Music Compositions since the 1980s]." Master's Thesis of Fujian Normal University.
- Liu, Tianhua 刘天华. 1927a. "Guo Yue Gai Jin She Yuan Qi 国乐改进社缘起 [The Society for the Reform and Advancement of Traditional Music Declaration]." *Xin Yue Chao 新乐潮 (New Wave of Music)* 1 (1).
- Liu, Tianhua 刘天华. 1927b. "Wo Dui Ben She De Ji Hua 我对本社的计划 [My plans for the Society]." *Guo Yue Gai Jin She Cheng Li kan 国乐改进社成立刊 (The Society for the Reform and Advancement of Traditional Music Establishment of the Journal)*.

- Mao, Zedong 毛泽东. 1956. "Tong Yin Yue Gong Zuo Zhe De Tan Hua 同音乐工作者的谈话 [Chairman Mao's Talk to Music Workers]." pp. 3-7.
- Mao, Zedong 毛泽东. 2002. Mao Zedong Wen Yi Lun Ji 毛泽东文艺论集 [Mao Zedong's Collection of Essays on Literature and Art]. Central Party Literature Press.
- Mao, Zedong. 1942. "TALKS AT THE YENAN FORUM ON LITERATURE AND ART." Marxists.org.
https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-3/mswv3_08.htm. Accessed April 7, 2024.
- Meng, Lu 孟璐. 2012. "Pipa Zhi Zuo De Gai Jin Ji Yan Zou Ji Fa De Chuang Xin 琵琶制作的改进及演奏技法的创新 [Improvements in Pipa Production and Innovations in Playing Techniques]." Art Education, pp. 94-95.
- Mo, En 莫恩. 2022 "Man Tan Bu Tong Li Shi Shi Qi De Pipa Gai Liang 漫谈不同历史时期的琵琶改良 [A Rambling Discussion on the Improvement of the Pipa in Different Historical Periods]." Musical Instrument Magazine, pp. 22-25.
- Sun, Huanying 孙焕英. 2002. "Hua Yanjun Yu Liu Tianhua Bi Jiao 华彦钧与刘天华比较 [A comparison between Hua Yanjun and Liu Tianhua]." Journal of Xinghai Conservatory of Music no. 4: 22-26.
- Summary of the Forum on the Work in Literature and Art in the Armed Forces with which Comrade Lin Piao Entrusted Comrade Chaing Ching. 1968. Peking: Foreign Languages Press.
- Wang, Cizhao 王次炤. 2013. "Lin Shicheng Xiansheng Dui Pipa Zhuanye Jiaoxue De Jiechu Gongxian 林石城先生对琵琶专业教学的接触贡献 [Lin Shicheng's Exposure and Contribution to Pipa Professional Teaching]." Journal of the Central Conservatory of Music 1: 6-21.

- Wang, Yanli 王艳莉. 2015. Shanghai Gong Bu Ju Yue Dui Yan Jiu 上海工部局乐队研究 [Research on the Shanghai Municipal Council Band]. Shanghai Conservatory of Music Press.
- Wang, Yuhe 汪毓和. 2009. Zhongguo Jin Xian Dai Yin Yue Shi 中国近现代音乐史 [Modern Chinese Music History]. People's Music Publishing House Co.,Ltd.
- Wang, Yuhe 汪毓和, and Tianhong Hu 胡天虹. 2006. Zhongguo Jin Xian Dai Yin Yue Shi: 1901-1949 中国近现代音乐史: 1901-1949 [Modern Chinese Music History: 1901-1949]. People's Music Publishing House Co.,Ltd.
- Wei, Tingge 魏廷格. 1998. "Xiao Youmei De Yin Yue Si Xiang Ji Qi Xian Shi Yi Yi (Shang)—You 'Zui' Hai Shi You Gong 萧友梅的音乐思想及其现实意义(上)—有 '罪'还是有功 [Xiao Youmei's Musical Ideas and Their Relevance (upper)-With 'Sin' or with Merit]." *Journal of the Central Conservatory of Music (quarterly)* 1: 33-39.
- Wu, Ben. 2023. "TRENDS IN THE GLOBALIZATION OF Pipa MUSIC." In *The Oxford Handbook of Music in China and the Chinese Diaspora*, edited by Oxford University Press, 329-345.
- Wu, Huijuan 吴慧娟. 2013. "Lun Shanghai Pai Wang Yuting Pipa De Te Dian Yu Li Shi Gong Ji 论 '上海派' 汪显庭琵琶的特点与历史功绩 [On the Characteristics and Historical Merits of the 'Shanghai School' Pipa of Wang Xianting]." *Music Art* 1: 142-147.
- Wu, Huijuan 吴慧娟, and Danying Liao 廖丹滢. 2023. "Yin Yue Wen Hua Shi Xue Shi Jiao Xia Er Shi Shi Ji Pipa Xie Zou Qu De Zhongguo Hua Jin Cheng Tan Xi 音乐文化诗学视角下二十世纪琵琶协奏曲的中国化进程探析 [An Analysis of the Sinicization of the 20th Century Pipa Concerto from the Perspective of Music Culture Poetics]." *Journal of FuZhou University— Philosophy and Social Sciences* 2 (174): 155-172.

- Wu, Lantana 吴兰塔娜. 2021. "Pipa Du Zou Qu Jing Mo Zhi Xian De Yin Yue Te Zheng Ji Yan Zou Ti Yan Fen Xi 琵琶独奏曲《静默之弦》的音乐特征及演奏体验分析 [Analysis of the Musical Characteristics and Performance Experience of the Pipa Solo Piece 'Silent Strings']." Master Thesis, Minzu University of China.
- Xue, Jing 薛婧. 2010. "Qian Xi Jian Guo Hou Zhi Jin Pipa Zuo Pin De Chuang Zuo He Fa Zhan Gai Kuang 浅析建国后至今琵琶作品的创作和发展概况 [An Overview of the Composition and Development of Pipa Works from the Founding of the People's Republic of China to the Present]." Master Dissertation of Xi'an Conservatory of Music, 1-40.
- Xv, Song 许嵩. 2014. "Yi Zu Yin Yue Su Cai Zai Pipa Yue Qu Zhong De Yun Yong Tan Xi (Shang) Yi Yi Zu Wu Qu Wei Li 彝族音乐素材在琵琶乐曲中的运用探析(上)以《彝族舞曲》为例 [Exploring the Use of Yi Music Materials in Pipa Pieces (Upper) Taking "Yi Dance Song" as an Example]." *Journal of Zhaoqing University* 35 (3): 74-79.
- Yu, Yizhi 喻意志. 2010. *Zhongguo Yinyue Shi 中国音乐史 [History of Chinese Music]*. 湖南文艺出版社.
- Zhao, Yuanren 赵元任. 1928. *Xin Shi Ge Ji 新诗歌集 [New Poetry Collection]*. The Commercial Press.
- Zhou, Lijuan 周丽娟. 2012. "Pipa Qu Lang Ya Shan Wu Zhuang Shi Ji Qi Yan Lian 琵琶曲《狼牙山五壮士》及其演练 [Pipa Solo Piece The Five Heroes of Langya Mountain and Its Practice]." *Chinese Music* no. 2: 144-148.
- "About SHCM." 2021. 上海音乐学院 (Shanghai Conservatory of Music). <https://en.shcmusic.edu.cn/79/listm.htm>. Accessed April 13, 2024.
- "Xiao Shi Hui Mou 校史回眸 [School History]." n.d. 中央音乐学院 (Central Conservatory of Music). Accessed March 28, 2024. <https://www.ccom.edu.cn/ljxx/xshm.htm>.

"Yinyue Chuangzuo 音乐创作 [Musical Works]." 百度百科. <https://baike.baidu.com/item/音乐创作/1354194>. Accessed April 13, 2024.