

# CHINESE PIANO CONCERTOS FROM 1936 TO 2010

by

YAN KOU

(Under the Direction of Martha Thomas and Dorothea Link)

## ABSTRACT

The Chinese piano concerto has only existed since 1936. For much of its existence its cultivation was sporadic, but in the last four decades the Chinese piano concerto has blossomed along with the research of the genre. This study provides a brief history of the Chinese piano concerto. It also presents an overview of existing scholarship on the subject, both in English and Chinese. Finally, this study illustrates the compositional problems faced by Chinese composers writing in a Western genre with analysis of three representative concertos. The three concertos are: (1) Jiang Wenye's Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16 (1936); (2) *Yellow River Piano Concerto* (1969), arranged by Yin Chengzong, Chu Wanghua, Sheng Lihong, Liu Zhuang, Xu Peixing, and Shi Shucheng from *Yellow River Cantata* composed by Xian Xinghai in 1939; and (3) Zhao Xiaosheng's Piano Concerto No. 1, "Aphrodite" (1985).

INDEX WORDS: Chinese piano concerto, Jiang Wenye, *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, Zhao Xiaosheng

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Purpose of the Study

The Chinese piano concerto has only existed since 1936. For much of its existence its cultivation was sporadic, but in the last four decades the Chinese piano concerto has blossomed, along with the research of the genre. While researching this topic I realized there is a research gap. No study has attempted to make a complete list of Chinese piano concertos. Articles that discussed the history of the Chinese piano concerto were mostly written in the early 1990s, and there are many Chinese piano concertos that have not been researched. The purpose of the study is to provide a brief history of the Chinese piano concerto and to present an overview of existing English and Chinese scholarship on the subject. Finally, this study illustrates the compositional problems faced by Chinese composers writing in a Western genre with analysis of three representative concertos. The three concertos are: (1) Jiang Wenye's 第一钢琴协奏曲 [Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16] (1936); (2) 黄河钢琴协奏曲 [The Yellow River Piano Concerto] (1969) arranged by Yin Chengzong, Chu Wanghua, Sheng Lihong, Liu Zhuang, Xu Peixing, and Shi Shucheng from 黄河大合唱 [Yellow River Cantata] composed by Xian Xinghai in 1939; and (3) Zhao Xiaosheng's 第一钢琴协奏曲 “希望之神” [Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”]<sup>1</sup> (1985).

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<sup>1</sup> The literal translation of the Chinese title is “The god of hope,” which is slightly different from its English title.



## Organization of the Document

Chapter One serves as the introduction to the document. This chapter includes the purpose of the study, organization of the document, historical background information, and literature review.

Chapter Two provides periodization of Chinese piano concertos and a list of Chinese piano concertos that the author found through encyclopedias, scholarly articles, performance reviews, and dissertations. Each entry includes the name of the composer and descriptive information about the work.

Chapters Three to Five present analyses of three Chinese piano concertos, illustrating the compositions' nature in balancing the genre and Chinese music.

Chapter Six provides a conclusion.

## Historical Background

The piano, invented in 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe, is an instrument that possesses a variety of sound capacities. During the development of the instrument, a tremendous amount of musical literature was created for it. However, when the piano was introduced in China in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a country with over five thousand years of cultural history at that point in time, the piano was a foreign and new instrument. In the history of Chinese piano music, Chinese composers experimented, explored, and eventually developed a unique musical language for Chinese piano music. On the other hand, the piano concerto is one of the most complicated musical genres. The piano concertos in China reflected a struggle of balance between Chinese culture, which is the root for most Chinese composers, and Western influence, which is a natural characteristic of the piano.

Christian missionaries were the pioneers in introducing Western music to China. As early as the 8<sup>th</sup> century, European missionaries brought their music to China.<sup>2</sup> The Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) presented an Italian clavichord to the emperor Shen-zong of the Ming dynasty in 1601.<sup>3</sup> The emperor was impressed with the sound of the instrument, and four musicians were sent by the emperor to learn how to play the clavichord from Didacus De Pantoja (1571-1618), another missionary in Beijing at that time.<sup>4</sup> In the Qing dynasty (1644-1912), missionaries from Europe presented the emperor with Western instruments as tributes. Emperor Kang-xi (in reign 1661-1722) studied harpsichord with Tome Perey, a missionary from Portugal.<sup>5</sup>

In the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, most countries in Europe developed capitalistic economies as the industrial revolution quickly spread. The need for colonies led Europe to look east, while the giant dynasty of Qing was still a feudal monarchy.

After China's defeat in the Opium War (1839-1842) in 1842, the Qing dynasty was forced to sign the Treaty of Nanking, which obligated China to open its gates to the West. Before the Opium War, Western music was not familiar to ordinary people in China; only Christian church songs and hymns were known.<sup>6</sup> Since the Opium War, China had been suffering from constant invasions from other countries: the Second Opium War from 1856 to 1860; the First Sino-Japanese War from 1894 to 1895; and the Boxer Rebellion that led to the Siege of the International Legations in 1900. These wars

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<sup>2</sup> Liu Ching-chih, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, trans. Caroline Mason (Hong Kong: The Chinese Press, 2010), 23.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Curt Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China: Middle-class Ambitions and the Struggle over Western Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 4.

<sup>4</sup> Cui Shiguang, "Three Centuries of Cultural Interfacing: A History of Western Music in China," *American Music Teacher* 39, no. 5 (April/May 1990): 14.

<sup>5</sup> Cheung-Yu Franz Mo, "A Study of Three Significant Twentieth-Century Chinese Piano Concertos" (DMA diss., The Juilliard School, 2002), 6-7.

<sup>6</sup> Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, 23.

that China lost led to several treaties that opened cities for trading and forced China to cede territories. The Treaty of Nanking ceded Hong Kong to the British Empire and opened Guangzhou, Fuzhou, Xiamen, Ningbo, and Shanghai for trading. The Second Opium War led to the Treaty of Tientsin and the Convention of Peking, which opened several other cities for trading. The first Sino-Japanese war led to the Treaty of Shimonoseki, which ceded away Taiwan, the Liaodong Peninsula, and the Penghu islands and opened Shashi, Chongqing, Suzhou, and Hangzhou for trading. The Siege of the International Legations led to the Boxer Protocol, which required a massive amount of indemnity. Besides the treaties mentioned here, the Qing dynasty signed more documents that ceded lands and power until its collapse in 1911. In the extremely unstable economic and political background in China, Chinese intellectuals called for national salvation in movements such as the Westernization movement and the Hundred Days' Reform.<sup>7</sup> Though both movements ended up as failures, parts of it, including opening modern schools, sending students overseas, and reforming the army with a modern Western approach, did contribute to future revolutions.

Introducing Western music to China was not a conscious priority for the Europeans. Originally, they wanted to sell opium and preach Christianity, along with participating in other economic activities in China. With the Westernization movement, influences of Western music can be found in places that were modernized first, such as the army and in schools. The military band music and school songs were among the first to become westernized. As in the opened port cities, music was needed when the Western

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<sup>7</sup> The Westernization movement was launched in the 1860s. It was the industrialization in China under monarchy. The defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War claimed the failure of the Westernization movement. The Hundred Days' Reform was launched in 1896, its purpose being the setting up of a constitutional monarchy in China. The reform only lasted a hundred and three days and was forced to stop by Empress Dowager *Cixi*, the actual ruler of the Qing dynasty.

population was large enough to form a small society of its own. Along with the band musicians came the piano, an important instrument in the West.

Even though the piano was imported into China in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the development of piano compositions in China did not begin until a century later. This delay in the development of piano music was due to several historical reasons. First, the piano was an instrument new to the people of China, and the sound was unlike anything they had heard before. Traditional Chinese instruments are mostly solo instruments.<sup>8</sup> Ensembles with woodwinds and percussion are used often for ceremonies such as weddings or funerals. One of the characteristics of traditional Chinese music is a linear structure rather than Western music's vertical structure. Regarding volume, most traditional Chinese solo instruments are made from wood and have a rather small body for vibration. Thus, most of them do not produce loud sounds at all, in contrast to the piano which has a broad dynamic range.

Second, the piano was an outsider to the music of China. Before industrialization in the 1950s, China was an agricultural country. The vast majority of Chinese people were farmers. Most of their time was occupied by farming, and little was left for any kind of musical life. Thus, folk music in China, especially in rural China, still adhered to an oral tradition, or with minimal instrument accompaniment. Some of the well-known folk song genres include *xintianyou* in Northwest China, *changdiao* in Inner Mongolia, and *shange* in southern China. In these genres, the piano had no usage in the musical life of

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<sup>8</sup> Traditional Chinese instruments can be categorized into four groups: 1. Plucked string instruments such as *guqin*, *se*, *guzheng* and *pipa*. 2. Bowed string instruments such as *erhu*, *huqin* and *matouqin*. 3. Woodwinds, mainly made with bamboo, such as *dizi*, *xiao*, and *suona*. 4. Percussion instruments such as *bianzhong*, *muyu*, *bo* and *luo*. There is another method of categorizing Chinese instruments based on material called *Bayin*, which divided the instruments into eight categories: silk (string instrument), bamboo (mostly woodwind), wood, stone, metal (percussion), clay, gourd and skin (drum).

the Chinese people. In addition, incorporating the piano into the traditional Chinese instrumental ensembles was difficult, due to the different tuning systems.<sup>9</sup>

Third, as for the urban classes, contradictory attitudes toward Western culture existed simultaneously. Many intellectuals from the Confucian tradition still held a resistant attitude toward objects from the West because of the loss of the Opium War. For urban citizens from the treaty port cities, foreign people, culture, and lifestyle influenced their lives, and many benefited from working as agents between China and the West. Their attitude towards Western culture was a cautious welcome.

Fourth, the acceptance of the piano in China naturally required time to allow for a greater proliferation of the instrument. Because of transportation difficulties during this time, the piano and its music remained in cities, especially port cities such as Guangzhou and Shanghai, or cities in inner China with rapid transportation such as Wuhan and Beijing. And as mentioned above, Western piano music had very little interaction and influence on Chinese folk music, since the piano never spread into rural China.

Fifth, the training of the first generation of Chinese musicians to play Western instruments required even more time. The defeat in the Opium War forced China to open five port cities for trading to the British Empire and to cede Hong Kong to the British. The first audience for piano music was largely foreign soldiers, merchants, missionaries, and their relatives from these port cities. As an example, in 1879 a professor and six musicians from Europe started a municipal public band in Shanghai, which later developed into the Shanghai Municipal Symphony Orchestra in 1907. At the time, the orchestra members were all European, and it was not until the 1930s that they hired a

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<sup>9</sup> The Chinese scales are based on the Pythagorean scale method, using the 2:3 ratio to create pitches. The piano on the other hand, is an instrument that incorporates a well-tempered tuning system.

Chinese musician.<sup>10</sup> In fact, before 1922 the concerts of the Shanghai Municipal Symphony Orchestra were not open to Chinese audiences.<sup>11</sup> Starting in 1929, the orchestra began to feature Chinese soloists such as violinist Ma Sicong and Wang Renyi. In 1931, Composer Huang Zi was invited by the administration staff to become a member of the committee of the orchestra.<sup>12</sup>

Finally, as mentioned above, China suffered from a series of defeats by Western powers resulting in extreme poverty which was another hindrance to the spread of the piano.

Because of these barriers, it was not until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that there was a local audience for piano music in China. This audience consisted mainly of the middle class, which comprised native bourgeoisie, intellectuals (people who received education as distinct from the uneducated masses), and the new communist<sup>13</sup> officialdom.<sup>14</sup> The native bourgeoisie were mostly agents between China and Western merchants. Later they became the first Chinese capitalists, as capitalism grew in the port cities and along the Yangzi River. The intellectuals can be further divided based on the amount of education they received. A substantial portion of the high intellectuals (who received a college education) had bourgeoisie origins. Apart from the Confucian intellectuals, many high intellectuals were disappointed with traditional China and believed that its salvation should be through Westernization. Many of them, though sympathetic, did not participate in China's revolution. Other intellectuals were from various origins, ranging from

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<sup>10</sup> Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China*, 5.

<sup>11</sup> Yang Hon-Lung, "From Colonial Modernity to Global Identity: The Shanghai Municipal Orchestra," in *China and the West: Music, Representation, and Reception*, ed. Hon-Lun Yang and Michael Saffle (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017), 50.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>13</sup> The Communist Party of China was established in July 1921.

<sup>14</sup> Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China*, 24-25.

peasants, workers, and landlords to military officers. The education they received also varied from basic reading, private teaching, and military schools. On the other hand, many of the early members of the Communist party of China had experiences with study overseas (mostly in France and Germany), where they accepted Marxism as well as becoming proponents of Western music.

Zhao Yuanren (赵元任 1892-1982) was the first Chinese composer to write piano music. He was from the Jiangsu province and received his basic education in Tianjin. Later, he attended Cornell University to study mathematics, where he graduated in 1914. Then he went to Harvard University for graduate study, completing his degree in 1918. Zhao was mainly a linguist and music for him was a hobby, but in the 1920s he was among the most important song composers in China. In 1914 he harmonized a traditional Chinese song named *Lao Ba Ban*, but never published it.<sup>15</sup> The first piano composition that he published, *和平进行曲* [March of Peace], was written in 1915 during his graduate study at Harvard University. It was published in the opening issue of *科学* [Science] magazine, founded by Chinese students in the United States. The magazine was edited in the U. S. and sent to Shanghai for publication. Zhao's composition was the only musical work in that issue of the magazine. This piece, according to Zhao Yuanren, was written completely in a Western style with a standard ternary form, using functional major and minor scales and traditional cadences.<sup>16</sup> Zhao Yuanren and his family moved to the U. S. in 1938, and his focus turned to linguistics.

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<sup>15</sup> Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, 142.

<sup>16</sup> Li Binyang, “中国的第一首钢琴作品” [China's first piano composition], *人民音乐* [People's Music] (March 1984): 33.

During the 1920s, another important composer, Xiao Youmei (萧友梅 1884-1940) was working on professional music education in China. Xiao was educated at the Tokyo Imperial School of Music, where he studied piano and voice. Later he was sent to Germany by the Ministry of Education in Beijing and studied music theory and composition at the Conservatory of Music in Leipzig. Xiao returned to China in March 1920 and became a tutor at the Peking University Music Research Society starting in 1921. In 1922, the society became the Peking University Institute of Music and Xiao became the Dean of the Institute. Xiao was very active in Beijing until 1926 when the Northern Warlord's government closed all college music departments. Xiao then went to Shanghai. There, with support from Cai Yuanpei, the President of University Education, the first official conservatory of musical education was established in Shanghai on November 27<sup>th</sup>, 1927 under the name of 国立音乐院 [National Conservatory of Music]. In 1929 the name of the conservatory changed to 国立音乐专科学校 [National Institute of Music].<sup>17</sup> Xiao was one of the most important music educators in China during the 1920s, and many composers and pianists received their education at the National Institute of Music.

Besides Xiao Youmei, Alexander Tcherepnin (1899-1977) contributed much to the development of the National Institute of Music. Tcherepnin was trained in the St. Petersburg Conservatory and his first visit to China was from April 1934 to February 1935. During this period, he also visited Japan between July and September of 1934.<sup>18</sup> In

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<sup>17</sup> Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, 101.

<sup>18</sup> Qian Renping and Zhang Xiong, “齐尔品与国立音专 —— 上海音乐学院图书馆馆藏相关文献的整理与研究” [Tcherepnin and National Institute of Music: Summary and research of related literature from the Shanghai Music Library], *音乐艺术: 上海音乐学院学报* [Art of Music: Journal of The Shanghai Conservatory of Music] 133, (Summer 2013): 14.



May 1935, he wrote to Xiao Youmei about hosting a national competition of piano compositions of Chinese national character. The result of the competition came out in November as follows:

First Prize: He Luting, *Mutong Zhi Di* [Buffalo Boy's Flute].  
Second Prize: Yu Bianmin, *C minor variations*. Lao Zhicheng, *Mutong Zhi Yue* [Music of the Buffalo Boy]. Chen Tianhe, *Prelude*. Jiang Dingxian, *Yao Lan Qu* [Cradle Song].  
Honorary second prize: He Luting, *Yao Lan Qu* [Cradle Song]<sup>19</sup>

This competition pointed to a direction for Chinese composers of instrumental music in the 1930s, especially piano music, and raised the awareness of nationalism among young Chinese composers. Many of them became leading composers or educators of Chinese music.<sup>20</sup>

In his article “Music in Modern China” published in *The Musical Quarterly* in 1935, Tcherepnin commented on the winning compositions:

Rodin Ho [He Luting] is the winner of a prize competition that I sponsored last year in Shanghai for a piano composition of Chinese national character. He does not speak any language except Chinese; his prize-winning composition, *Buffalo Boy's Flute*, shows originality, clarity, and a sure hand in counterpoint and form. The second prize, at the same contest, was won by Lao Chih-Chen [Lao Zhicheng]. Born in Canton [Guangdong], in 1911, now living in Peiping [Beijing], he never had any teacher; he taught himself to play the piano, and performs with nice expression his own compositions, works full of life and real artistic temperament.<sup>21</sup>

Tcherepnin visited China again from spring 1936 to March 1937. During both visits he taught piano lessons in Shanghai and Beijing and played several concerts of his own compositions along with piano music by Chinese composers. Tcherepnin believed that music students in China should be familiar with Chinese music traditions and Western instruments first, then learn from contemporary Western composers, and only

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<sup>19</sup> Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, 102.

<sup>20</sup> Qian and Zhang, “Tcherepnin and National Institute of Music,” 10.

<sup>21</sup> Alexander Tcherepnin, “Music in Modern China,” *The Musical Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (October 1935): 399.

turn to classical or romantic composers if needed.<sup>22</sup> Rather than going abroad to study in conservatories, he encouraged young Chinese musicians to listen to the music of China's peasants. In the same article in *The Musical Quarterly* he stated:

The Chinese musical student should be treated in a special way: for beginner, both the instrument and the music to be played on this instrument [piano] are unknown quantities, adaptation of Chinese folksongs in a modern manner...The Chinese composer must discover the way for China's creative musical evolution...He [Chinese composers] has the world's most populous country to support him. The more national his product, the greater will be its international value.<sup>23</sup>

Tcherepnin met Chinese composer Jiang Wenye (1910-1983) in Japan on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 1935.<sup>24</sup> The two musicians established a friendship. In the same year, Jiang Wenye composed his first piano concerto, the first by a Chinese composer. The existing score of the concerto was a two-piano version. An orchestrated score (if written) was never found.<sup>25</sup> In this concerto, hints of influences from Tcherepnin can be found such as the use of Japanese and Chinese scales.<sup>26</sup> Jiang's piano concerto marks the year 1936 as the starting point for the history of Chinese piano concertos. Jiang returned to China in 1938 and never composed another piano concerto.

Japan's invasion of China started in 1931. After the Mukden Incident, Japan took control of Northeast China. On July 7<sup>th</sup>, 1937 with the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, Japan launched a full-scale war with China. Shanghai was occupied by the Japanese army in November, and the capital city Nanjing was lost in December. Wuhan and Guangzhou

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<sup>22</sup> Qian and Zhang, "Tcherepnin and National Institute of Music," 14.

<sup>23</sup> Tcherepnin, "Music in Modern China," 398.

<sup>24</sup> Xia Su, "江文也及其钢琴音乐风格" [Jiang Wenye and his piano music style], in *江文也钢琴作品集* [Collection of Jiang Wenye's Piano Compositions], ed. Jiang Xiaoyun (Beijing, China: Central Conservatory Publishing Company, 2006), 2.

<sup>25</sup> Wu Cen, "江文也钢琴音乐研究综述——纪念江文也诞辰 100 周年" [Survey of research on the piano music of Jiang Wenye: In commemoration of the 100th anniversary of Jiang Wenye's birth], *音乐艺术: 上海音乐学院学报* [Art of Music: Journal of The Shanghai Conservatory of Music] 123, (Winter 2010): 113.

<sup>26</sup> Jiang was born in Taiwan and moved to Xiamen when he was six. At age thirteen he moved to Japan and received his music education there.

were occupied in October 1938. The invasion raised patriotism among Chinese people, and Chinese composers used music to participate in this national salvation movement. Later, composers in China adopted a nationalistic outlook in their compositions. The writing of piano concertos also reflected this outlook.

In 1942, Mao Zedong (毛泽东 1893-1976) in “在延安文艺座谈会上的讲话” [Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art]<sup>27</sup> discussed the role of literature and the arts in revolutionary China. In the speech Mao stated that:

Our specialists are not only for the cadres, but also, and indeed chiefly, for the masses. Our specialists in literature should pay attention to the wall newspapers of the masses and to the reportage written in the army and the villages. Our specialists in drama should pay attention to the small troupes in the army and the villages. Our specialists in music should pay attention to the songs of the masses. Our specialists in the fine arts should pay attention to the fine arts of the masses. All these comrades should make close contact with comrades engaged in the work of popularizing literature and art among the masses. On the one hand, they should help and guide the popularizers, and on the other, they should learn from these comrades and, through them, draw nourishment from the masses to replenish and enrich themselves so that their specialties do not become "ivory towers," detached from the masses and from reality and devoid of content or life. We should esteem the specialists, for they are very valuable to our cause. But we should tell them that no revolutionary writer or artist can do any meaningful work unless he is closely linked with the masses, gives expression to their thoughts and feelings and serves them as a loyal spokesman. Only by speaking for the masses can he educate them and only by being their pupil can he be their teacher. If he regards himself as their master, as an aristocrat who lords it over the "lower orders", then, no matter how talented he may be, he will not be needed by the masses and his work will have no future.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> “Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art” was Mao’s speeches organized in the Yan'an forum on literature and art held in Yan’an on May 1942.

<sup>28</sup> Mao Zedong, “在延安文艺座谈会上的讲话” [Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art], in 毛泽东选集 [Selected Works of Mao Zedong], ed. Working group of selected works of Mao Zedong (Beijing, China: People’s Publishing House, 1953): 820. The translation of the original text is from [https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-3/mswv3\\_08.htm](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-3/mswv3_08.htm). The original Chinese text is copied here: 我们的专门家不但是为了干部，主要地还是为了群众。我们的文学专门家应该注意群众的墙报，注意军队和农村中的通讯文学。我们的戏剧专门家应该注意军队和农村中的小剧团。我们的音乐专门家应该注意群众的歌唱。我们的美术专门家应该注意群众的美术。一切这些同志都应该和在群众中做文艺普及工作的同志们发生密切的联系，一方面帮助他们，指导他们，一方面又向他们学习，从他们吸收由群众中来的养料，把自己充实起来，丰富起来，使自己的专门不致成为脱离群众、脱离实际、毫无内容、毫无生气的空中楼阁。我们应该尊重专门家，专门家对于我们的事业是很可宝贵的。但是我们应该告诉他们，一切革命的文学家艺术家只有联系群众，表现群众，把自己当作群众的忠实的代言人，他们的工作才有意义。只有代表群众才能教育群众，只有做群众的学生才能做群众的先生。如果把自己看作群众的主人，看作高踞于“下等人”头上的贵族，那末，不管他们有多大的才能，也是群众所不需要的，他们的工作是没有前途的。

This speech represented the communistic attitude toward literature and the arts; they should come from the people and serve the people. In the communist controlled region, composers were welcome to use folk music in their compositions. A representative example would be *The White-Haired Girl*, an opera composed in Yan'an in 1945. Its music incorporated the folk tune *Xiao Bai Cai*.<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, conservatories like the National Institute of Music remained in the Western tradition of professional training in art music. In Kraus's book he portrayed this controversy as:

One group has channeled its cultural iconoclasm in support of the West's elite tradition of art music, arguing that China will be modern when it fully takes part in international musical culture, when its pianists are recognized around the world for playing Liszt and Beethoven, and when Chinese composers have themselves written great orchestral works. From this perspective, Europe's musical art must be emulated because it is scientific. Science is evident from the technology of the musical instruments, from the use of harmony, and from the association of this music with scientifically advanced societies. In contrast to this open respect for the European classics, another group of musicians has argued that music is modern when it is revolutionary. Faithful to Xian Xinghai's populist side, such musicians eschew Beethoven in favor of updating China's own instruments and singing style and adding harmony as they use music to mobilize the workers and peasants of the People's Republic.<sup>30</sup>

Due to Japan's invasion and the Liberation War,<sup>31</sup> nine years after Jiang Wenye's piano concerto in 1936, Zhang Xiaohu (1994-1997) composed his Piano Concerto No.1 in E-flat Major in 1945. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1949, the communist party took an important part in influencing music writing. During the first seventeen years of the republic, many valuable piano concertos were written, including *Youth Piano Concerto* by the group of composers that included Liu Shikun, Pan Yiming, Huang Xiaofei and Sun Yilin, composed in 1959, and

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<sup>29</sup> *Xiao Bai Cai* is a folk tune from the Hebei province of China.

<sup>30</sup> Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China*, 101.

<sup>31</sup> In Western world, this is often referred to as the Second Chinese Civil War, from 1946 to 1949.

*Concertino for the Young* by Liu Zhuang. However, the increasing political tension eventually led to the Cultural Revolution (1966 to 1976), and arts activities were heavily linked with ideology during this time. The *Yellow River Piano Concerto* was arranged in this period. After the reform and opening-up beginning in 1978, increased individuality and experimental elements could be found in compositions by Chinese composers. Representative concertos include Zhao Xiaosheng's Piano Concerto No. 1, "Aphrodite", composed in 1985, Huang Anlun's Piano Concerto in G Minor, Op. 25, composed in 1982, Zhang Chao's *Ailao Rhapsody*, composed in 1996, and Wang Xilin's Piano Concerto, composed in 2010.

## Literature Review

### Overview

To date, I have located over sixty documents that address the topic of the Chinese piano concerto and Chinese piano music in general; about one third are written in English and two thirds in Chinese. Half of the sources deal with the Chinese piano concerto, and the other half deal with Chinese piano music, Chinese music in general, and the musical styles of individual composers.

### Early Literature

Tcherepnin, during his concert tour in the Far East, wrote an article in *The Musical Quarterly* in 1935 introducing the Western world to Chinese music and the status of music education in Shanghai, China. During this concert tour, Tcherepnin met a number of Chinese composers who later became important in the history of Chinese music, such as Jiang Wenye and He Luting.

## Literature of Chinese Piano Music

Though Chinese piano music has existed for about one hundred years, the musicological study of Chinese piano music started much more recently. Wei Tingge's article "我国钢琴音乐创作的发展" [The development of piano music in our country], published in 1983, was the earliest scholarly document I found about the development of Chinese piano music. From a modern perspective, this article is not entirely scholarly, as there are no citations. This document was, however, the first to portray the development of Chinese piano music, and many passages from it have been used in textbooks about Chinese piano music. In this article, Wei Tingge also encouraged Chinese composers to explore atonal music. Later in 1987, he wrote another article "从中国钢琴曲看传统音乐与当代音乐创作的关系" [Exploring the relationship between Chinese traditional music and modern composition through Chinese piano music]. Here he acknowledged the connection between piano music in China and Chinese traditional music and discussed how composers of Chinese piano music absorbed elements from traditional music in their compositions, whether consciously or not. Wei's writing set the general picture for Chinese piano music and pointed out its core issue: accepting and adopting the piano, a completely Western instrument, into the vast culture of China.

The study of Chinese piano music in the Western world started with Richard Curt Kraus's 1989 book *Pianos and Politics in China: Middle-class Ambitions and the Struggle over Western Music*. In this book Kraus, a sociologist, traced how ideology and political events affected the life and career of four musicians in China: Xian Xinghai (冼星海 1905-1945), Fu Cong (傅聪 1934- ), Yin Chengzong (殷承宗 1941- ) and Liu Shikun (刘诗昆 1939- ). Kraus's book also discussed how the piano, a representative of

Western culture, struggled for a place in the vast political events of China. This book lacked musical analysis; however, the issues it discussed are valuable.

In the 1990s, several doctoral dissertations in the United States also addressed Chinese piano music. Chun Grace Fan-long claimed in the 1991 dissertation “A Study of Idiomatic Piano Compositions during the Cultural Revolution in the People's Republic of China” that during the Cultural Revolution, piano music was used to build a reinforced socialistic ideology. This ideology emphasized the functional value of music rather than the sonic event itself, and the piano became the Chinese composer's tool for expressing the sound ideals and tone qualities that are intrinsic to Chinese music. In 1992, Chen Zhong, in the dissertation “A Survey of Chinese Piano Music,” painted an overall picture of Chinese piano music. This dissertation references Tcherepnin, Kraus, and Wei Tingge. This dissertation is a more detailed survey in comparison with Wei's article, and it includes musical examples and brief analyses. It also divided Chinese piano music into three periods: compositions from 1914 to 1949, from 1949 to 1976, and from 1976 to the present (1992). In 1993, Zhang Shi-gu, in her doctoral dissertation “Chinese and Western Influences upon Piano Music in China,” traced the development of Chinese piano music in seven compositions and evaluated how and to what extent the repertoire reflects the diverse influences of Western music, traditional Chinese culture, and Chinese politics. This dissertation divided the history of Chinese piano music into four periods based on major political events. Wei Tingge's two articles again appeared as references.

Back in China, in 1996, Bian Meng published her book *中国钢琴文化之形成与发展* [The formation and development of Chinese piano culture] which set the foundation for the future study of Chinese piano music. This book mainly traced the history of piano

composition in China, as well as the history of piano pedagogy in China. It divided the history of Chinese piano music into more detailed periods: 1. “Origin” which refers to music before 1919; 2. “Establishment of professional conservatory and its piano pedagogy” that refers to the piano music from 1919 to 1937; 3. “Eight years of Anti-Japanese war and three years of Liberation war” that covers piano music from 1937 to 1949; 4. “The piano art’s development in the first seventeen years of the republic” covering piano pedagogy and piano music from 1949 to 1966; 5. “Chinese piano art during the Cultural Revolution” which refers to piano music from 1966 to 1976; and 6. “New Path” which is about piano music and music education after the Cultural Revolution. Bian’s book is used as a textbook in many Chinese universities’ music courses.

From 1996, the research of Chinese piano music stepped into more detailed and individual studies of certain composers, compositions, or aspects of Chinese piano music. In 2006, Li Yufeng, in the article “试论中国钢琴音乐作品的组织结构与演奏” [The organizational structure and performance of Chinese piano music compositions], described four types of forms in Chinese piano music: 1. Forms from traditional music, 2. Forms from folk music, including vocal and instrumental music, 3. Forms from Western music, and 4. Forms modified or created by the composer. For each type the author offers several examples and a short analysis.

In the 2013 article “中国钢琴音乐的中国风格” [The national style of Chinese piano music], Dai Baisheng attempted to define the style of Chinese piano music and stated that Chinese piano music went through a style change in its history. Dai divides the development of Chinese piano music into three periods: pre-1949, 1949-1976, and after



1976. In the pre-1949 period, Chinese composers focused on applying folk melodies to piano compositions. Most compositions in this period remained tonal and were character pieces. The piano music in the period 1949-1976 was heavily influenced by politics, focusing on nationalized melodies and harmonies. The concept of the “people’s music” was reflected in piano compositions. Many compositions have simple textures and singable tunes. After the economic reform starting in late 1970s, Chinese piano music launched into three directions. The first trend continued to emphasize folk melodies as the core of style. The second trend explored experimental elements, not exactly emphasizing a “Chinese style” in the composition. The third trend explored a more individual understanding of the “Chinese style,” usually not using existing folk melodies in piano composition. Also, in this article, the author opines that the style of Chinese piano music should not be understood as a simple imitation of the nationalistic style in 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe. A fuller understanding of Chinese piano music requires knowledge of the culture and history of China itself.

Guo Dingchang, in his 2014 article “中国钢琴音乐文化的三种形态” [Three formal types of Chinese piano music culture], focused on the cultural side of Chinese piano music. The author categorized Chinese piano culture into three types: elite culture, popular culture, and practical culture. The elite culture is what people refer to as art music, including professional piano performing, composition, and education. The popular culture became possible when the piano was affordable to ordinary families in China. The main parts of this culture are popular piano music, amateur piano playing, and education. The practical culture refers to the piano as a tool in professional music education, in

serving as an orchestra in piano reduction scores, and as an economic product. The author also believes that these three cultures influence and interact with each other.

In 2015, Sun Juan wrote an article “非调性在新时期中国钢琴音乐创作中的运用选析” [Atonal technique as employed in Chinese piano music composition in the new era] which explored the atonal aspect of piano music in China after the Cultural Revolution. Sun stated that after 1978, an increasing number of attempts at using atonal music can be found among Chinese composers.

### Literature of Chinese Piano Concertos

The first systematic study of Chinese piano concertos came in 1991. Pu Fang, in her article “中国钢琴协奏曲创作中的民族化追求” [The pursuit of nationalism in the Chinese piano concerto], discussed Chinese composers’ exploration of nationalism in piano concertos. According to Pu Fang, the piano concerto is one of the most developed genres in Western classical music. This genre requires not only sophisticated piano writing, but also mastery of large orchestral writing. In China, especially after the 1970s, many piano concertos were written. Pu believes that in all Chinese piano concertos composed from 1930s until the 1990s, when this article was written, Chinese composers were searching for a nationalist style. In terms of melody, Chinese piano concertos usually incorporate existing folk tunes or absorb folk elements such as folk scales or rhythms. Chinese composers often explored non-functional harmony. As for form, many Chinese piano concertos did follow the Western standard sonata form but with modifications. Regarding orchestration, many composers explored combining a Western orchestra with traditional Chinese instruments or focusing on bringing out a nationalistic style using a Western orchestra only. The piano writing reflects influences from

traditional Chinese instruments. Overall, these piano concertos reflect the communication between China and the Western world. In 1994, Pu Fang wrote a brief introduction of the concerto as a genre and a brief summary of the history of the Chinese piano concerto in her article “论中国钢琴协奏曲创作的发展” [The development of the Chinese piano concerto].

In 2016, Wu Jiajun, in the article “中国作曲家创作的钢琴协奏曲发展简述” [A brief introduction of the development of piano concertos by Chinese composers], divided the development of Chinese piano concertos into two periods. According to the author, Chinese piano concertos written before the Cultural Revolution were mostly transcriptions of Chinese folk songs or traditional Chinese instrumental music, and those composed after the Cultural Revolution appear to be more original. These are the only scholarly articles that discuss the Chinese piano concerto in general, providing useful information about its history. Later articles focus more on specific concertos. As of the writing of this document, a complete history of Chinese piano concertos has yet to be written.

#### Literature of Individual Composers and Concertos Analyzed in this Dissertation

The first biographical article of Jiang Wenye was written by Liang Maochun in 1984, a year after the composer’s death. Titled “江文也音乐创作发展轨迹” [The music development of Jiang Wenye], Liang traced the career of the composer, and divided the compositional career of Jiang into three major periods based on the shifts in his style. In Wei Tingge’s article “江文也钢琴作品风格的变化” [The style change in Jiang Wenye’s piano compositions] (1992), he basically agreed on the same three period divisions. In 1994 Wang Yuhe in his article “江文也钢琴创作中的民族因素” [National elements in

Jiang Wenye's piano compositions] discussed the nationalism in Jiang's piano music. The author divided Jiang Wenye's career by location: the Japan period and the China period. In the 2001 article “江文也早期钢琴音乐创作的现代技法” [The modern techniques of Jiang Wenye's early piano music], Wang Wenli analyzed how the modern Western technique appeared in Jiang's early piano music in detail, as mentioned in the articles from 1984 and 1992. In 2010, on the 100th anniversary of the composer's birth, Cen Wu, in the article “江文也钢琴音乐研究综述——纪念江文也诞辰 100 周年” [Survey of research on the piano music of Jiang Wenye: In commemoration of the 100th anniversary of Jiang Wenye's birth], provided an overview of the current research on the composer's piano music. The author also pointed out a lack of systematic study of Jiang's piano music in the field. The complete compositions of Jiang Wenye were published in December 2016. Among these documents, only Cen's and Pu Fang's article in 1994 mentioned Jiang Wenye's piano concerto, yet none provided any further information on the work.

Scholarly documents related to the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* are noticeably numerous. Kraus's 1989 book mentioned the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* in the chapter on Yin Chengzong. The earliest article, “《黄河》钢琴协奏曲是怎样诞生的?” [How did the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* emerge?], appeared in 1995 and was written by Chu Wanghua. Chu wrote about the commission of the concerto, the organization of the group, the compositional process, and the premiere of the concerto.

In North America, Chen Shing-Lih's doctoral dissertation “The Yellow River Piano Concerto: Politics, Culture, and Style” (1996) was the first dissertation to analyze this concerto in a Western approach and in detail. The author believes that even though

the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* has been colored by its association with the Cultural Revolution, it is a key piece linking traditional Chinese music with contemporary works and a valuable piece in Chinese piano repertoire.

In the same year in China, Yin Yan, in the article “钢琴协奏曲《黄河》版权问题” [The copyright of piano concerto *Huanghe*], wrote about the issues with copyright between Yin Chengzong and the Central Symphony Orchestra. In 1997, Chen Xu in the article “关于钢琴协奏曲《黄河》修改之我见” [My opinion on the revision of the piano concerto *Huanghe*] claims that the tune “East is red” should be kept in the concerto despite its apparent ideological character. The 1999 article “有关钢琴协奏曲《黄河》的史料述评” [Historical material concerning the piano concerto *Huanghe*], written by Pu Fang summarized the current issues with the concerto. Both Chu Wanghua’s and Yin Yan’s document were cited. In 2002, Mo Cheung-Yu Franz in the doctoral dissertation “A Study of Three Significant Twentieth-Century Chinese Piano Concertos,” analyzed the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* and argued that it was one of three significant 20<sup>th</sup> century Chinese piano concertos. In addition to the analysis, he introduced the group composition and the programmatic content of this concerto. Mo also claimed that this concerto’s artistic merit needs to be reevaluated by the West, since it has been looked down on. In this dissertation, Chu Wanghua’s 1995 article and Bian Meng’s 1996 book about piano culture in China are cited. In China, details of the concerto are still being analyzed. In 2005, Li Li, in the article “五声性旋律与功能和声的交融——以钢琴协奏曲《黄河》第二乐章为例” [The blend of pentatonic melody and functional harmony: On the example of the second movement of the *Huanghe* piano concerto], pointed out the connection in the concerto between pentatonic Chinese scales and Western functional

harmony. In 2014, Wu Jiajun and Jin Wang, in the joint article “论钢琴协奏曲《黄河》结构衍生与特征” [The structural derivation and characteristics of piano concerto *Huanghe*], discussed the form of each movement. Although the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* is one of the most popular concertos in China today, its artistic value is still being questioned, both in China and in the West.

One year after Zhao Xiaosheng composed his Piano Concerto No. 1, Aphrodite in 1986, Fang Zhiwen’s article “希望在合力中升华——对赵晓生在《希望之神》中“合力论”的浅析” [Transcend in the united force: An analysis of the “combinism” theory in Zhao Xiaosheng’s Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”] briefly analyzed the compositional technique of the concerto. In 2012, Chen Dan, in the article “赵晓生《太极》与“太极作曲系统”及其意义” [Zhao Xiaosheng's *Taiji*, the *Taiji* compositional system, and its significance], mentioned the concerto and its relationship with the *Taiji* compositional system. The 2017 article “赵晓生钢琴协奏曲《希望之神》的结构形态探析” [Exploring the structure of Zhao Xiaosheng’s piano concerto “Aphrodite”] by Yu Yue analyzed the form of the concerto. Even though Zhao Xiaosheng is still an active pianist and music educator, his early concerto deserves more attention.

### Summary

These studies indicate the current research of Chinese piano music and Chinese piano concertos. The western scholarship lacks interest in this field. Besides Tchernin and Kraus’s writing, most English research has been conducted by Chinese students who studied in the United States.

The Chinese scholarship of Chinese piano music and Chinese piano concertos started in the 1980s with Wei Tingge. The early studies were summaries of piano compositions of Chinese composers, mainly those who remained active after the establishment of People's Republic of China in 1949. The earliest systematic study of Chinese piano concertos was written by Pu Fang in 1991, in which she discussed the nationalism of Chinese piano concertos. After the 1990s, musicology studies of Chinese piano music and Chinese piano concertos prospered, and more scholarship can be found. The trend of the research also shifted from systematic summaries to detailed individual studies of a certain composition. Some studies also attempted to summarize the styles of Chinese piano music. However, almost thirty years have passed since Pu Fang's writing of Chinese piano concertos, and some new piano concertos were written by Chinese composer after 1991. An update to the current status of Chinese piano concertos is needed.

## CHAPTER TWO

### CHINESE PIANO CONCERTOS FROM 1936 TO 2010

#### The Periodization of Chinese Piano Concertos

The history of Chinese piano concertos is deeply connected with the history of Chinese piano music. In Bian Meng's book *中国钢琴文化之形成与发展* [The Formation and Development of Chinese Piano Culture], published in 1996, she divided the history of Chinese piano music into six periods. The first period refers to piano compositions composed before the May Fourth Movement in 1919. The second period refers to piano music from 1919 until the breakout of full scale war against Japan in 1937. The third is from 1937 until the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The fourth is the first seventeen years of the republic, from 1949 to 1966. The fifth spans the period of the Cultural Revolution, from 1966 to 1976. The sixth refers to piano compositions from 1976 to the present. As shown by Bian's six periods, the development of Chinese piano music has been heavily influenced by political surroundings and major historical events. This division of the history of Chinese piano music into six periods is widely accepted in China.

On the other hand, in 2016, Wu Jiajun wrote the article “中国作曲家创作的钢琴协奏曲发展简述” [A brief introduction of the development of piano]. He divided the history of Chinese piano concertos into two periods. The first is before the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976 and the second is after the Cultural Revolution. According to Wu, Chinese piano concertos before the end of the Cultural Revolution were mainly



transcriptions and arrangements, incorporating music of Chinese instruments or folk songs. Chinese piano concertos after the Cultural Revolution tend to have more originality. Wu further divided piano concertos from the second period into two categories, the first being piano concertos that accepted the traditional Western format of the genre and followed the nationalist style from the first period. Concertos in the other category were still based on Chinese music materials combined with modern compositional technique.

In my opinion, the history of Chinese piano concertos is heavily influenced by major historical events. Thus, Bian Meng's periodization based on the important historical events of modern China is more accurate than Wu's suggested division. But, because the first Chinese piano concerto was not composed until 1936, Bian's first two periods do not apply to the history of Chinese piano concertos. I have divided the history of Chinese piano concertos into four periods, based on Bian's approach. The first was from 1936, the date of composition for the first Chinese piano concerto, until the establishment of the republic in 1949. In this period, composers in China were searching for a musical identity of their own. In the second period, from 1949 to 1966, nationalism was the representative style. The third period, from 1966 to 1976, showed heavy ideological and political influences. The fourth period, from 1976 to the present, allowed more experimental compositions due to economic reform and the loosening of the political environment in China.

As of the writing of this document, I have not been able to locate an accurate and complete list of Chinese piano concertos. Pu Fang's article in 1991 did not offer a complete list of Chinese piano concertos. Wu Jiajun's article in 2016 did mention many

Chinese piano concertos; however, he did not give further information other than the names of the concertos. In my opinion, a comprehensive list of Chinese piano concertos is needed for a better understanding of the history of this genre and for the benefit of future studies in this topic.

Chinese Piano Concertos from 1936 to 2010 in Chronological Order

❖ Composer: Jiang Wenye [江文也, 1910-1983]

Date of composition: 1936

Title: 第一钢琴协奏曲 作品 16 号 [Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16]

Date of premiere: May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1937. Duo pianists Inoue Sonoco and Paul Weingarten performed a section of the concerto.<sup>32</sup>

Score: Score for two pianos published in Beijing by the Central Conservatory Publishing Company in 2006.

Form: Single movement

Comment: Orchestrated score was never found.<sup>33</sup>

❖ Composer: Zhang Xiaohu (张肖虎 1914-1997)

Date of composition: 1945

Title: 降 E 大调第一钢琴协奏曲 [Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-flat Major]

Date of premiere: 1945 by Tianjin Institute of Commercial Symphony Orchestra with the composer as the conductor; information on the soloist is missing. The second performance of this concerto had to wait until May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1988 in a concert in celebration of Zhang Xiaohu's 55 years in music.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Liang Maochun, “百年琴韵 — 中国钢琴创作的第一次高潮 (五)” [Hundred years of piano art: The first climax of Chinese piano composition, part 5], *钢琴艺术* [Piano Art] (May 2016): 29.

<sup>33</sup> Wu, “Survey of research on the piano music of Jiang Wenye,” 113.

<sup>34</sup> Liang, “Hundred years of piano art: The first climax of Chinese piano compositions, part 5,” 29.

Score: Unknown

Form: Two movements

Comment: Zhang used musical materials from his song *Gu Xiang* in this concerto.<sup>35</sup>

❖ Composer: Guo Zurong (郭祖荣 1929- )

Date of composition: 1955

Title: 第一钢琴协奏曲 [Piano Concerto No. 1]

Date of premiere: Beijing in 2000, with Hong Yizhe as the soloist, Bian Zushan conducting the China Film Orchestra.<sup>36</sup>

Score: The complete works of Guo Zurong were published in Hong Kong in 2009. They include two volumes of piano concertos. These two volumes include Guo Zurong's first seven piano concertos and the *Piano and Orchestra in D-flat*.

Form: This concerto followed the Western form of the concerto and consists of three movements.<sup>37</sup>

❖ Composer: Guo Zurong

Date of composition: 1957

Title: 第二钢琴协奏曲 [Piano Concerto No. 2]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: The complete works of Guo Zurong were published in Hong Kong in 2009. They include two volumes of piano concertos.

Form: This concerto consists of three movements.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Liang Maochun, “百年琴韵 — 中国钢琴创作的第二次高潮 (四)” [Hundred years of piano art: The second climax of Chinese piano composition, part 4], *钢琴艺术* [Piano Art] (March 2017): 12.

<sup>37</sup> Guo Zurong, *The Concertos Vol. 1: Piano Concertos Autograph* (Hong Kong: New Hong Kong Yearbook Limited Company, 2009): 1

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

❖ Composer: Liu Zhuang (刘庄 1932-2011)

Date of composition: 1957

Title: 钢琴小协奏曲-献给青少年 [Concertino for the Young]

Date of premiere: 1957 with Liu Zhuang as the soloist, Yang Jiangren conducted the Shanghai Conservatory Orchestra.<sup>39</sup>

Score: Unknown

Form: Unknown

Comment: Employing a traditional Western orchestra, this concerto was Liu's graduation composition.<sup>40</sup>

❖ Composer: Guo Zurong.

Date of composition: Started in 1957, forced to stop due to political reasons, finished in 1995.<sup>41</sup>

Title: 第四钢琴协奏曲 [Piano Concerto No. 4]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: The complete works of Guo Zurong were published in Hong Kong in 2009. They include two volumes of piano concertos.

Form: This concerto is a single movement composition.<sup>42</sup>

❖ Composer: Xu Zhenmin (徐振民 1934-)

Date of composition: 1957

Title: 钢琴协奏曲 [Piano Concerto]

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<sup>39</sup> Liang Maochun, “百年琴韵 — 中国钢琴创作的第二次高潮 (三)” [Hundred years of piano art: The second climax of Chinese piano composition, part 3], *钢琴艺术* [Piano Art] (February 2017): 38.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Guo, *The Concertos Vol. 1*, 289.

<sup>42</sup> Guo, *The Concertos Vol. 1*, 1

Date of premiere: Tianjin in 1958, with Zhou Guangren as the soloist, and Li Delun conducted the Central Orchestra.<sup>43</sup>

Score: Unknown

Form: Unknown

Comments: The piano concerto was Xu Zhenmin's graduation composition.<sup>44</sup>

❖ Composer: Zhu Renyu (朱仁玉 1940-1990)

Date of composition: 1958

Title: *儿童钢琴协奏曲* [Piano Concerto for Children]

Date of premiere: 1958 with freshman of the middle school attached to Central Conservatory with Xie Daqun as the soloist. Xu Xin, a newly graduated conductor from Central Conservatory conducted the orchestra of the attached school "Red Scarf Symphony Orchestra".<sup>45</sup>

Score: Published score and recordings were lost.<sup>46</sup>

Form: From the memory of Zhu's classmates, this concerto was a single movement concerto with pentatonic folk music elements.<sup>47</sup>

❖ Composer: Guo Zurong

Date of composition: 1959

Title: *第三钢琴协奏曲* [Piano Concerto No. 3]

Date of premiere: Premiered in Fuzhou, China in 2000, conducted by Bian Shanzu, information of the soloist and the orchestra is missing.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> “徐振民作品年表” [Chronology of Xu Zhenmin], *人民音乐* [People's Music] (July 2010): 13.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Liang, “Hundred years of piano art: The second climax of Chinese piano composition, part 5,” 15-16.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Liang, “Hundred Years of Piano Art: The Second Climax of Chinese Piano Composition, Part 4,” 12.

Score: The complete works of Guo Zurong were published in Hong Kong in 2009. They include two volumes of piano concertos.

Form: This concerto is a single movement composition.<sup>49</sup>

- ❖ Composer: Sun Yilin (孙亦林 1935-2015), Liu Shikun (刘诗昆 1939- ), Pan Yiming (潘一鸣), Huang Xiaofei (黄晓飞)

Date of composition: 1959

Title: 青年钢琴协奏曲 [Youth Piano Concerto]

Date of premiere: Premiered in 1959, with Liu Shikun as the soloist and Zhu Gongyi conducting the Central Conservatory Chinese Orchestra.<sup>50</sup>

Score: The full score was published in 1961 by Music Publishing Company.

Form: A single movement concerto for piano and traditional Chinese instrument orchestra. The structure is a free ternary form.

Comment: Several folk songs are used in the music. The premiere was recorded. Another trackable recording of the concerto was from 1963 by China Record Corporation with the original performers.<sup>51</sup>

- ❖ Composer: Sha Mei (沙梅 1909-1993)

Date of composition: 1960

Title: 第一钢琴协奏曲 [Piano Concerto No. 1]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Unknown

Form: Unknown

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<sup>49</sup> Guo, *The Concertos Vol. 1*, 1.

<sup>50</sup> Liang Maochun, “百年琴韵 — 中国钢琴创作的第二次高潮 (六)” [Hundred Years of Piano Art: The Second Climax of Chinese Piano Composition, Part 6], *钢琴艺术* [Piano Art] (June 2017): 13-15.

<sup>51</sup> Liang, “Hundred Years of Piano Art: The Second Climax of Chinese Piano Composition, Part 6,” 15.

Comment: An existing document indicates that the first movement was finished in 1960, while the completion date of the concerto is unknown.<sup>52</sup>

❖ Composer: Shi Wanchun (施万春 1936-)

Date of composition: 1963

Title: 第一钢琴协奏曲 [Piano Concerto No. 1]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Unknown

Form: This is a single movement concerto written in sonata form.

Comment: The material of the theme came from a *suona* piece in the Hebei region.<sup>53</sup>

❖ Composer: Guo Zurong

Date of composition: 1968

Title: 第五钢琴协奏曲 [Piano Concerto No. 5]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: The complete works of Guo Zurong were published in Hong Kong in 2009. They include two volumes of piano concertos.

Form: This concerto is a single movement composition.<sup>54</sup>

❖ Composer: Guo Zurong

Date of composition: 1968

Title: 第六钢琴协奏曲 [Piano Concerto No. 6]

Date of premiere: Unknown

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<sup>52</sup> Xiang Yansheng, “兼学中西 奋力拼搏——老音乐家沙梅事迹的回顾” [Remembrance of musician Sha Mei], *人民音乐* [People's Music] (December 1993): 7.

<sup>53</sup> He Qiansan, “第一钢琴协奏曲” [Piano Concerto No. 1], *人民音乐* [People's Music] (January 1963): 15-16.

<sup>54</sup> Guo Zurong, *The Concertos Vol. 2: Piano Concertos Autograph* (Hong Kong: New Hong Kong Yearbook Limited Company, 2009): 359.

Score: The complete works of Guo Zurong were published in Hong Kong in 2009. They include two volumes of piano concertos.

Form: This concerto is a single movement composition.<sup>55</sup>

- ❖ Composer: Xian Xinghai (冼星海 1910-1945), Yin Chengzong (殷承宗 1941- ), Chu Wanghua (储望华 1941-), Sheng Lihong (盛礼洪 1926-), Liu Zhuang (刘庄 1932-2011), Shi Shucheng (石叔诚 1946- ), Xu Peixing (许裴星 1946- )

Date of composition: The original cantata by Xian Xinghai was composed in 1939; the piano concerto was written in 1969.

Title: 黄河钢琴协奏曲 [Yellow River Piano Concerto]

Date of Premiere: Premiered in January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1970, with Yin Cheng as the soloist and Li Delun conducting the Central Symphony Orchestra.<sup>56</sup>

Score: Both the full score and the reduction for two pianos were published by People's Music Publishing Company in 1970.

Form: This concerto consists of four movements and every movement is titled.

- ❖ Composer: Huang Zhenmao (黄桢茂 1912-2011)

Date of composition: 1971

Title: d 小调钢琴协奏曲 “锦绣祖国” [Piano Concerto in D Minor, “Jinxiu Zuguo”]

Date of premiere: Manila, Philippines on May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1971, with Regalado Jose as the soloist and Luis Valencia conducting the Philippine Symphony Orchestra.<sup>57</sup>

Score: Unknown

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 425.

<sup>56</sup> Chu Wanghua, “《黄河》钢琴协奏曲是怎样诞生的?” [How did the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* emerge?], 人民音乐 [People's Music] (May 1995): 8.

<sup>57</sup> Liang Maochun, “锦绣河山入梦中——评黄桢茂的 d 小调钢琴协奏曲《锦绣祖国》” [Comment on Huang Zhenmao's Piano Concerto in d Minor], 音乐探索 [Exploration in Music] (Winter 2014): 81.



Form: This concerto is written in three movements, following the standard Western tradition and incorporating pentatonic melodies. The first movement is a sonata form, the second is a slow ternary form, and the third is a fast theme and variations.<sup>58</sup>

❖ Composer: Guo Zhiyuan (郭芝苑 1921-2013)

Date of composition: 1973

Title: 小协奏曲-为钢琴与弦乐队 [Concertino-For Piano and String Orchestra]

Date of premiere: October 1974 by National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra with Li Taixiang as the conductor; information on the soloist is missing.<sup>59</sup>

Score: Published in 1993 by Yueyun publishing company in Taipei

Form: The concerto consists of three movements.<sup>60</sup>

❖ Composer: Zhu Gongyi (朱工一 1922-1986) and Chu Wanghua

Date of composition: 1975

Title: 南海儿女 [Children of the Southern Sea]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Unknown

Form: This concerto consists of three movements with the titles “春汛出海 [Out of the sea at the spring]”, “船头忆苦 [Memory of miserable past at the boat]” and “保卫海疆 [Defend the sea]”.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 82-83.

<sup>59</sup> Wu Jiajun, “中国作曲家创作的钢琴协奏曲发展简述” [A brief introduction of the development of piano concertos by Chinese composer], *音乐生活* [Music Life] (March 2016): 58

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Wu Jiajun, “A brief introduction of the development of piano concertos by Chinese composers,” 59.

- ❖ Composer: Yang Liqing (杨立青 1942-2013), Pan Zhaohe (潘兆和 1946- ), and Xu Zhanhai (徐占海 1945- )

Date of composition: 1975

Title: 出海 [Out at the sea]

Date of premiere: Shenyang Conservatory in October 1975 with Yang Liqing as the soloist; information on the conductor and the soloist is missing.<sup>62</sup>

Score: Unknown

Form: The composition consists of three movements.<sup>63</sup>

Comment: Composed for piano and traditional Chinese instrument orchestra.

- ❖ Composer: Liu Shikun, Guo Zhihong (郭志鸿 1932- )

Date of composition: 1977

Title: 钢琴协奏曲 “战台风” [Piano Concerto, “*Zhan Tai Feng*”<sup>64</sup>]

Date of premiere: According to Liu, the premier of the concerto was in 1977.<sup>65</sup>

Score: Unknown

Form: The concerto was arranged from *Zhan Tai Feng*, a piece composed for the *guzheng*, a traditional Chinese instrument, by Wang Changyuan for a single movement piano concerto.

Comment: This concerto incorporated three themes from the original *guzheng* piece. The concerto was written for a traditional Western orchestra but with some traditional Chinese instruments added in, such as the bamboo flute.<sup>66</sup> This performance was

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 59.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 59.

<sup>64</sup> The literal translation of the title is “fight the hurricane”.

<sup>65</sup> Liu Shikun, “努力创作民族的钢琴的作品” [Work hard to create national piano composition], *人民音乐* [People’s Music] (January 1977):12.

<sup>66</sup> Liu Shikun, “Work hard to create national piano composition,” 12.

videotaped. The earliest trackable recording was made by the China Record Corporation, with Liu Shikun as the soloist, Hang Zhongjie as the conductor and the Chinese National Symphony Orchestra accompanying.

❖ Composer: Guo Zurong

Date of composition: 1977

Title: 第七钢琴协奏曲 [Piano Concerto No. 7]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: The complete works of Guo Zurong were published in Hong Kong in 2009. They include two volumes of piano concertos.

Form: This concerto consists of three movements.<sup>67</sup>

❖ Composer: Rao Yuyan (饶余燕 1933-2010)

Date of composition: 1979

Title: 钢琴协奏曲-献给青少年 [Piano Concerto- *For Teenager*]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Full score published by People's Publishing Company in 1995.

Form: This concerto is a single movement composition written in sonata form.<sup>68</sup>

Comment: A recording with Bao Huiqiao as the soloist, Yuan Fang conducting the China Broadcast Symphony Orchestra was made by China Record Corporation in 1984.

❖ Composer: Liu Dunnan (刘敦南 1940- )

Date of composition: 1979

Title: 钢琴协奏曲 “山林” [Piano Concerto, “The Mountain Forest”]

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<sup>67</sup> Guo, *The Concertos Vol. 2*, 509.

<sup>68</sup> Gong Jianwe, “青春理想的赞歌——评钢琴协奏曲《献给青少年》” [Comment on piano concerto-for teenager], *交响-西安音乐学院学报* [Jiao Xiang-Journal of Xi'an Conservatory of Music] (Summer 1982): 26.

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Score for two pianos published by Shanghai Music Publishing Company in 2007.

Form: This concerto is divided into three movements: 山林的春天 [Spring in the forest], 山林的夜话 [Dialogue between the mountain and the forest], 山林的节日 [Festival in mountain forest].<sup>69</sup>

❖ Composer: Luo Jingjing (罗京京)

Date of composition: 1979

Title: 钢琴与乐队 [Piano and Orchestra]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Unknown

Form: Unknown

Comment: The researcher did not find more information other than the title of the composition and the composer's name.

❖ Composer: Huang Anlun (黄安伦 1949- )

Date of composition: 1982

Title: g 小调钢琴协奏曲, 作品 25b [Piano Concerto in G Minor, Op. 25b]<sup>70</sup>

Date of premiere: Guangzhou in 1984, with Joseph Banowetz as the soloist and Lai

Dewu conducting the Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra.<sup>71</sup>

Score: Unknown

Form: This concerto consists of three movements.

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<sup>69</sup> Wu, "A Brief Introduction of the Development of Piano Concertos by Chinese Composers," 59.

<sup>70</sup> Also known as Huang Anlun's Piano Concerto No. 1.

<sup>71</sup> Ming Yan, "自始至终“有调调”-对黄安伦的音乐史学研究" [Musicology study of Huang Anlun], *乐府新声: 沈阳音乐学院学报* [The new voice of Yue Fu: The Academic Periodical of Shenyang Conservatory of Music] (Spring 2007): 91.

Comment: This concerto was dedicated to Joseph Banowetz. A recording of the concerto was released by Marco Polo Records in 2016, with Banowetz as the soloist, and Zheng Xiaoying conducting the China National Opera House Symphony Orchestra.<sup>72</sup>

❖ Composer: Ma Sicong (马思聪 1912-1987)

Date of composition: 1983

Title: A 大调钢琴协奏曲 [Piano Concerto in A major]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Unknown

Form: Unknown

Comment: This concerto was composed while Ma was in the United States. It is listed as Op. 60. The score of the concerto was not found.<sup>73</sup>

❖ Composer: Sha Mei

Date of composition: 1984

Title: 第二钢琴协奏曲 [Piano Concerto No. 2]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Unknown

Form: This concerto consists of three movements.<sup>74</sup>

❖ Composer: Xu Jixing (徐纪星)

Date of composition: 1984

Title: 第一钢琴协奏曲 [Piano Concerto No. 1]

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<sup>72</sup> Ming, "Musicology study of Huang Anlun," 92.

<sup>73</sup> Pu Fang, "马思聪钢琴创作研究" [Research of Ma Sicong's piano music], *黄钟: 武汉音乐学院学报* [Huangzhong: Journal Of Wuhan Conservatory Of Music] (Spring 2013): 56.

<sup>74</sup> Xiang, "Remembrance of musician Sha Mei," 7.

Date of premiere: The concerto was premiered in Shanghai in 1984.<sup>75</sup>

Score: Unknown

Form: This concerto consists three movements.

Comment: This is Xu's graduation composition from Shanghai Conservatory. This concerto was written in the Western standard format.<sup>76</sup>

❖ Composer: Ding Shande (丁善德 1911-1995)

Date of composition: 1984-86

Title: 降 B 大调钢琴协奏曲, 作品 23 号 [Piano Concerto in B-flat Major, Op. 23]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: The complete work of Ding Shande was published by Shanghai Music Publishing Company in 2011, including the full score and a reduction for two pianos of this concerto.

Form: This concerto has three movements.<sup>77</sup>

❖ Composer: Zhao Xiaosheng (赵晓生 1945- )

Date of composition: 1985

Title: 第一钢琴协奏曲, “希望之神” [Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Full score published by Shanghai Music Publishing Company in 2015.

Form: The concerto consists of four sections that are played without pause.

❖ Composer: Hsu Sung-Jen (徐颂仁 1941-2013)

Date of composition: 1985

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<sup>75</sup> Sun Guozhong, “他们在探索与追求——记上海几位青年作曲家” [They are exploring and pursuing-about a few young composers in Shanghai], *人民音乐* [People's Music] (August 1986): 24.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>77</sup> Wu, “A brief introduction of the development of piano concertos by Chinese composers,” 59.

Title: 钢琴协奏曲 “落大雨主题变奏 “[Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, “Pounding Rain”—Variations on a theme]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Unknown

Form: This concerto consists of three movements.<sup>78</sup>

❖ Composer: Du Mingxin (杜鸣心 1928- )

Date of composition: 1986

Title: 第一钢琴协奏曲 “春之采” [Piano Concerto No. 1, “*Chun Zhi Cai*”]

Date of premiere: 1988 in Hong Kong with Jenő Jandó as the soloist and Shi Minghan conducting the Hong Kong Symphony Orchestra.<sup>79</sup>

Score: Unknown

Form: This concerto consists of three movements following the Western tradition. The first movement is in sonata form. The second movement is a slow lyrical movement. The third movement is a toccata.<sup>80</sup>

❖ Composer: Guo Zurong

Date of composition: 1988

Title: 降D调钢琴与乐队 [*Piano and Orchestra in D-flat*]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: The complete works of Guo Zurong were published in Hong Kong in 2009. They include two volumes of piano concertos.

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<sup>78</sup> Juang Wen-ta, “臺灣作曲家「鋼琴協奏曲」之統整與分析” [Collection and analysis of piano concertos by Taiwan composers], 音樂研究: 國立臺灣師範大學藝術學院音樂研究所年刊 [Yinyue yanjiu: Guoli Taiwan Shifan Daxue Yishu Xueyuan Yinyue Yanjiusuo Niankan] 16, (2012): 35.

<sup>79</sup> Cheung-Yu Franz Mo, “A Study of Three Significant Twentieth-Century Chinese Piano Concertos” (DMA diss., The Juilliard School, 2002), 88.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 105.

Form: This is a single movement composition for piano and orchestra.<sup>81</sup>

❖ Composer: Zhao Xiaosheng

Date of composition: 1991

Title: 第二钢琴协奏曲“辽音” [Piano Concerto No. 2 “*The Sound of Liao*”]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Full score was published by Shanghai Music Publishing Company in 2015.

Form: Unknown

Comment: The researcher did not find any scholarship in Chinese or English related to this concerto.

❖ Composer: Du Mingxin

Date of composition: 1991

Title: 第二钢琴协奏曲 [Piano Concerto No. 2]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Unknown

Form: This concerto consists of three movements.<sup>82</sup>

❖ Composer: Chen Yi (陈怡 1953- )

Date of composition: 1992

Title: Concerto

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Unknown

Form: Unknown

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<sup>81</sup> Guo, *The Concertos Vol. 2*, 631.

<sup>82</sup> “杜鸣心主要作品创作年表 [Chronology of main composition of Du Mingxin],” *人民音乐* [People’s Music] (July 2008): 28.



Comment: Written for piano and large orchestra.<sup>83</sup>

❖ Composer: Hsiao Tyzen (萧泰然 1938-2015)

Date of composition: 1992

Title: Piano Concerto in C Minor, Op. 53

Date of premiere: 1994.<sup>84</sup>

Score: Unknown

Form: This concerto consists of three movements.<sup>85</sup>

❖ Composer: Lu Yen (卢炎 1930-2008)

Date of composition: 1995

Title: Piano Concerto

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Unknown

Form: Unknown

Comment: This concerto is written for piano and chamber orchestra.<sup>86</sup>

❖ Composer: Zhang Zhao (张朝 1964- )

Date of composition: 1996

Title: 哀牢狂想 [*Ailao Rhapsody*]

Date of premiere: 1996 in Beijing, with Zhao Chao as the soloist and Li Xincao conducting the China Broadcast Symphony Orchestra.<sup>87</sup>

Score: Unknown

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<sup>83</sup> "Chen Yi," accessed February 19, 2018, <http://composers21.com/compdocs/chenyi.htm>.

<sup>84</sup> Juang Wen-ta, "Collection and analysis of piano concertos by Taiwan Composers," 55.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>87</sup> Shan Xu, "多彩的奏鸣——与张朝谈《哀牢狂想》" [Talking to Zhang Chao about *Ailao Rhapsody*], *钢琴艺术* [Piano Art] (September 2013): 29.

Form: This concerto is a single movement composition using modified sonata form.<sup>88</sup>

❖ Composer: Huang Anlun

Date of composition: 1999

Title: 第二钢琴协奏曲 [Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor]

Date of premiere: Shanghai on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1999, with Xu Peiping as the soloist and Huang Anlun conducting the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra.<sup>89</sup>

Score: Unknown

Form: This concerto consists of three movements.

Comment: A recording of the concerto was published by Longyin Recording Company in 2001.<sup>90</sup>

❖ Composer: Yin Qing (印青 1954- ), Wang Jianzhong (王建中 1933- ), and Yang Liqing (杨立青 1942-2013)

Date of composition: The original song on which this concerto was based was composed in 1997. The piano concerto was composed in 1999.

Title: 钢琴协奏曲 “走进新时代” [Piano Concerto, “Stepping into the New Age”]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Full score published by Shanghai Music Publishing House in 2003.

Form: This concerto is written in a single movement format.<sup>91</sup>

❖ Composer: Du Mingxin

Date of composition: 2002

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<sup>88</sup>Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Wu Xinyang, “黄安伦《第二钢琴协奏曲》之音乐分析” [Musical analysis of Huang Anlun’s Piano Concerto No. 2], *艺术评鉴* [Art Comments] (February 2017): 132.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 133.

<sup>91</sup> Zhan Qi, “对钢琴协奏曲《走进新时代》中钢琴演奏技法的研究及其部分作品分析” [Analysis of Piano Technique of Piano Concerto “Stepping into the New Age”] (Master thesis, Jiangxi Normal University, 2010), 6.

Title: 第三钢琴协奏曲“献给鼓浪屿” [Piano Concerto No. 3, “For *Gulangyu*”]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Unknown

Form: This concerto consists of three movements.<sup>92</sup>

❖ Composer: Tan Dun (谭盾 1957- )

Date of composition: 2008

Title: 钢琴协奏曲“火” [Piano Concerto, “The Fire”]

Date of premiere: Premiered in April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008 in New York with Lang Lang as the soloist and Leonard Slatkin conducting the New York Philharmonic.<sup>93</sup>

Score: Full score published by Schirmer in 2008.

Form: This concerto has three movements.<sup>94</sup>

❖ Composer: Lu Yen (卢炎 1930-2008)

Date of composition: 2008

Title: Piano Concerto No. 2

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Unknown

Form: This concerto consists of three movements.<sup>95</sup>

❖ Composer Wang Xilin (王西麟 1936- )

Date of composition: 2010

Title: 钢琴协奏曲 [Piano Concerto]

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<sup>92</sup> “Chronology of main composition of Du Mingxin,” 28.

<sup>93</sup> “Work Information,” accessed February 27, 2018, <http://www.musicsalesclassical.com/composer/work/36247#>.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Juang Wen-ta, “Collection and analysis of piano concertos by Taiwan composers,” 46.

Date of premiere: 2010 in Basel, Switzerland on November 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> with Chen Sa as the soloist and Francesc Part conducted the Switzerland Orchestra.

Score: Unknown

Form: This concerto consists of three movements.<sup>96</sup>

❖ Composer: Meregjih (莫尔吉胡 1931-2017)

Date of composition: The researcher did not find the date of composition.

Title: 钢琴协奏曲“安岱” [Piano Concerto, “*Andai*”]

Date of premiere: Unknown

Score: Unknown

Form: This concerto is written in a single movement format.

Comment: The orchestration includes piano and a traditional Chinese instrument orchestra.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Tan Gesheng, “王西麟《钢琴协奏曲》中传统戏曲因素研究——兼论“戏曲音乐交响化”问题” [Chinese *xiqu* music elements in Wang Xilin's piano concerto and the symphonic presentation of *xiqu* Music], *黄钟: 武汉音乐学院学报* [Huangzhong: Journal Of Wuhan Conservatory Of Music] (Summer 2013): 105.

<sup>97</sup> Hua Xia, “莫尔吉胡钢琴协奏曲《安岱》音乐形态研究” [Musical analysis of Meregjih's piano concerto “*Andai*”] (Master's thesis, Inner Mongolia Normal University, 2014), 21.

## CHAPTER THREE

### JIANG WENYE'S PIANO CONCERTO NO. 1 OP. 16

#### Biography

Jiang Wenye (江文也 1910-1983) was born in Taiwan, which was occupied by Japan at the time. At age six, he moved to Xiamen, China with his parents. At age thirteen, after his parents passed away, Jiang moved to Tokyo, Japan for further education. In Japan he majored in engineering and received private music lessons. According to Jiang himself, most of his music education came from himself. He said “I recite many famous pieces to learn fundamental harmony and learn the composition technique of European music very quickly.”<sup>98</sup> Jiang lived in Japan for fifteen years, and spoke a little Southern Min<sup>99</sup>, but the language he used in daily life and writing was Japanese. In 1934 Jiang traveled back to Taiwan for nine days. In 1938 Jiang moved to Beijing to study Chinese traditional music. After the establishment of the Republic, Jiang worked as professor of composition in the Central Conservatory in Beijing beginning in 1950. In the Anti-Rightist Movement in 1957 he was categorized as rightist. During the Cultural Revolution, Jiang was sent to labor camps and was not able to work as a musician. In 1978 he received political rehabilitation, but his health condition did not allow him to work anymore. Jiang died in Beijing in 1983.

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<sup>98</sup> Xia Su, “江文也及其钢琴音乐风格” [Jiang Wenye and his piano music style], in *江文也钢琴作品集* [Collection of Jiang Wenye's Piano Compositions], ed. Jiang Xiaoyun (Beijing, China: Central Conservatory Publishing Company, 2006), 1.

<sup>99</sup> A dialect widely spoken in Southern China.

## Periodization of Jiang Wenye's Piano Music

Jiang wrote over 130 music compositions, 31 of which were for piano, and 21 were preserved.<sup>100</sup> Most of the piano compositions were character pieces and sonatas written before 1949. Many researches divided Jiang Wenye's compositional career into several periods. In 1984, Liang Maochun divided the piano music into two productive periods and a transitional period: the first productive period 1934 to 1938; the transitional period 1938 to 1945; and the second productive period 1949 to 1953.<sup>101</sup> The author excluded 1945 to 1949 possibly because no compositions from those years were known at the time. In 1992, Wei Tingge divided the piano music of Jiang Wenye into four periods: the early period from 1935 to 1936; the transitional year of 1936; the middle period from 1938 to 1943; and the late period from 1949 to 1953.<sup>102</sup> The author did not include 1943 to 1949 possibly for the same lack of records from those years. In 1994, Wang Yuhe divided the piano music of Jiang into two periods: the Japan period 1934 to 1938 and China period 1939 to 1957.<sup>103</sup> These articles looked at Jiang Wenye's piano compositions from different aspects, but all three agreed that his early piano music, especially those works written before 1938, was influenced by Japanese folk music and contemporary Western music. Liang Maochun, in his 2015 article, stated that during Tcherepnin's visit to China and Japan from 1935 to 1937, Tcherepnin pointed out that young composers in China and Japan should learn composition technique directly from

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<sup>100</sup> Wu, "Survey of research on the piano music of Jiang Wenye": 111-2.

<sup>101</sup> Liang Maochun, "江文也音乐创作发展轨迹" [The music development of Jiang Wenye], *中央音乐学院学报* [Journal of the Central Conservatory of Music] (Fall 1984): 5.

<sup>102</sup> Wei Tingge, "江文也钢琴作品风格的变化" [The style change in Jiang Wenye's piano compositions], *乐府新声: 沈阳音乐学院学报* [The New Voice of Yue-Fu: The Academic Periodical of Shenyang Conservatory of Music] (Summer 1992): 15.

<sup>103</sup> Wang Yuhe, "江文也钢琴创作中的民族因素" [National elements in Jiang Wenye's piano compositions], *中央音乐学院学报* [Journal of the Central Conservatory of Music] (Spring 1994): 83.

their contemporary European colleagues. Unfortunately, most young Chinese composers did not follow this suggestion. Jiang Wenye, however, took Tcherepnin's suggestion. As a result, Jiang's early piano music indicates clear influences from impressionism and atonal music.<sup>104</sup>

### Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16

#### General Information

Jiang composed his first and only piano concerto in 1936. Before its publication in 2006, this concerto existed solely in manuscript form. The only record of performance of this concerto was on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1937, with duo pianists Inoue Sonoco and Paul Weingarten performing the third section of the concerto.<sup>105</sup> This one-movement concerto exists only in a two-piano version, as the manuscript for an orchestrated score was never found. No recordings for this concerto exist. Liang Maochun in 2016 wrote that this concerto is a piano concerto written for two pianos. No English scholarship of this concerto exists.

The writing in the second piano part suggests that it was composed for a piano. As an example, from measures 291 to 298 (see Ex. 1), the solo piano and the second piano switch their parts. This writing is common in compositions for two pianos, such in the first movement of Mozart's Sonata in D Major for two pianos, K. 448 (see Ex. 2), but rarely seen in a piano and orchestra reduction score.

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<sup>104</sup> Liang Maochun, “百年琴韵 — 中国钢琴创作的第一次高潮 (二)” [Hundred years of piano art: The first climax of Chinese piano composition, part 2], *钢琴艺术* [Piano Art] (October 2015): 37.

<sup>105</sup> Jiang Xiaoyun, “编者说明” [Editor's notes], in *江文也钢琴作品集* [Collection of Jiang Wenye's Piano Compositions], ed. Jiang Xiaoyun (Beijing, China: Central Conservatory Publishing Company, 2006), i.



Example 1. Jiang Wenye, Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16, mm. 290-8<sup>106</sup>



Example 2. Mozart, Sonata for Two Pianos in D Major, K. 448, mm. 15-21<sup>107</sup>

<sup>106</sup> Jiang Wenye, *江文也钢琴作品集* [Collection of Jiang Wenye's piano compositions], ed. Jiang Xiaoyun (Beijing, China: Central Conservatory Publishing Company, 2006), 114.

<sup>107</sup> W. A. Mozart, Sonata for Two Pianos in D major, K. 448, ed. Alfred Dorffel, (Leipzig: Edition Peters, n.d.): 3-4.



## The Structure of the Concerto

This single-movement concerto consists of 665 measures and can be divided into four sections based on tempo changes:

Measure	Phrasing	Key	Material
1 to 4	4	A major	Recitative passage
5 to 8	4	b minor	New motive (motive 1)
9 to 12	4	B major	Recitative repeated
13 to 28	4+8+4	e minor	Fragmentation of motive 1
29 to 40	4+8	d minor	Motive 1

Figure 1. Structure of *Allegro non troppo quasi Recitativo*, measures 1 to 40

Measure	Phrasing	Key	Material
41 to 68	4+4+4+4+4+4+4	C major	New motive (motive 2)
69 to 72	4	E major	Motive 2
73 to 82	4+2+4	C major	Motive 2
83 to 84	2	E major	Motive 2
85 to 104	4+4+4+2+2+4	C major	Motive 2
105 to 120	4+4+8	E major	Motive 2
121 to 136	4+4+8	A major	Motive 2
137 to 152	4+4+2+2+4	E major	New motive (motive 3)
153 to 168	4+4+4+4	A major	Motive 2

169 to 178	2+2+4+2	E major	Motive 3
179 to 210	2+2+4+4+4+4+4+4+4	A major	Motive 3
211 to 218	8	C major	New motive (motive 4)
219 to 226	8	C-sharp major	Motive 4
227 to 230	4	C major	Motive 4
231 to 234	4	D-flat major	Motive 4
235 to 242	8	C major	Motive 4
243 to 250	8	C-sharp major	Motive 4
251 to 266	4+4+2+2+4	C major	Motive 4
267 to 274	4+4	C-sharp major	Motive 4
275 to 308	4+4+4+4+4+4+4+5+1	C major- F major- G major	Transitional passage
309 to 340	4+4+8+4+4+4+4	B major	Motive 2
341 to 356	2+2+4+4+4	A major	Motive 3
357 to 380	5+5+10+4	a minor	Transitional passage

Figure 2. Structure of *Presto feroce*, measures 41 to 381

Measure	Phrasing	Key	Material
381 to 416	4+4+4+8+4+4+4+4	G major	Motive 3
417 to 420	4	e minor	Transitional passage
421 to 428	4+4	e minor	Motive 1
429 to 472	4+4+4+4+4+4+3+5+4+3+5	e minor	Fragmentation of motive 1
473 to 490	2+3+2+2+9	e minor	Transitional passage

Figure 3. Structure of *Poco tranquillo non lento*, measures 381 to 490

Measure	Phrasing	Key	Material
491 to 522	4+4+8+4+4+4+4	G major	Motive 2
523 to 530	2+2+4	G major	Motive 3
531 to 538	8	C major	Motive 4
539 to 546	8	C-sharp major	Motive 4
547 to 550	2+2	C major	Motive 4
551 to 554	4	D-flat major	Motive 4
555 to 580	4+4+4+4+4+6	C major- G major	Transitional passage
581 to 590	10	C major	Coda
591 to 636	4+4+4+4+4+4+4+4+6+4	G major- C major	Motive 1
637 to 657	2+2+2+2+2+2+2+2+3	e minor	Motive 1, slower tempo
658 to 665	4+4	a minor	A tempo, ending passage

Figure 4. Structure of *Tempo I*, measures 491 to 665

The form of this concerto is influenced by Western music in two ways. First, the tempos of the four sections of the concerto are slow-fast-slow-fast, with the first section serving as an introduction. The tempo design of the concerto is similar to a traditional piano concerto where the tempos of the three movements are fast-slow-fast. Second, music materials that appear in the second section reappear in the fourth section, as in a ternary form.

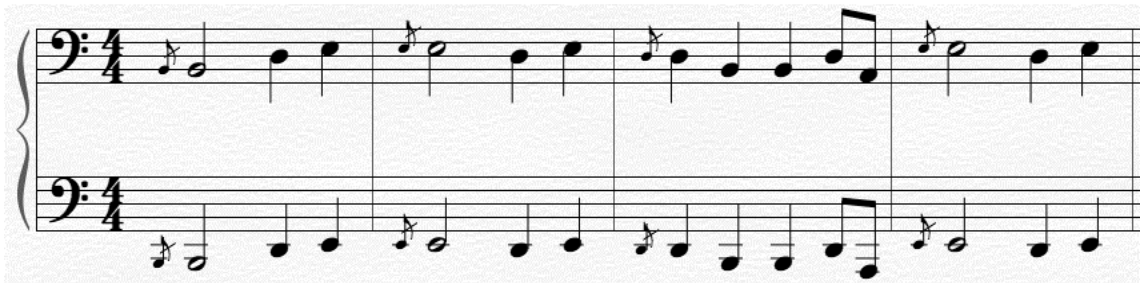
The tonality in the introduction is unstable. When motive 2 first appears in the first section, it is mainly in C major and moves to E major occasionally. Motive 3 first appears in E major and moves to A major. Motive 4 first appears in C major and alternates between C major and C-sharp (D-flat) major. When motives 2 and 3 reappear

in the first section, motive 1 moves to B major, and motive 3 is in A major. The third section is mainly in e minor, but in the beginning motive 3 appears briefly in G major. In the fourth section, motives 2 and 3 both appear in G major. Motive 4 on the other hand, continues to alternate between C major and C-sharp (D-flat) major. Motive 1 returns towards the end of the section and ends in a minor.

Overall, this concerto is in an ABA form with an introduction. The first section functions as the introduction. The first A section presents the four motives of the concerto, followed by the B section which is readily identified because of the tempo difference between these two sections. With the return of the A section, Motive 1 which is prominent in the opening A section, comes back to conclude the concerto.

### Motives

There are four principal motives in this concerto. Motive 1 first appears from measures 5 to 8 (see Ex. 3) and is played by the second piano. The most important interval in this motive is a perfect fourth, as it appears twice in the motive, first in the ascending B, D, E in measure 5 and then in the descending D-A in measure 7.



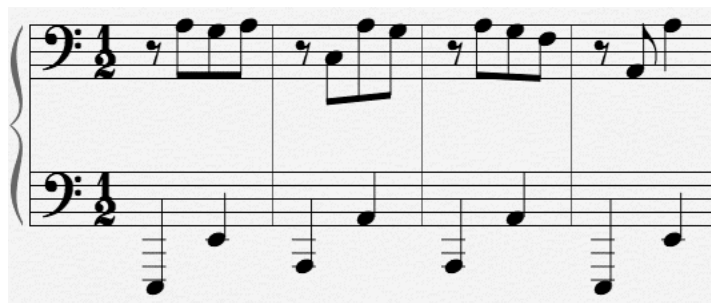
Example 3. Jiang Wenye, Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16, mm. 5-8

This motive is extremely important because it forms the core of the accompaniment texture in the concerto. In measure 25 (see Ex. 4), the first measure of the motive appears in the solo piano as E, G, A, which forms a perfect fourth.



Example 4. Jiang Wenye, Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16, mm. 25-8

In measure 41 (see Ex. 5), the second piano plays E, A, G, A, again forming a perfect fourth.



Example 5. Jiang Wenye, Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16, mm. 41-4

In measures 211 to 212 (see Ex. 6), the second piano again plays E, A, G, A in a toccata texture.



Example 6. Jiang Wenye, Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16, mm. 209-212

In measures 284 to 285 (see Ex. 7), the second piano plays E, A, B, A, which alters the direction of the neighbor note and still forms a perfect fourth. The interval of a perfect fourth is the basic building brick of the concerto.



Example 7. Jiang Wenye, Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16, mm. 284-5

Motive 2 first appears from measures 49 to 52 (see Ex. 8). This motive is a four-measure phrase and obtains a dance quality. Liang Maochun described it as “dancing around a festival campfire.”<sup>108</sup>



Example 8. Jiang Wenye, Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16, mm. 49-52

Motive 3 first appears from measures 137 to 140 (see Ex. 9), played in the right hand of the solo piano. Like motive 2, it is in clear four-measure phrases. Motive 3 presents an even more dancelike quality with syncopation.



<sup>108</sup> Liang, “Hundred years of piano art: The first climax of Chinese piano composition, part 5,” 29.



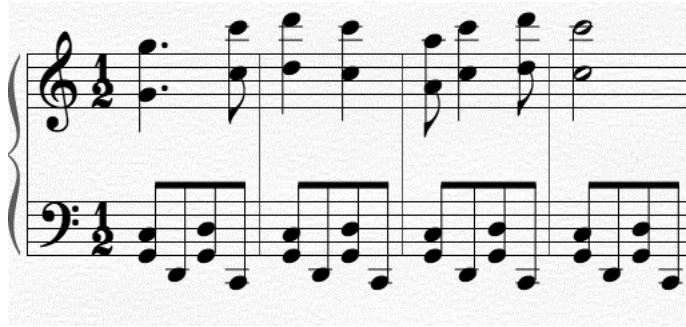
Example 9. Jiang Wenye, Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16, mm. 134-145

Jiang also uses motive 3 in the beginning of the slow section from measures 385 to 388 (see Ex. 10), in the right hand of the solo piano.



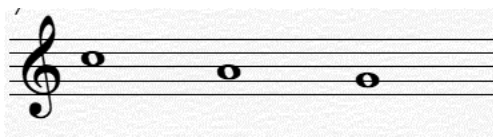
Example 10. Jiang Wenye, Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16, mm. 381-391

Motive 4 first appears from measures 211 to 214 (see Ex. 11), in the right hand of the solo piano. The major difference between this motive and the previous two is the long note at the end of the phrase.



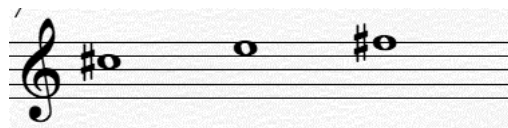
Example 11. Jiang Wenye, Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16, mm. 211-4

Besides motive 1, the other three motives also share connections with a perfect fourth. The ending of the first appearance of motive 2 consists of a perfect fourth with the notes C, A, G (see Ex. 12).

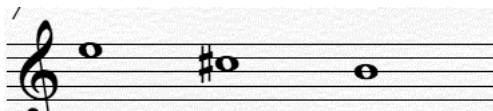


Example 12. Fourth interval in motive 2

The first appearance of motive 3 consists of two perfect fourths in the four-measure phrase, first in the ascending C-sharp, E, F-sharp (see Ex. 13), then in the descending E, C-sharp, B (see Ex. 14).



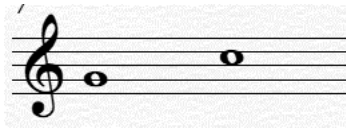
Example 13. Fourth interval no. 1 in motive 3



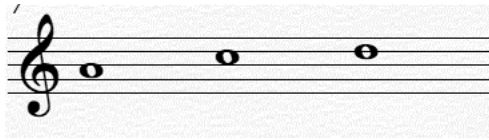
Example 14. Fourth interval no. 2 in motive 3

In the first appearance of motive 4, two perfect fourths can be found, first in G, C (see Ex. 15), then in A, C, D (see Ex. 16).





Example 15. Fourth interval no. 1 in motive 4



Example 16. Fourth interval no. 2 in motive 4

All four motives are linked by the use of a perfect fourth. This is Jiang's approach of organizing this concerto.

### Scales

The reason why the perfect fourth is the core interval of the concerto is because it is based on Japanese scales, and Japanese scales are based on fourths:

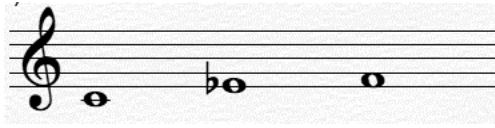
It was not until after World War II, however, that Koizumi Fumio (1958), influenced by the methods of Western comparative musicology, first developed a theory to account successfully for all Japanese musical genres. Koizumi conceived of the scale based not on the unit of the octave but on the unit of the fourth. Although the importance of fourths in Japanese scales had already been noted by Robert Lachmann (1929) and Simohusa Kan'iti (1942), Koizumi was the first to use the fourth as a unit of musical analysis. Koizumi called his unit a tetrachord because its two outer tones formed the same interval as the ancient Greek tetrachord, despite the fact that it had only one intermediate tone... To account for melodies with a range wider than a fourth, Koizumi suggested that two or more tetrachords could be combined either conjunctly (sharing a nuclear tone) or disjunctly (forming an octave pentatonic scale). In addition, combination of different tetrachords is common... Koizumi's tetrachord theory, now widely accepted by Japanese scholars, has formed the basis of many subsequent modal theories.<sup>109</sup>

In Koizumi's theory, there are four kinds of tetrachords in Japanese music. The *min'yo*, which is often seen in folk songs and traditional children's songs, is constructed

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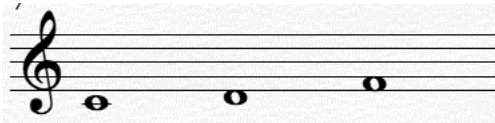
<sup>109</sup> Komoda Haruko and Nogawa Mihoko, "Theory and Notation in Japan," in *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music Vol. 7: China, Japan and Korea*, eds. Robert C. Provine, Yosihiko Tokumaru, and J. Lawrence Witzleben (New York and London: Routledge, 2002), 568-569.

with a major second on top of a minor third (see Ex. 17).



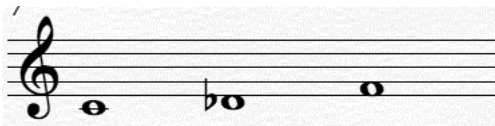
Example 17. A *min'yo* tetrachord

The *ritu* is constructed with a minor third on top of a major second (see Ex. 18).



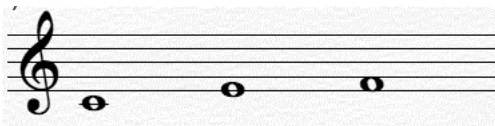
Example 18. A *ritu* tetrachord

The *miyakobusi*, often seen in urban music, is constructed with a major third on top of a minor second (see Ex. 19).



Example 19. A *miyakobusi* tetrachord

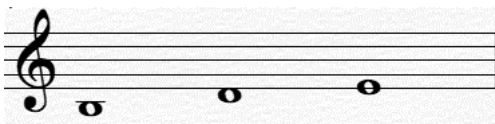
The *Okinawa*, often seen in music from the Okinawa region, is constructed with a minor second on top of a major third (see Ex. 20).



Example 20. An *Okinawa* tetrachord

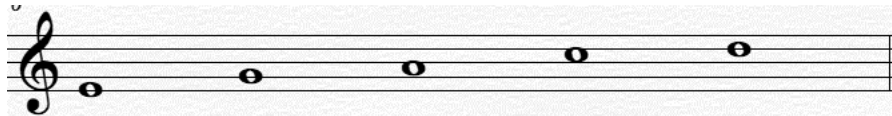
All the motives in Jiang Wenye's piano concerto can be analyzed with this theory.

The core notes in motive 1, B, D, and E, form a *min'yo* tetrachord (see Ex. 21).



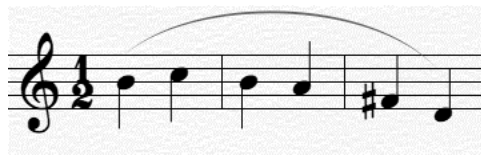
Example 21. *Min'yo* tetrachord from motive 1

The first appearance of motive 2 from measures 57 to 60 includes a pentatonic scale from E, G, A, C, and D. This scale can be interpreted as a Chinese pentatonic scale of E-jue, or two conjunct *min'yo* tetrachords of E, G, A, and A, C, D (see Ex. 22). The same situation applies with motive 3, with its first appearance from measures 138 to 141 and the first appearance of motive 4 from measures 212 to 215.



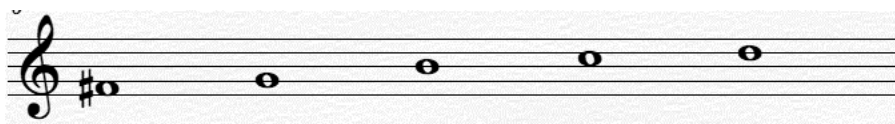
Example 22. Pentatonic scale from motive 2, 3, and 4

Another example of the use of Japanese scales is from measures 430 to 432 (see Ex. 23).



Example 23. Jiang Wenye, Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16, mm. 430-2

The pentatonic scale in this phrase includes notes F-sharp, G, B, C, and D. This scale does not fit any Chinese pentatonic scales but is clearly a conjunct scale of two *Okinawa* tetrachords G, B, C and D, F-sharp, G (see Ex. 24).



Example 24. Two *Okinawa* tetrachords from Jiang Wenye's piano concerto, mm. 430-2  
National Elements: Chinese or Japanese?

Even though this concerto is the first Chinese piano concerto, its musical style is heavily influenced by Japanese music. There are three reasons for this mismatching. First, it is true that except for motive 1, every other motive in the concerto can be interpreted as

using a Chinese pentatonic scale or two conjunct Japanese *min'yo* scales. China and Japan have long history of musical communication. As early as the Tang dynasty (618-907), Japan sent musicians along with ambassadors to China, which partially explains why the music of the two countries have many similarities. Second, Jiang Wenye's personal experience indicates influence from Japanese music. Jiang moved to Japan in 1923, and before his return to China in 1938 he had been living in Japan for over fifteen years. He received his music education in Japan, and it was natural that he was influenced by Japanese music. Third, according to Wei Tingge, Jiang did not have an awareness of his Chinese identity at the time this concerto was composed:

This indicates that the music style of China and Japan, belonging to the same culture circle and having a long history of communication, share some commonality despite their diversities, like music styles among different European regions. If Japanese composers also write in non-chromatic pentatonic scales, then some of Jiang's early composition cannot be categorized as Chinese style or Chinese-Japanese style based on the use of non-chromatic pentatonic scales. On the contrary, his condition I am afraid did not obtain a clear intention of expressing a Chinese style, nor did he have enough knowledge to do so. The style we hear in his early piano compositions that is similar to Chinese style is actually the common style among Chinese and Japanese music. Thus, as to nationalism, the style of Jiang Wenye's early piano compositions should be categorized as Japanese style.<sup>110</sup>

Based on these three reasons, I believe that the nationalist elements in Jiang Wenye's Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16 are from Japanese music, rather than Chinese music.

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<sup>110</sup> Wei Tingge, "The style change in Jiang Wenye's piano compositions," 15. The original text is translated by the researcher unless otherwise stated. The original text is copied here: 这说明, 同属于一个文化圈, 又有长久互相交往历史的中, 日两个民族, 她们的音乐风格除去互相殊异的个性外, 还有互相共通的共性, 正如欧洲诸民族音乐风格之间既有个性又有共性一样。既然日本作曲家也写作无半音五声音阶作品, 那么就不能根据无半音五声音阶这一点认定江文也某些早期作品是中国或中日风格并存的。相反, 以他当时的主客观条件, 恐怕还不具有表现中国风格的明确的主观意识, 也不具有表现中国风格的必要的中国传统音乐修养。我们从他早期钢琴作品中听到的那种与中国风格十分相像的风格, 实际上是属于中国, 日本音乐风格中带有共同性的那种风格。因此, 就民族形式而言, 江文也早期钢琴曲, 应当说是日本风格的。

## Conclusion

Jiang Wenye composed his first piano concerto in 1936. This is the first known piano concerto composed by a Chinese composer. Influences from Western music are clear in terms of form, as the concerto does follow the Western standard of movement division and divides the concerto into an “Introduction-fast-slow-fast” structure. The form of the concerto is an ABA form with introduction. The concerto includes four important motives, and these four motives are united by sharing the interval of a perfect fourth. The scales Jiang used in the concerto are mostly Japanese *min'yo* scales. Although this composition is the first piano concerto by a Chinese composer, its music is influenced by Japanese music. As the first piano concerto by a Chinese composer, Jiang Wenye's Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16 did not receive enough awareness in the field. Jiang is an interesting composer, and this concerto deserves more research.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE *YELLOW RIVER PIANO CONCERTO*

#### Introduction

The *Yellow River Piano Concerto* is the best-known Chinese piano concerto. It was arranged by Yin Chengzong, Chu Wanghua, Sheng Lihong, Liu Zhuang, Shi Shucheng, and Xu Peixing in 1969 from Xian Xinghai's *Yellow River Cantata*, composed in 1939.

The Yellow River, or *Huang He*, is the second longest river (5464 kilometers) in China. The river originates from the Baian Kela Mountains, flows through nine northern provinces, and runs into the Bohai Sea. The Yellow River is one of two mother rivers of the Chinese civilization, the other being the Yangtze River. It is believed that the prehistoric Beijing man lived in the Yellow River Valley as early as half a million years ago. The early dynasties of Chinese civilization, including the Xia dynasty (2205-1766 B.C.), the Shang dynasty (1766-1122 B.C.), and the Zhou dynasty (1122-221 B.C.), all emerged and flourished around the region where the Yellow River flows.<sup>111</sup> In fact, before the Han Dynasty, the Chinese character “河[River]” referred to the Yellow River only. The Chinese character “黄[Yellow]” refers to the muddy water of the river from central China.

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<sup>111</sup> Chen Shing-Lih, “The Yellow River Piano Concerto: Politics, Culture, and Style” (DMA diss., University of British Columbia, Vancouver, 1996), 3.

## The Yellow River Cantata

Xian Xinghai (1905-1945) was one of the most influential composers in China during the 1930s and 1940s. He came to Yan'an in November 1938 and became the head of the Lu Xun Arts Academy. In spring 1939 Xian composed the *Yellow River Cantata* in around six days.<sup>112</sup> Kraus commented on the political aspects of the *Yellow River*

*Cantata*:

The *Yellow River Cantata* carried Xian's propaganda songs of the national salvation movement to a new and grander level. It celebrates China's land and people, and the guerrilla war against Japan. Its lyrics are somewhat classical in style, as befit even Communist art before Mao's 1942 "Talks at the Yan'an Forum."<sup>113</sup>

The first few performances of the cantata in Yan'an were successful according to Xian's writing:

I conducted a few performances of the cantata in Yan'an. The chorus started with around a hundred members and expanded to five hundred. The orchestra has around twenty members, mostly with Chinese instruments. The grand hall cannot fill all of us, the sound can be heard from far away.<sup>114</sup>

This composition was written in numbered notation,<sup>115</sup> and in 1941 Xian re-orchestrated the cantata with traditional Western instruments and a full SATB choir. This version of the cantata has become the standard and is performed worldwide.<sup>116</sup> The published scores of the cantata include versions in both staff notation and numbered notation.

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<sup>112</sup> Xian Xinghai, "洗星海创造札记" [Some writings of Xian Xinghai on his composition], *人民音乐* [People's Music] (August 1955), 14-15.

<sup>113</sup> Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China* 58.

<sup>114</sup> Xian, "Some writings of Xian Xinghai on his composition," 15. The original text is copied here: 这大合唱在延安演出时屡次由我指挥, 合唱队由一百起增加到五百人, 乐队二十余人, 多用中国乐器。大礼堂几乎容纳不下, 声音远远可以听到。

<sup>115</sup> Numbered notation is widely used in China, it uses the numbers 1 to 7 to represent notes in a diatonic scale.

<sup>116</sup> The first edition of the *Yellow River Cantata* was published in 1956, by Music Publishing House in Beijing.

The cantata includes eight movements for different voices and orchestra: 1. 黄河船夫曲 [Yellow River Boatman's Song], for full choir. 2. 黄河颂 [Ode to the Yellow River], for baritone solo. 3. 黄河之水天上来 [Yellow River Ascending from the Sky], for narrator, no singing. 4. 黄水谣 [Yellow River Ballad], for female chorus. 5. 河边对口曲 [Duet by the River], for male chorus. 6. 黄河怨 [Yellow River Hatred], for soprano solo. 7. 保卫黄河 [Defend the Yellow River], for full SATB chorus. 8. 怒吼吧! 黄河 [Roar! Yellow River], for full SATB chorus.

When Yin Chengzong and his composition group arranged the cantata as a piano concerto, they reduced the piece to four movements: 1. 黄河船夫曲 [Yellow River Boatman's Song], arranged from the first movement of the cantata. 2. 黄河颂 [Ode to the Yellow River], arranged from the second movement. 3. 黄河愤 [Wrath of the Yellow River], arranged from the fourth and sixth movements. 4. 保卫黄河 [Defend the Yellow River], arranged from the seventh and eighth movements.

#### The Composition Group of the *Yellow River Piano Concerto*

The lyricist of the *Yellow River Cantata*, Guang Weiran (光未然 1913-2002), was criticized during the Cultural Revolution, and the cantata was not allowed for performance. In 1968, after the successful performance of the piano transcription of *The Legend of the Red Lantern*, Yin Chengzong wrote to Jiang Qing (江青 1914-1991), the person of governmental influence during the Cultural Revolution, asking for permission to arrange the original cantata of Xian Xinghai into a piano concerto. After this request was approved, the composition group of the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* was established in February 1969. Yin was assigned as the head of the group. The initial



members of the group included Du Mingxin, an active composer at the time; however, later Du was transferred out of the group for arrangement of the *Red Detachment of Women*. The members of the composition group included Yin Chengzong, Chu Wanghua, Sheng Lihong, Liu Zhuang, Shi Shucheng, and Xu Peixing.<sup>117</sup> The paragraphs below give some information about each member of the composition group of the *Yellow River Piano Concerto*.

Yin Chengzong started learning the piano at age seven, and he won second prize at the International Tchaikovsky Competition in 1962. After graduating from the Central Conservatory in 1965, Yin was assigned to the Central Symphony Orchestra. He was one of the few pianists who remained active during the Cultural Revolution. Yin joined the Communist Party of China in 1973, after the Cultural Revolution and was under political review for a few years. Yin emigrated to the United States in 1983 and remains an active pianist and music educator today. In the composition group, Yin was in charge of writing the piano part.

Chu Wanghua enrolled in the piano department of the Central Conservatory in 1958. After graduation, Chu stayed in the conservatory for teaching. After the Cultural Revolution, he settled in Australia and remained active composing and performing as a pianist. In the composition group, Chu cooperated with Yin on the solo piano part.

After Du Mingxin left the composition group, Yin invited Sheng Lihong to join. Sheng was a composition professor at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. According to Chu Wanghua, Sheng was mainly in charge of the orchestration of the concerto.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> The dates of the members of the composition group were mentioned on page 33 in Chapter 2.

<sup>118</sup> Chu, “《黄河》钢琴协奏曲是怎样诞生的?” [How did the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* emerge?], 人民音乐

Liu Zhuang joined the composition group around September 1969. Before that time, she was in the Beijing Peking Opera Band for a Peking Opera reform event. Liu was in charge of the structure of the concerto, as well as preparing required governmental reports along with Yin.<sup>119</sup>

Shi Shucheng and Xu Peixing joined the group earlier than Liu Zhuang, yet according to Chu Wanghua, they did not participate in the actual writing of the concerto. Xu was Yin's student at the time and was assigned to the Central Symphony Orchestra as a piano player. Shi Shucheng was another soloist for the concerto. The concerto was premiered in 1970, with Yin Cheng as the soloist and Li Delun conducting the Central Symphony Orchestra.

### The Yellow River Piano Concerto

#### Tonality

The Chinese five-note system names the five notes as: *gong*, *shang*, *jue*, *zhi*, and *yu*. According to *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, these five notes correspond with do, re, mi, sol, and la in tonic solmization.<sup>120</sup> A Chinese pentatonic scale with C as *gong* and the first note in the scale would be called a C-*gong* mode (see Ex. 25). Also, each of the twelve pitches within an octave can be the *gong* note.<sup>121</sup> For instance, a D-*gong* mode would include notes D, E, F-sharp, A, and B. On the other hand, each note within the mode can be the first note of the scale. For example, in example 25, if the scale starts with D as the first note of the scale, it becomes a D-*shang* mode that include notes

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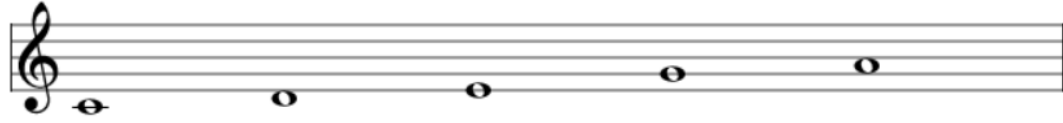
[People's Music] (May 1995): 6.

<sup>119</sup> Chu, "How did the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* emerge?" 6.

<sup>120</sup> Chen Yingshi, "Theory and Notation in China," in *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music Vol. 7: China, Japan and Korea*, eds. Robert C. Provine, Yosihiko Tokumaru, and J. Lawrence Witzleben (New York and London: Routledge, 2002), 115.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

D, E, G, A, and C. And if the scale starts with A as the first note of the scale, it becomes an A-yu mode that includes notes A, C, D, E, and G.



Example 25. C-gong mode

### The Structure of the Concerto

#### 1. 黄河船夫曲 [Yellow River Boatman's Song]

This movement consists of 113 measures, three themes, and one motive. The major part of this movement is written in D-gong mode.

Measure	Phrasing	Tempo	Key	Material
1 to 15	1+2+2+6+2+2	Allegro molto agitato	D-gong	<i>Haozi</i> <sup>122</sup> motive is introduced
16	1			Cadenza
17 to 50	2+2+2+2+2+2+6+2+2+2+2+2+4		D-gong	Theme 1
51 to 74	4+4+4+4+4+4		B-yu, E-yu, D-gong	Theme 2
75 to 82	2+2+1+1+2		D-gong	<i>Haozi</i> motive
83	1			Cadenza
84 to 92	4+4		D-gong	Theme 3
93 to 113	1+2+4+4+2+4+2+2		D-gong	<i>Haozi</i> motive

Figure 5. Structure of “Yellow River Boatman’s Song”

The *haozi* motive is presented in the beginning of the movement. It is a descending major second in the opening of measure 2 (see Ex. 26, the *haozi* motive is in the right hand of the second piano).

<sup>122</sup> *Haozi* literally means “Signal” in Chinese, it is often sung during laboring by workers and farmers. A *haozi* often includes limited pitches and is very rhythmic.



Example 26. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 1, mm. 1-3<sup>123</sup>

Theme 1 first appears in measure 17 (see Ex. 27). The interval of a major second is prominent in theme 1. Measure 17 includes notes D and E and measure 18 includes note A and B, forming two major seconds. Theme 1 shares the same music character with the *haozi* motive, being very rhythmic and only containing four notes.



Example 27. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 1, mm. 17-20

Theme 2 first appears in measure 51 (see Ex. 28). It is the only place in the movement where the tonality moves away from the D-gong mode, though B-yu mode shares all the notes with D-gong mode.<sup>124</sup> Theme 2 is repeated once in E-yu mode, and then returns to D-gong mode. Theme 2 also has one major second, as measures 51 to 54 include the notes D and E in the top voice of the soloist's right hand. In 2014, Wu Jiangjun and Wang Jin wrote an article analyzing the form of the concerto. They claimed that all three themes in this movement are developed from the *haozi* motive.<sup>125</sup>

<sup>123</sup> Yin Chengzong, Chu Wanghua, Liu Zhuang, Sheng Lihong, Shi Shucheng, and Xu Peixing, *黄河钢琴协奏曲* [Yellow River Piano Concerto] (Beijing, China: People's Music Publishing House), 1

<sup>124</sup> D-gong mode includes note D, E, F-sharp, A, and B. B-yu mode includes note B, D, E, F-sharp, and A.

<sup>125</sup> Wu Jiajun and Jin Wang, "论钢琴协奏曲《黄河》结构衍生与特征" [The structural derivation and characteristics



Example 28. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 1, mm. 51-5

Theme 3 is a lyrical theme (see Ex. 29). The folksong quality of the theme is in contrast with the *haozi* motive and the other two themes. The use of an ascending and descending major second in the top voice of the soloist's right hand in the theme indicates its connection with the *haozi* motive, but it seems forced to claim it is developed from the motive.



Example 29. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 1, mm. 88-9

The key design and the use of music materials in this movement suggest that it is not in sonata form. Chen Shing-Lih, in her doctoral dissertation from 1996, suggests that this movement resembles the traditional Chinese sequence of *qi* (opening), *cheng* (inheriting), *zhuan* (turning), and *he* (closing).<sup>126</sup> This concept was originally used by Chinese poets in their writing and then used as an artistic concept by Chinese artists. However, Chen in her own analysis did not follow this sequence, as she divides the movement into seven

of piano concerto *Huanghe*], *乐府新声：沈阳音乐学院学报* [The New Voice of Yue-Fu: The Academic Periodical Of Shenyang Conservatory Of Music] (Winter 2014): 72.

<sup>126</sup> Chen, "The Yellow River Piano Concerto," 44.

sections.<sup>127</sup> As pointed out earlier, Wu and Wang made the connection between the *haozi* motive and the other three themes. They divide the movement into seven parts and claim that this movement is in a rondo form (ABACADA).<sup>128</sup> I think Chen's observation on the sequence is correct. Measures 1 to 16 form the opening of the movement. The *haozi* motive is the core element in this section. Measures 17 to 83 make up the inheriting section, since both themes from this section are connected with the *haozi* motive. Measures 84 to 92 comprise the turning section, which is in contrast with previous and following passage. Measures 93 to 113 serve as the closing section. The two cadenzas in this movement are placed between sections as transitions.

## 2. 黄河颂 [Ode to the Yellow River]

This movement consists of 72 measures and is written in B-flat-gong mode. It is a transcription of the original second movement of the cantata (see Ex. 30) with some modification. The original movement of the cantata includes five verses of text. Example 30 presents the vocal line extracted from the *Yellow River Cantata*.

Measure	Phrasing	Tempo	Key	Verse of the lyric	Material
1 to 15	4+6+5	Adagio maestoso	B-flat- gong	1	Measures 5 to 31 of the song modified and played by the orchestra
16 to 34	4+6+4+4			1	Measures 5 to 31 of the song played by the solo piano
35 to 48	4+4+6	Piu mosso		2	Measures 39 to 55 of the song played by the solo piano

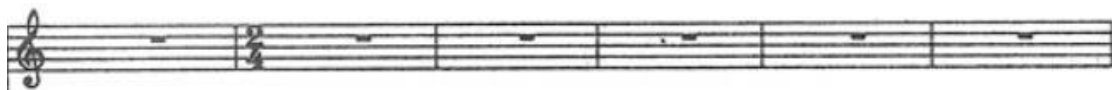
<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>128</sup> Wu and Jin, "The structural derivation and characteristics of piano concerto *Huanghe*," 72.

49 to 58	5+5			Part of 4	Measures 72 to 85 of the song modified played by the solo piano
59 to 65	3+3			5	Measures 85 to 92 of the song played by the solo piano
66 to 72	7				Newly composed Coda played by the orchestra

Figure 6. Structure of “Ode to the Yellow River”

The image shows a musical score for the song "Ode to the Yellow River". It consists of six staves of music in a single system, all written in treble clef. The lyrics are in Chinese and are placed below the notes. The first staff is a whole rest. The second staff begins with the lyrics "我 站 在 高 山 之 巅, 望 黄 河 滚". The third staff continues with "滚, 奔 向 东 南, 金 涛 澎". The fourth staff has "湃, 掀 起 万 丈 狂 澜, 浊 流". The fifth staff reads "婉 转, 结 成 九 曲 连 环, 从 昆 仑 山". The sixth and final staff concludes with "下, 奔 向 黄 海 之 边, 把 中 原 大 地 劈 成".





臂膀，我们民族的伟大精神，将要在你的哺育下发扬滋

长，我们祖国的英雄儿女，将要学习你的榜样，像你

一样的伟大坚强，像你一样地伟大坚

强!

Example 30. Xiang Xinghai, “Ode to the Yellow River”, vocal melody<sup>129</sup>

Chen wrote, “... the ternary form frequently found in the slow movements of Western piano concertos was not used in this piece.”<sup>130</sup> Chen’s analysis of this movement claims that measures 1 to 15 is the theme of the movement, and the following parts are development of it. Chen ignored the fact that the structure of this movement is close to the structure of the original song from the cantata. Chen believes that measures 59 to 65 is the coda, and the newly composed measures 66 to 72 is a postlude.

I think that, with its connection to the original movement from the cantata, this movement is through-composed. Examples 31 to 34 show the beginning of each section of the concerto movement, along with their corresponding measures in the original cantata. Example 31a shows the beginning of the vocal melody. Example 31b shows the beginning of the concerto movement, and the vocal melody is played in the right hand of

<sup>129</sup> Xian Xinghai, *黄河大合唱* [Yellow River Cantata] (Beijing, China: People’s Music Publishing House, 1978), 15-21. Accessed February 26, 2018. <http://www.qupu123.com/minge/sanzi/p100.html>.

<sup>130</sup> Chen, “The Yellow River Piano Concerto,” 51.

the second piano. Example 32a shows the vocal melody at the beginning of the second verse of the lyrics. Example 32b shows the corresponding measures in the concerto movement, and the vocal melody is played in the right hand of the solo piano. Example 33a shows the vocal melody at the beginning of the fourth verse of the lyrics. Example 33b shows the corresponding measures and the vocal melody is played in the right hand of the solo piano. Example 34a shows the vocal melody at the beginning of the fifth verse of the lyrics. Example 34b shows the corresponding measures and the vocal melody is played in both hands of the solo piano. Example 35 is the newly composed coda. These examples show the close connection between the structure of the original song and the structure of this movement.



Example 31a. Xiang Xinghai, "Ode to the Yellow River", vocal melody, mm. 4-7



Example 31b. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 2, mm. 1-4



Example 32a. Xiang Xinghai, "Ode to the Yellow River", vocal melody, mm. 38-43



Example 32b. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 2, mm. 34-6



Example 33a. Xiang Xinghai, “Ode to the Yellow River”, vocal melody, mm. 71-4



Example 33b. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 2, mm. 48-50



Example 34a. Xiang Xinghai, “Ode to the Yellow River”, vocal melody, mm. 86-9



Example 34b. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 2, mm. 60-2



Example 35. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 2, mm. 66-72

### 3. 黄河愤 [Wrath of the Yellow River]

This movement has 158 measures. Music materials used in this movement come from two movements of the cantata: “黄水谣 [Yellow River Ballad]” and “黄河怨 [Yellow River Hatred]”. This movement includes all the music material from “Yellow River Ballad” along with its ABA form, and before the return of the A section, the composers added in music from “Yellow River Hatred.”

Measure	Phrasing	Tempo	Key	Material
1 to 3	2+1	Andantino grazioso	E-flat-gong	Introduction
4 to 33	6+4+4+2+2+4+4+4			Section 1 played by the solo piano
34 to 55	2+2+4+4+4+6			Section 1 played by the orchestra
56 to 65	1+3+3+3	Patetico	C-yu, E- flat-gong	Section 2 played by the solo piano

66 to 74	3+3+3		C-yu, E-flat-gong	Section 2 played by the solo piano in different texture
75 to 83	2+2+5		E-flat-gong, G-sharp-yu	Transition passage
84 to 136	7+3+4+6+4+4+5+4+5+4+4+3	Agitato	G-sharp-yu, B-flat-yu, D-flat-gong	Section 3 played by the solo piano
137 to 158	8+6+8	Allargando	E-flat-gong	Section 1 played by the orchestra

Figure 7. Structure of “Wrath of the Yellow River”

Section 1 first appears in measure 4 (see Ex. 36) and is from “黄水谣 [Yellow River Ballad].” The original song is in an ABA form, and section 1 is the A section of the song. This section possesses a folksong quality and regular four-measure phrases, indicating a peaceful character.



Example 36. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 3, mm. 3-6

Section 2 first appears in measure 56 (see Ex. 37) and is from the B section of “Yellow River Ballad.” This section is in contrast with the previous one. Its mode changes from E-flat-gong to C-yu. Yu mode often carries a minor quality with a minor third created between yu and gong. In this section the minor third is created between yu

(C) and gong (E-flat). This mode, along with dense chords and fast running sixteenth notes, creates an unstable and dark character.



Example 37. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 3, mm. 56-8

Music material in section 3 comes from “黄河怨 [Yellow River Hatred].” The music moves to G-sharp-yu, a very distant key from E-flat gong.<sup>131</sup> The music here includes a cadenza-like section from measures 84 to 107 (see Ex. 38) and moves to B-flat-yu mode. From measures 108 to 136 (see Ex. 39) the music is in D-flat-gong mode. The rapidly changing tonality and the use of the yu mode indicate a dark and agitated character.



Example 38. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 3, mm. 84-6

<sup>131</sup> The key signature of E-flat gong is three flats, and the key signature of G-sharp-yu is five sharps.



Example 39. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 3, mm. 108-112

Chen identified this movement as an ABCA form with a prelude.<sup>132</sup> However, her division of section B goes from measures 56 to 93. The music material used from measures 84 to 93 no longer belongs to “Yellow River Ballad” but “Yellow River Hatred” and should not be put in that section.

Wu and Wang claim that this movement follows the sequence of *qi* (opening), *cheng* (inheriting), *zhuan* (turning), *he* (closing). They analyze this movement as follows: measures 1 to 3 – prelude; measures 4 to 55 - opening section; measures 56 to 83 - inheriting section; measures 84 to 136 - turning section; and measures 137 to 158 - ending section.<sup>133</sup> The issue with this approach is that the music in the inheriting section is from the B section of “Yellow River Ballad” which is in contrast with the previous section, the A section of “Yellow River Ballad.”

In my opinion, the form of the movement is an ABCA with a brief introduction. The introduction is from measures 1 to 3. The A section includes measures 4 to 55 and contains the A section of “Yellow River Ballad.” The B section consists of measures 56 to 83, using the B section of “Yellow River Ballad.” Measures 84 to 136 comprise the C section and uses music from “Yellow River Hatred.” Finally, the A section returns at the end in measures 137 to 158.

<sup>132</sup> Chen, “The Yellow River Piano Concerto,” 59.

<sup>133</sup> Wu and Jin, “The structural derivation and characteristics of piano concerto *Huanghe*,” 73.

4. 保卫黄河 [Defend the Yellow River]

The music in this movement is mainly from the seventh movement “Defend the Yellow River” of the original cantata and is in the form of a theme and variations. Other music in this movement includes the opening of “Roar! Yellow River,” “East is Red” (a song praising Mao Zedong), and part of “L'Internationale.”

Measure	Phrasing	Tempo	Key	Material
1 to 8	3+4+1	Allegro	C-gong, D-gong, B-gong	Opening of “Roar! Yellow River”, “East is Red”, Cadenza
9 to 18	4+2+4	Presto	A-gong	Transition
19 to 49	8+4+5+5+2+2+1+4			Theme
50 to 71	8+4+5+5			Var. 1
72 to 93	8+4+5+5			Var. 2
94 to 115	8+4+5+5			Var. 3
116 to 132	3+2+4+4+4		A-gong, D-gong	Transition
133 to 163	8+4+5+5+2+2+1+4	Marziale	D-gong	Var. 4
164 to 180	3+2+2+10		D-gong, B-flat- gong	Transition
181 to 196	4+6+6		B-flat- gong	Var. 5



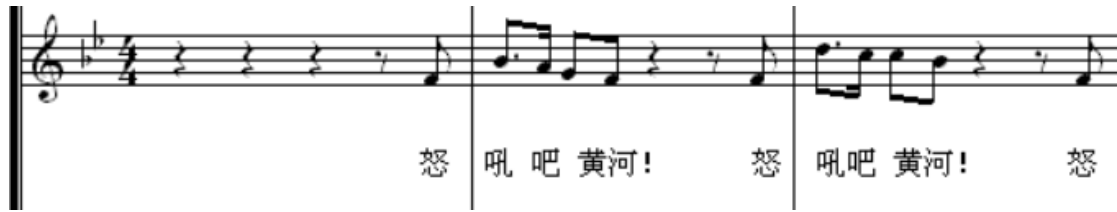
197 to 216	4+4+4+4+4		C-gong	Var. 6
217 to 238	8+4+5+5		F-gong	Var. 7
239 to 262	2+2+4+2+2+2+2+4+4		F-gong, D-yu, G- flat-gong	Transition
263 to 270	2+3+3		A-flat- gong, F- gong	Var. 8
271 to 302	8+4+4+2+2+1+1+1+3+6		B-flat- gong, E- flat- gong, D- gong	Cadenza
303 to 326	2+2+4+8+1+7	Molto meno mosso	D-gong	“East is Red”
327 to 360	2+8+8+8+8	Presto	D-gong	Fragment of theme
361 to 366	6		D major	“L’Internationale”
367 to 381	10+5		D-gong	Coda

Figure 8. Structure of “Defend the Yellow River”

This movement is in a theme and variation form. The opening three measures of the movement (see Ex. 40) come from the first three measures of “Roar! Yellow River” of the original cantata (see Ex. 41).



Example 40. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 4, mm. 1-3



Example 41. Xian Xinghai, “Roar! Yellow River” from *Yellow River Cantata*, mm. 1-3<sup>134</sup>

The theme first appears in measure 19 (see Ex. 42). The use of gong (A), jue (C-sharp), and zhi (E) in A-gong mode creates a major triad, and along with the dotted rhythm and duple meter, this theme is a march. The composers did not use the word “variation” in the movement. However, variation principles are applied, as the main theme is restated eight times with different keys, textures, and rhythms.



Example 42. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 4, mm. 19-28

<sup>134</sup> Xian, *Yellow River Cantata*, 55.

Chen's dissertation from 1996 analyzed this movement as a theme and variation.<sup>135</sup> Wu and Wang in their joint article from 2014, however, pointed out that the variations are written in classical sonata form.<sup>136</sup> According to Wu and Wang, the theme and the first three variations are written in A-gong mode and only minor changes in texture occur in these variations. Measures 19 to 132 contain the exposition of the movement. The rapid change of key and texture mark variations 4 to 7, measures 133 to 302, as the development. The theme comes back in measure 327 in D-gong mode, and measures 327 to 360 serve as the recapitulation. One of the main principles of classical sonata form is that the movement should conclude in the same key in which it began. In this case, the movement starts in A-gong mode but does not end in A-gong mode; rather, the movement ends in D-gong mode. Wu and Wang did not offer an explanation for this in their article.

To find a better way to explain this issue, one needs to look at the keys of all four movements. The first movement is written in D-gong mode. The second movement is in B-flat-gong mode, a remote key from D-gong mode. The third movement starts and ends in E-flat-gong mode, a related key of B-flat-gong mode. The fourth movement starts in A-gong mode, the dominant key of D-gong, and ends in D-gong. The return of D-gong mode is problematic within the fourth movement but fits the concerto in a macro way.

Though named as a piano concerto, the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* does not follow the Western standard of the genre. It includes four movements, and the first movement is not written in sonata form. However, according to Chu Wanghua, the structure of the first movement was originally written in sonata form:

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<sup>135</sup> Chen, "The Yellow River Piano Concerto," 75.

<sup>136</sup> Wu and Jin, "The structural derivation and characteristics of piano concerto *Huanghe*," 74.

In the early summer of 1969, the first draft of *Yellow River Piano Concerto* was completed, based on Western traditional piano concertos. The first movement was written in sonata form (with the first theme from “Yellow River Boatman’s Song” and the second theme from “Ode to the Yellow River.” The themes are contrasted and developed, then reappear in the recapitulation). For the first trial of the draft, Li Delun, Yan Liangkun (conductor of the concerto), Du Mingxin, and the first chairs of Central Symphony Orchestra were invited. Yin Chengzong was the soloist and Chu Wanghua was on the second piano (the orchestra). After the trial performance, opinions were given, mostly in agreement. Li Delun thought it was a “foreign format” to compose the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* in sonata form. It might not be accepted by common people in China. He thought that there were some issues with our composition idea, and we should “smash” the “foreign format” and reconsider the structure of the concerto.<sup>137</sup>

Mao’s idea that music should serve the common people of China was exaggerated and overemphasized during the Cultural Revolution. Western music form at the time was seen as a capitalist representation that should not be used in music by Chinese composers. The form of the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* is a compromise between the composers and the political pressure they faced.

### Political Message

In the fourth movement of the concerto, two songs outside the original cantata are used: “东方红 [East is Red]” and “国际歌 [L’Internationale].” According to Chu Wanghua, these songs carry a political message and were added under the direct command of Jiang Qing.<sup>138</sup> Jiang believed the use of these two songs would “emphasize the righteousness of the thought of Mao Zedong and show the will to push the world’s revolution to the end.”<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Chu, “How did the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* emerge?,” 6. The original text is copied here: 到了1969年初夏,《黄河》协奏曲完成了第一稿。这一稿,以西洋古典钢琴协奏曲的模式作为依据,第一乐章的曲式结构是《奏鸣曲式》(主部主题为《黄河船夫曲》,副部主题为《黄河颂》,二者对比兼展开、再现。)第一稿试奏时,请来了李德伦、严良堃(《黄河大合唱》的权威指挥家)、杜鸣心和中央乐团交响乐队各声部长共十余人。由殷承宗担任钢琴独奏,储望华担任第二钢琴(即乐队部分)协奏。众人听后纷纷发表意见,首肯者颇多。李德伦发表意见,认为沿袭“奏鸣曲式”来写《黄河》,是一种“洋框框”,或不能为中国老百姓所接受。他认为我们创作思想存在着问题。应该“砸烂”“洋框框”,重新考虑协奏曲的构思体裁。

<sup>138</sup> Chu, “How did the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* emerge?,” 7.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 8.

1. “东方红 [East is Red]”

“East is Red” (see Ex. 43) originally was a folksong from Shanxi province named *Baimadiao*. During World War II, the lyric was re-written to praise Mao Zedong as the rising sun from the east and the savior of Chinese people. During the Cultural Revolution, the cult of Mao reached its peak. The first measure of “East is Red” is used in the opening of the movement (see Ex. 44, measure 4), and the whole song is played with grandioso chords towards the ending of the fourth movement (see Ex. 45).

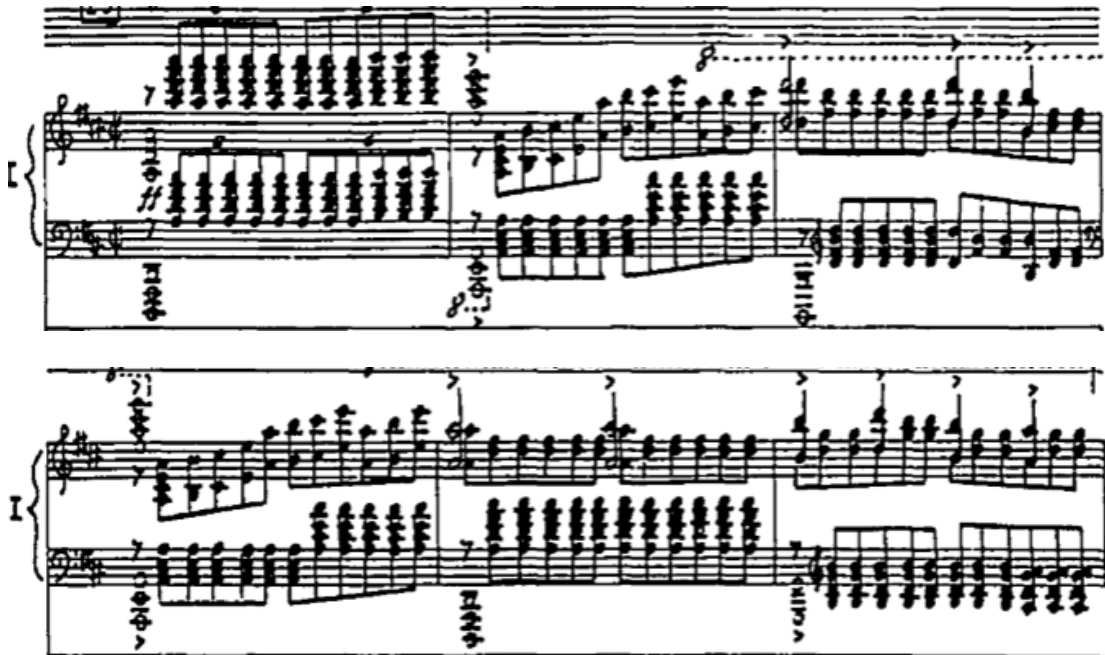


Example 43. “East is Red”<sup>140</sup>



Example 44. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 4, mm. 4-8

<sup>140</sup> Chen, “The Yellow River Piano Concerto,” 39.



Example 45. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 4, mm. 303-8

2. “国际歌 [L'Internationale]”

“L'Internationale” is a left-wing anthem (see Ex. 46). The original French lyric was written by Eugène Pottier in 1871, and in 1888 Pierre Degeyter put music to it. Qu Qiubai (瞿秋白 1899-1935), one of the early leaders of the Communist Party of China, translated the song into Chinese and introduced it to China. Measures 57 to 64 of “L'Internationale” are found in measures 361 to 367 of the fourth movement of the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* and are played by the orchestra (see Ex. 47).

Marcia. (♩ = 104)

1. De-bout! les damnés de la ter - re! De-bout! les forçats de la faim! La rai - son  
起来, 饥寒交迫的奴 隶, 起来, 全世界受苦的人! 满腔的

10 tonne en son cra - të - re C'est l'é - rup - tion de la fin Du pas - sé faisons ta - ble ra -  
热血已经沸 腾, 要为 真理而 斗 争! 旧世 界 打个落花 流

20 se Foule es - clave, de - bout, de - bout! Le mon - de va chan - ger de ba - se Nous ne som - mes rien,  
水, 奴 隶们 起 来起 来! 不要 说 我们 一 无 所 有, 我 们 要 做 天

30 **Coro.** soy - ons tout! C'est la lut - te fi - na - le Groupons - nous, et de - main L'In -  
下 的 主 人! 这 是 最 后 的 斗 争, 团 结 起 来 到 明 天, 英

41 ter - na - tio - na - le Se - ra le genre hu - main! C'est la lut - te fi - na - le Groupons -  
特 纳 雄 耐 尔 就 一 定 要 实 现, 这 是 最 后 的 斗 争, 团 结 起

53 nous, et de - main L'In - ter - na - tio - na - le Se - ra le genre hu - main!  
来 到 明 天, 英 特 纳 雄 耐 尔 就 一 定 要 实 现.

Example 46. "L'Internationale"<sup>141</sup>

The image shows two systems of piano music. The first system consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a grand staff bracket. The second system also consists of two staves with a grand staff bracket. The music features complex rhythmic patterns and dynamic markings.

Example 47. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 4, mm. 361-8

<sup>141</sup> Pierre Degenyter, *L'Internationale* International Music Scores Library Project/Petrucci Music Library: Free Public Domain Sheet Music. Accessed February 19, 2018. <http://ks.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/1/17/IMSLP510691-PMLP827608-Pierre-de-Geyter-----L-Internationale----.pdf>

After the Cultural Revolution, Jiang Qing was arrested and put in prison. There were some thoughts of removing her influence on the concerto.<sup>142</sup> Shi Shucheng, another member of the composition group, revised the concerto. According to Shi, in 1987 the Central Symphony Orchestra decided to revise the concerto, since Yin Chengzong, Chu Wanghua, and Xu Peixing were no longer in China. The conductor of the orchestra Li Delun gathered Shi, Liu Zhuang, and Sheng Lihong for the revision of the concerto. Sheng Lihong was retired and only offered occasional suggestions. During the working process, Liu Zhuang also moved out of China and Shi Shucheng completed the revision himself. In his version, Shi changed the orchestration and the title of the third movement from “Wrath of the Yellow River” to “Yellow River Ballad.” The biggest change was that Shi removed “L’Internationale” and “East is Red” from the fourth movement and replaced “East is Red” with the slow section from the first movement.<sup>143</sup> Shi’s revision of the concerto caused a long argument concerning the copyright of the *Yellow River Piano Concerto*. The argument was between Yin Chengzong, who insisted that “L’Internationale” and “East is Red” should remain part of the composition, Shi Shucheng, who claimed his revision should also be treated as part of the composition, and the Central Symphony Orchestra, which claimed they owned the copyright since the concerto was published as a group composition of the orchestra. The Central Symphony Orchestra disbanded and regrouped in 1996, and this copyright issue is still unresolved today. Both Yin and Shi’s version of the concerto are played today.

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<sup>142</sup> Shi Shucheng, “钢琴协奏曲《黄河》的创作及修改” [The composition and revision of the *Yellow River Piano Concerto*], *音乐爱好者* [Music Lover] (May 1998): 77.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.



## Pianistic Writing

In the composition group, Yin Chengzong and Chu Wanghua were in charge of writing the solo piano part. The piano writing in the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* reflects influences from Western music, especially nineteenth-century romanticism. In Chen's dissertation, she also points out that the piano writing in the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* shares many similarities with music of Chopin and Liszt.<sup>144</sup> Chu admitted in 1995 that in the composition process, they referred to Western composers:

Because every member of the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* composition group received Western traditional music training, the cooperation would be a certain hybrid of music. In the composition process, we chose works of Rachmaninoff, Liszt, Tchaikovsky, Ravel and other composers to listen and refer to. There were many parts in the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* that preserved hints of imitation, and they caused Western criticism of "hodgepodge," and some music critics in China at the end of the seventies [1970s] claimed that the concerto was a plagiarized work. Members [of the composition group] worried if we "borrowed" too much. Yin always said: this is the first proletarian piano concerto. Western piano concertos have existed for over one hundred years. It would be impossible for us to not use them as references.<sup>145</sup>

There are four clear references to Western compositions in the piano writing. The first one is from measures 91 to 93 in the third movement (see Ex. 48). The texture here is very similar to Chopin's Ballade No. 4, Op. 52 from measures 191 to 194 (see Ex. 49).

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<sup>144</sup> Chen, "The Yellow River Piano Concerto," 52.

<sup>145</sup> Chu, "How Did the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* emerge?," 7. The original text is copied here: 由于《黄河》创作组每一位成员, 受的都是西洋古典传统音乐教育, 多人的合作, 便可能是对某一种艺术混合体的认同。在写作过程中, 我们选择了拉赫玛尼诺夫、李斯特、柴可夫斯基、拉威尔等人的作品, 细心聆听、潜心借鉴。在《黄河》钢琴协奏曲中, 确有不少部分有明显的模仿痕迹— 这造成日后西方评论家批评的“大杂烩”, 以及七十年代末有一些国内音乐评论家发难说, 《黄河》有“抄袭”之嫌的授柄— 大家都有些担心是不是“拿来”得太多。殷总是说: “无产阶级钢琴协奏曲, 这才是第一部, 西方的钢琴协奏曲搞了一百多年了, 我们当然不可能不去借鉴继承。”



Example 48. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 3, mm. 90-3



Example 49. Frederic Chopin, *Ballade No. 4*, Op. 52, mm. 191-4<sup>146</sup>

The second reference is found in measures 19 to 24 of the fourth movement (see Ex. 50). Here the descending octave in the soloist's left hand is similar to the B section of Chopin's *Polonaise in A-flat Major*, Op. 53 (see Ex. 51).

<sup>146</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Ballade No.4*, Op.52, in *Friedrich Chopin's Werke. Band I*, ed. Ernst Rudorff (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, n.d.): 39. International Music Scores Library Project/Petrucchi Music Library: Free Public Domain Sheet Music. Accessed February 27, 2018. [http://ks.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/0/0d/IMSLP113142-PMLP01649-FChopin\\_Ballade\\_No.4\\_Op.52\\_BHBand1.pdf](http://ks.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/0/0d/IMSLP113142-PMLP01649-FChopin_Ballade_No.4_Op.52_BHBand1.pdf).



Example 50. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 4, mm. 19-28



Example 51. Frederic Chopin, Polonaise in A-flat major, Op. 53, mm. 86-88<sup>147</sup>

The third reference is from measures 263 to 270 in the fourth movement (see Ex. 52). Here the texture with the left hand playing the melody, then both hands moving to arpeggios, recalls a similar passage in Liszt's Sonata in B Minor, measures 556 to 568 (see Ex. 53).

<sup>147</sup> Frederic Chopin, Polonaise in A-flat major, Op.53, in *Complete Works for the Piano, Vol.3*, ed. Carl Mikuli (New York: G. Schirmer, 1894), 53. International Music Scores Library Project/Petrucci Music Library: Free Public Domain Sheet Music. Accessed February 27, 2018. [http://ks.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/9/90/IMSLP73123-PMLP02334-Chopin\\_Polonaises\\_Schirmer\\_Mikuli\\_Op\\_53\\_filter.pdf](http://ks.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/9/90/IMSLP73123-PMLP02334-Chopin_Polonaises_Schirmer_Mikuli_Op_53_filter.pdf).

Example 52. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 4, mm. 261-270

Example 53. Franz Liszt. *Sonata in B Minor*, S. 178, mm. 560-569<sup>148</sup>

<sup>148</sup> Franz Liszt, *Sonata in B Minor*, in *Sochineniia dlia fortepiano, Vol. 1*, ed. Yakov Milstein (Moscow: Muzgiz), 123. International Music Scores Library Project/Petrucci Music Library: Free Public Domain Sheet Music. Accessed February 27, 2018. [http://ks.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/a/a5/IMSLP423343-PMLP14018-S.178\\_-](http://ks.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/a/a5/IMSLP423343-PMLP14018-S.178_-)

The fourth reference is from measures 320 to 326 (see Ex. 54). The wide leaps in both hands of the soloist along with the thick chordal texture is similar to Mussorgsky's "The Great Gate of Kiev" from measures 115 to 120 (see Ex. 55).

Example 54. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 4, mm. 318-326

Example 55. Mussorgsky, *The Great Gate of Kiev*, mm. 115-120<sup>149</sup>

[Piano\\_Sonata\\_in\\_B\\_minor\\_\(1960\\_Muzgiz,\\_Milstein\).pdf](#)

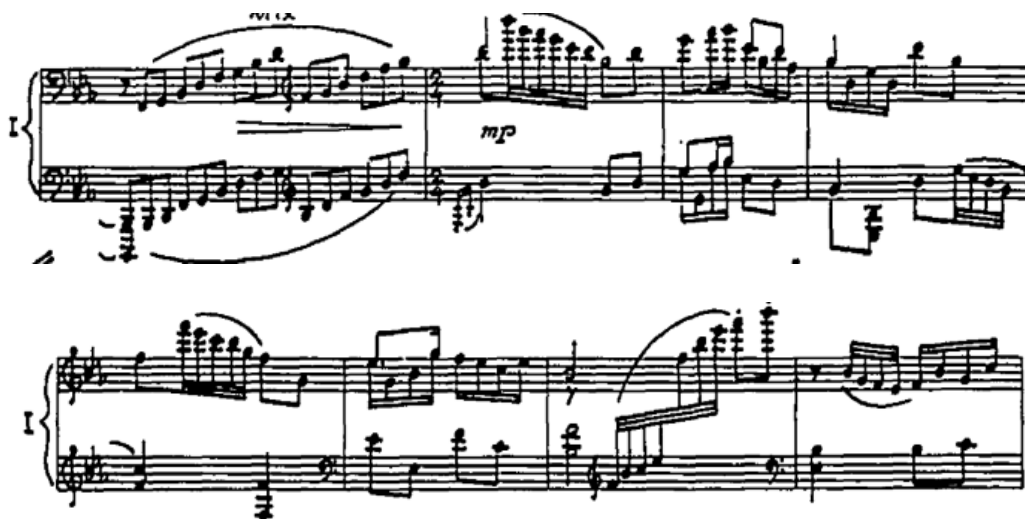
<sup>149</sup> Modest Mussorgsky, "The Great Gate of Kiev," from *Pictures at an Exhibition*, ed. Pavel Lamm (Moscow: Muzgiz, 1939. Reprint, New York: Dover Publications, 1990), 163. International Music Scores Library Project/Petrucci Music Library: Free Public Domain Sheet Music. Accessed February 26, 2018.

The pianistic writing of the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* includes references to Western piano music and the music of traditional Chinese instruments. Chu said:

At the end of 1969 the recording of the draft was sent to Jiang Qing. After listening to it Jiang sent for Yu Huiyong to “help” us. Yu came to the composition group once and gave some “ideas.” After that, we changed the accompaniment part from the “Yellow River Ballad” in the left hand of the solo piano from broken chords which is often used in traditional Western piano sonatas to imitate *guzheng*. We also added Chinese traditional instruments like bamboo flute and *pipa* to strengthen the nationalism and the Chinese character of the concerto.<sup>150</sup>

Chu is referring to measures 4 to 17 in the third movement (see Ex. 56). Here the texture of the solo piano imitates the *guzheng*, a traditional Chinese string instrument.

The thirty-second notes are imitating a sweep over the strings on a *guzheng*.



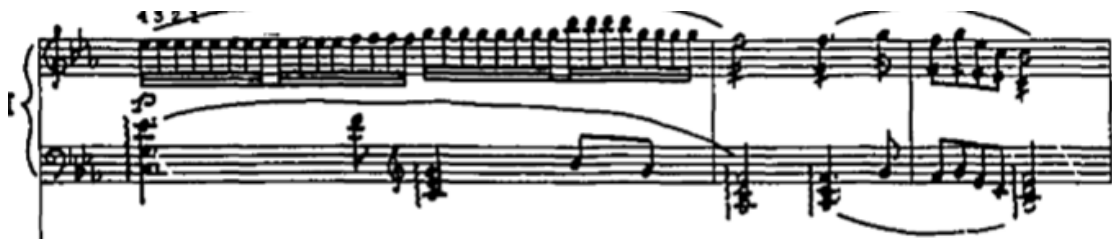
<http://ks.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/7/75/IMSLP41547-PMLP03722-Mussorgsky---Pictures-Of-An-Exhibition---Ed-Kalmus.pdf>

<sup>150</sup> Chu, “How Did the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* emerge?,” 7. The original text is copied here: 到了 1969 年底, 送审稿的录音交到了江青那里, 她听过录音之后, 指令于会泳来 “帮助” 我们。于会泳来过创作组一次, 出了一些 “点子”。之后, 我们将《黄水谣》钢琴部分的伴奏音型, 由原来的西欧古典钢琴奏鸣曲中惯用的左手分解和弦音型, 改写为双手模仿古筝的音型, 并在乐队中增设了竹笛、琵琶等中国民族乐器, 强化了民族风格, 增添了中国民族的特色。



Example 56. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 3, mm. 3-17

Another reference to a traditional Chinese instrument occurs in the third movement from measures 66 to 74 (see Ex. 57). Here the rapid repeated notes in the soloist's right hand are imitating rapid finger rotation on a *pipa*, a traditional Chinese string instrument.



Example 57. *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, movement 3, mm. 66-8

### Reception

The reception of the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* has varied over the decades. According to musicologist Pu Fang in 1999, Jiang Qing was involved in the compositional process of the concerto, and it was set as one of the models during the Cultural Revolution. Thus, all comments at the time would be positive since any negative criticism would not have been published publicly.<sup>151</sup> The most representative article that

<sup>151</sup> Pu Fang, “有关钢琴协奏曲《黄河》的史料述评” [Historical material concerning the piano concerto *Huanghe*], *中央音乐学院学报* [Journal of the Central Conservatory of Music] (Winter 1999): 70.

commented on the concerto in 1970 was from Ding Xuelei.<sup>152</sup> Ding claims that the concerto is praise for a proletarian hero, praise for the strong fighting spirit of China, praise for Chairman Mao's idea of the people's war. The *Yellow River Piano Concerto* makes a great breakthrough in structure, form, and piano technique. The concerto elevates the original cantata to a composition of communism and internationalism, a great instrumental work of Marxism, Leninism, and Maoism.<sup>153</sup> According to Pu, Ding's article puts too many political meanings in the writing of the concerto and evaluates the concerto completely based on Jiang Qing's political ideas during the Cultural Revolution.<sup>154</sup>

Comments from the Western world in the 1970s, however, were contrary to Ding's writing. In Kraus's book, he quoted Harold Schonberg's 1973 comments on the concerto as "... movie music. It is a rehash of Rachmaninoff, Khachaturian, late romanticism, bastardized Chinese music and Warner Brothers' climaxes."<sup>155</sup> In that article Harold Schonberg praised the pianistic technique of the soloist of the premier, Yin Chengzong, though Schonberg did not like the composition. He wrote that "The Yellow River Concerto, promptly nicknamed the "Yellow Fever" Concerto by the men in the orchestra [Philadelphia Orchestra], may be a piece of trash, but it is a damned hard workout for the soloist."<sup>156</sup>

After the Cultural Revolution, Yin Chengzong was under political review because of his position during the Cultural Revolution. As a representation of the dreadful ten years

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<sup>152</sup> According to Pu, Ding Xuelei was not a person, but a writing group in Shanghai under the control of Zhang Chunqiao from 1966.

<sup>153</sup> Pu, "Historical material concerning the piano concerto *Huanghe*," 74.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

<sup>155</sup> Kraus. *Pianos and Politics in China*, 148-149.

<sup>156</sup> Harold Schonberg, "Yin Spoke Only Chinese, Ormandy Only English," *New York Times* (October 14, 1973): 145.



of the Cultural Revolution, the concerto was no longer performed. Many chose to remain silent about the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* during 1970s, even though the political air was loosened. In Chen's dissertation she quoted Bi Xizhou's opinion from 1981 "... this concerto is not just a pure musical work. It is synonymous with that troublesome period for which these musicians hold such loathing. These musicians were crushed, so for them the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* became branded with the same indelible stamp. No wonder we are not willing to talk about this piece!"<sup>157</sup> In the 1980s, the concerto was revived and performed both inside and outside China. Many scholars started to reconsider the value of the concerto. In 1983, Wei Tingge states that the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* was an important composition during the Cultural Revolution, since it reached a new level of musical depth, scale of composition, and development of the instrument, with some drawbacks in the technique side.<sup>158</sup>

In 1989, Kraus gives his more objective comments on the concerto:

The 1970 concerto was flashy, sentimental, and patriotic, but to many Western listeners it sounded gaudy... But Yin did not write the *Yellow River Concerto* for Westerners; it was written for Chinese ears, where its notes reached two different audiences. First, for piano-playing sophisticates, the *Yellow River Concerto* "gave piano students and performers at least one thing to play, and for a period of two or three years, all anyone could hear coming from every piano in China, was the *Yellow River Concerto*." If the music did resemble Rachmaninoff and Khachaturian, this only contributed to the popularity of Yin's music in China, where the Russian musical imprint had been powerful. Second, for peasants and workers, the *Yellow River Concerto* was an accessible introduction to European music, in a patriotic and politically unimpeachable form, supported by the full might of the Chinese state. Untold millions of peasants watched a film of Yin playing his concerto; most had never before heard or seen a piano. This was a music education project of historically unprecedented scope.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Chen, "The Yellow River Piano Concerto," 80. Chen translated Bi's Chinese but did not offer original text.

<sup>158</sup> Wei Tingge, "我国钢琴音乐创作的发展 [The Development of Piano Music in Our Country]," *音乐研究* [Music Research] (Summer 1983): 42.

<sup>159</sup> Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China*, 149.

Among the composition group, only Chu Wanghua and Shi Shucheng wrote about the concerto. The other members, especially the leader of the group, Yin Chengzong who came up with the idea of writing a piano concerto based on the *Yellow River Cantata*, kept silent about the work.

Chen Shing-Lih in her 1996 doctoral dissertation, believes that the concerto is a strong statement of Chinese values. The contrasting views in its reception come from the political function of the concerto. She states that the original cantata offered main shaping forces to the concerto, the orchestration of the concerto lacks substance, and the combination of Western music and Chinese folk style reflects the values and needs of the Cultural Revolution. Chen claims that the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* is historically important in the Chinese piano repertoire and needs to be explored from new perspectives, not narrowed to its connection with the Cultural Revolution.<sup>160</sup>

Liu Ching-Chih finished his book *A Critical History of New Music in China*<sup>161</sup> in 1996. In this book he gave his opinion on the concerto as:

... basically a European-style orchestra (only the *zhudi* and the *pipa* being Chinese). The form of the concerto is also European. The piano part is decidedly Lisztian in style, being extremely flowery, if not quite poetic enough, and very appealing... Musically, the concerto is far less appealing than the *Huanghe dahechang* [Yellow River Cantata].<sup>162</sup>

In the twenty-first century, the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* has become more and more popular, with a new generation of active pianists performing it. Most of these pianists were born after the Cultural Revolution and during the economic reform, including Lang Lang (郎朗 1982- ), Chen Sa (陈萨 1979- ), Li Yundi (李云迪 1982- ),

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<sup>160</sup>Chen, "The Yellow River Piano Concerto," 80-83.

<sup>161</sup>This book's English translation was done by Caroline Mason in 2006.

<sup>162</sup>Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, 457-458.

and Wang Yuja (王羽佳 1987- ). However, the controversial reception still exists. In 2010, before the premiere of his own piano concerto, composer Wang Xilin (王西麟 1936- ) in his personal blog criticized the concerto as representative of the Cultural Revolution:

The Cultural Revolution ended thirty-four years ago, but there is no introspection on the culture of the Cultural Revolution. This is dangerous! The *Yellow River Concerto* that emerged in 1970, the climax of the Cultural Revolution, is representative of its culture, and it is still being played today. This is a shame for all Chinese music and Chinese culture...It [The *Yellow River Piano Concerto*] becomes a representative of aesthetics of the Cultural Revolution, thus some international friends say it was false music...In composition technique, since its music material came from a choral composition rather than original piano composition, it is an arrangement rather than a composition...for the past forty years, though some had criticized it privately, no authentic scholarship has been written about its harmful political purpose and its serious historical mistake.<sup>163</sup>

The reception of the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* ranges from Ding's full-scale praise during the Cultural Revolution to total silence during the 1970s after the Cultural Revolution. In the 1980s scholars started to look at this concerto as a music composition rather than as a work from the Cultural Revolution. Most scholars agree that though it has some drawbacks, the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* was a historically important work. As the economic reform continues, this concerto remains popular worldwide, though composer Wang Xilin, who experienced the dreadful ten years of the Cultural Revolution, claims that this concerto is the leftover evil of that time and should not be performed. On the other hand, Western scholarship lacks interest in this concerto. Most

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<sup>163</sup> Wang Xilin, “我为什么要写这部作品” [Why did I compose this work?] Accessed February 26, 2018. [http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog\\_93e305950101gc3x.html](http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_93e305950101gc3x.html). The original text is copied here: 文革结束已经 34 年了，但是对于文革文化却还没有反思。这是很危险的！产生于 1970 年文革高潮中的《黄钢协》就是文革文化的典型代表之一，而且至今仍在演奏。这是整个中国音乐的羞耻，也是中国文化的羞耻...它也成了文革文化的美学观念的集中代表。因此一些国际友人说它是虚假的音乐...在艺术技巧上，由于它的原型是声乐语言的合唱作品的改编而非钢琴作品的原创，它是改编而不是作曲...迄今 40 年来，虽然不断有人曾私下提出过批评，但是还从来没有过严肃的学术讨论指出其极为有害的政治目的和严重的历史局限和历史错误。

English scholarship on this concerto was written by Chinese students studying in the West.

The *Yellow River Piano Concerto* is a collection of complicated issues. It was written in a chaotic period in the history of the People's Republic of China; its fate was in many ways related to the Cultural Revolution. Although many of the ideas created during the Cultural Revolution died out at the end of this period, this concerto was not only revived, but became one of the best-known Chinese compositions. Many chose to play this concerto, but not discuss it. The *Yellow River Piano Concerto* will continue to be researched, as some of this composition is still a mystery.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### ZHAO XIAOSHENG'S PIANO CONCERTO NO. 1, "APHRODITE"

#### Biography

Zhao Xiaosheng (赵晓生 1945-) is a Chinese composer, pianist, and music educator. He graduated from the Shanghai Conservatory in 1967. Zhao's piano compositions before the 1980s were mostly transcriptions of Peking operas and folksongs. In 1979, the People's Republic of China established a formal diplomatic relationship with the United States. This relationship, along with China's economic reform, made it possible for many musicians in China to go abroad and study in the West. Zhao took advantage of this opportunity. From 1981 to 1984 he worked at the University of Missouri-Columbia as a visiting professor. His compositions in the 1980s reflected influences of modern Western music. After the 1980s, Zhao became interested in improvisatory music. He remained active as a concert pianist and music educator, giving solo concerts, master classes, and lectures around China.

#### Zhao's "Neoromanticbinism"

According to Zhao, his first piano concerto (1985) is an exploration of modern Chinese nationalism with "Neoromanticbinism."<sup>164</sup> Zhao created this word himself, the Chinese being "新浪漫主义合力论". "Neoromanticbinism," which means Neo-Romantic-Combinism, is a concept that Zhao created for explaining his compositions in

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<sup>164</sup> Fang Zhiwen, "希望在合力中升华——对赵晓生在《希望之神》中“合力论”的浅析 [Transcend in the united force: An analysis of the "combinism" theory in Zhao Xiaosheng's "*Aphrodite*]," 人民音乐 [People's Music] (November 1986): 19.

the 1980s. In general, this concept refers to a mixture of contrasting styles or ideas in one composition. Zhao wrote three articles from 1986 to 1987 to explain his theory. The main idea of “combinism” is to find a point of balance between these contrasting ideas. Zhao believes that neo-romanticism is the trend of the future. Music should return to expressing emotion, and music should have a center.<sup>165</sup>

In the first short article, Zhao claimed that there were two major shifts in the history of twentieth century music: the first from 1900 to 1940 and the second from 1945 to around 1970. The major trend during the second shift was the rebellion against tradition. Two contrasting representative styles of contemporary music were serialism, the total control of all musical elements, and chance music, which included no control in music. Both represent an anti-romantic style. However, the new techniques from these two shifts created a vast gap between composers and ordinary audiences. After the 1970s, many composers attempted to solve this issue, believing that music should return to the expression of emotions. Zhao stated that since so many new techniques and sound effects had been created, composers should combine these to create compositions that were new, yet acceptable to ordinary audiences. Composers should use “combinism” to achieve this goal.<sup>166</sup>

In his next article, Zhao stated that there were five sets of contrasting concepts that were important for the understanding of twentieth century music: emotion and sense; consonance and dissonance; centered and centerless; control and without control; nationalism and internationalism.

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<sup>165</sup> Zhao Xiaosheng, “新浪漫主义合力论” [Neoromanticcombinism], *中国音乐学* [Musicology in China] (Winter 1986): 38.

<sup>166</sup> Zhao Xiaosheng, “二十一世纪音乐与新浪漫主义崛起” [Music of the twenty-first century and the rise of neo-Romantics], *中国音乐学* [Musicology in China] (Fall 1986): 125-126.

Zhao believes that the first set of contrasting concepts, emotion and sense, are already combined in music. Baroque and Classical music focused on the perfection of forms and logic of music, while Romanticism focused on expressing emotions. Zhao believes that serialism was at the top of the “sense” side and ignored the emotional nature of music. Composers should look for a balance between sense and emotion.

Regarding the second set of contrasting concepts, consonance and dissonance, Zhao claims that they are relative concepts rather than absolute concepts, and they can only be heard in comparison with one another. With the increase of dissonance in twentieth century music, what many traditionally viewed as dissonance is now consonance. Zhao encourages composers to use dissonance as a tool, rather than as the purpose of a composition.

The third set of contrasting ideas are centered and centerless. Zhao states that before the twentieth century, Western music often exhibited tonality and was centered around a certain key. In the twentieth century, tonality was abandoned, and music became centerless. Zhao appreciates the positive side of atonal music, yet he believes that music should have a center, whether it is a pitch, an interval, or a combination of certain rhythmic patterns.

The fourth set of contrasting ideas are control and no control. In twentieth century music, these ideas are represented by serialism and chance music respectively. Zhao claims that music should be controlled, but serialism puts all musical elements under control, and it actually makes all serial music sound identical. On the other hand, music without control often lacks inner power and forming large organic structures can be

challenging. Zhao stated that music should be controlled, and chance music can be used as a contrast in certain sections.

The fifth set of contrasting ideas are nationalism and internationalism. Zhao states that there are four trends in this contrast. The first trend includes composers like Elgar, Copland, and Grieg who base their music on nationalism and combine some common elements of world music. Zhao's second trend includes such composers as Bartok and Shostakovich who do not directly apply nationalism in their music but who summarize national character in a higher level. Composers who draw inspiration from other cultures make up the third trend, while composers who abandon nationalism and focus on internationalism fall into the fourth trend.

In the third article, Zhao restates his idea of "combinism" and gives three pieces of advice for contemporary Chinese composers. First, the use of new compositional techniques does not equal a creative composition. Second, the reform of compositional techniques requires a traditional foundation. And third, serialism and total control of musical elements are not the ultimate purpose of music. At the end of the article, Zhao states that the concept of "combinism" in a way is a "counterpoint of style."<sup>167</sup>

Zhao's exploration represents many Chinese composers in the 1980s. Before that, due to political surroundings, the major parts of Chinese piano music were transcriptions or arrangements of folk songs were written in the nineteenth century nationalist style. China's economic reform enabled Chinese composers to go out and learn from the newest music in the Western world.

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<sup>167</sup> Zhao Xiaosheng, "合力论产生的原由及其内核" [The emergence of "combinism" and its core], *音乐研究* [Music Research] (February 1987): 24.



## Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”

### Basic Information

Zhao Xiaosheng’s Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite” was composed in 1985.<sup>168</sup> The woodwind section of this concerto includes one piccolo, two flutes, two oboes with the second one also on English horn, two B-flat clarinets, and two bassoons. The brass section includes four F horns, two B-flat trumpets, three trombones, and one tuba. The percussion section includes three timpani, triangle, bass drum, tambourine, two snare drums, tam-tam, piatti, castanets, *muyu*, *paigu*, wood block, campanella, and piatto sospeso. Besides the standard string section and a solo piano, this concerto also calls for celesta, glockenspiel, xylophone, and harp. This concerto consists of 833 measures and is shaped by four sections that should be played without pauses.

### Core Elements

The core elements of this concerto include three motives.

#### 1. Motive 1

This motive first appears in measures 1 to 2 (see Ex. 58) played by a solo trumpet and is the most important music unit of the concerto. This motive includes a major second and a minor third. The pitch collection of this motive is [025]; thus, with only three notes, this motive includes a major second and minor third, spanning the interval of a perfect fourth. This motive appears throughout the concerto, in its original form and transformations.

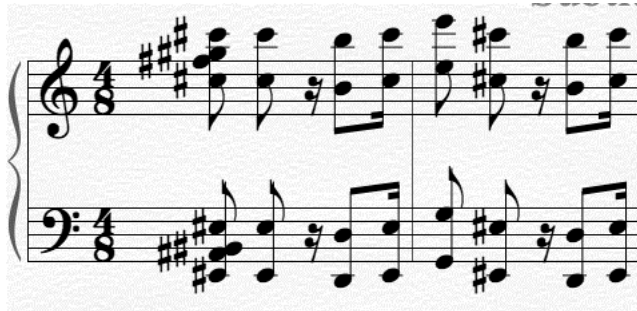
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<sup>168</sup> The full score of the concerto is published by Shanghai Music Publishing House in 2015.



Example 58. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, mm. 1-2<sup>169</sup>

In measures 173 and 174 (see Ex. 59), motive 1 is played in a different rhythm.



Example 59. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, mm. 173-4

In measure 617, another transformation of motive 1 appears in the solo piano part (see Ex. 60). The order of the notes is rearranged in this one.



Example 60. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, m. 617

In measure 677 (see Ex. 61), motive 1 appears in the top notes of the chord in the solo piano part. The order of the notes is also rearranged.



Example 61. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, m. 677

<sup>169</sup> Zhao Xiaosheng, “第一钢琴协奏曲 “希望之神” [Piano Concerto No.1 “Aphrodite”] (Shanghai, China: Shanghai Music Publishing House, 2015), 1.

Major themes of the concerto are developed from this motive. First, this motive is expanded to become theme 1 (see Ex. 62), the theme of the introduction. This theme includes all notes in a diatonic scale of D major, but the avoidance of using thirds in the expansion creates a sense of unsettledness in the tonality.



Example 62. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, mm. 1-6

Theme 2 first appears in measure 58 in the solo piano part (see Ex. 63). This theme is developed from motive 1 by changing the major second into a minor second and the major third into a perfect fourth. The directions of the intervals from motive 1 are kept. Theme 1 possesses a rhythmic figure of one eighth note followed by two sixteenth notes that become a primary figure in the first movement of the concerto.



Example 63. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, mm. 58-61

Theme 3 first appears in measure 262 with the solo English horn (see Ex. 64). This theme adds ornaments to theme 2. The rapid and uneven ornamentation indicates an expressive quality as in a slow movement of the music of Chopin.



Example 64. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, mm. 262-5

Theme 4 first appears in measure 409 (see Ex. 65). This theme is developed from motive 1 and adds repeated notes. Measure 409 includes note F, G, A-flat, and B-flat which forms a pitch collection of [0246]. Like [025], it includes intervals of a second, third, and fourth.



Example 65. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, mm. 409-413

Theme 5 first appears in m. 651 and is played by the solo bassoon (see Ex. 66). This theme is developed from motive 1 and the interval direction is inverted. Measures 651 to 652 includes an interval of a fifth, which is inverted from a fourth.



Example 66. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, mm. 651-3

## 2. Motive 2

Motive 2 first appears in measure 48 and consists of a tone row of seven notes (see Ex. 67). The first appearance of this motive includes notes C, C-sharp, D, F-sharp, G, G-sharp, and B. This collection of notes cannot fit into any existing scales and is an element of atonality. Each note in the row has the same note value. In this concerto Zhao often uses this motive as background.



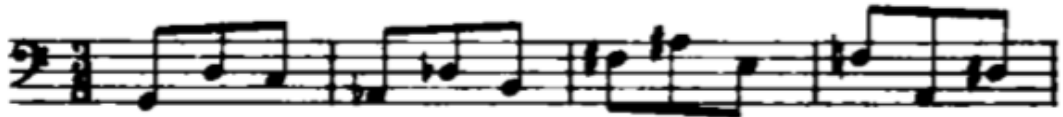
Example 67. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, mm. 48-9

Zhao changes the number of notes in the row occasionally. In measure 387 he reduces the number of notes in the row to four (see Ex. 68).



Example 68. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, mm. 387

From measures 705 to 708 this tone row is expanded into a twelve-tone row (see Ex. 69).



Example 69. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, mm. 705-8

### 3. Motive 3

Motive 3 first appears in measure 291 (see Ex. 70). The first appearance of the motive includes notes A, B and E, which forms a pitch collection of [027]. This motive only appears a few times in the concerto, often exhibiting a lyrical character.



Example 70. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, mm. 291-2

From measures 572 to 575 (see Ex. 71), the order of the notes is changed, but the pitch collection of [027] formed by B-flat, C, F indicates its connection with motive 3.



Example 71. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, mm. 572-5

### Form

Two articles have been written on this concerto thus far. Fang Zhiwen wrote a short article in 1986 to introduce the concerto to the public. In 2017 Yu Yue wrote another one discussing the form of the concerto. Yu Yue’s article is one page long and does not offer any musical examples. Both Fang and Yu propose the following analysis: The first and second movements can be interpreted as two themes in the exposition, the third movement is the development, and the fourth movement is the recapitulation. The score published by the Shanghai Music Publishing House in 2015 uses three *attacca* to divide the concerto into four movements.

Measure	Movement	Tempo	Structure according to Fang and Yu	Material
1 to 47	Introduction, cadenza	Andante	Exposition	Motive 1, theme 1
48 to 261	First movement	Allegro con brio		Motive 1, motive 2, theme 2
262 to 346	Second movement	Adagio espressivo		Theme 3, motive 3
347 to 608	Third movement	Allegro-Allegro molto	Development	Theme 4, fragment of theme 2, motive 2, motive 3
608 to 833	Fourth movement	Andante-Marcato	Recapitulation	Theme 5, motive 1, theme 1, motive 2, theme 2

Figure 9. Structure of Zhao Xiaosheng's Piano Concerto No. 1, "Aphrodite"

The concerto does not provide a tonal center. However, it does apply some principles of sonata form. The first and second movements include two contrasting thematic ideas (Theme 2 and Theme 3), which is usual in the exposition of a sonata form. The third movement uses fragments of materials presented in the previous sections and is unstable, which matches the character of a development. The fourth movement brings back the motives and themes in the exposition, forming a recapitulation. This recapitulation does not include music from the second movement, and according to Yu that is Zhao's innovation on sonata form.<sup>170</sup> In my opinion, it seems Fang and Yu forced this concerto into a type of sonata form, though Zhao applies some principles of sonata form in this composition.

<sup>170</sup> Yu Yue, "赵晓生钢琴协奏曲《希望之神》的结构形态探析" [Exploring the structure of Zhao Xiaosheng's piano concerto *Aphrodite*], *黄河之声* [The Sound of Huanghe] (May 2017): 71.

## Zhao's Application of His "Neoromanticism"

In his theory of "neoromanticism," Zhao states that composers should emphasize five sets of contrasting concepts: emotion and sense; consonance and dissonance; centered and centerless; control and without control; nationalism and internationalism. In this concerto, he presents his understanding of these concepts.

### 1. Emotion and sense

In Zhao's opinion, music is always a combination of emotion and sense. In part of the second movement (see Ex. 72), the music does not provide a tonal center, thus becoming a representation of modernism. On the other hand, Zhao applies characteristics that are often seen in romantic music such as long phrases, gradual crescendos, and grandioso chords in the solo piano part, almost referring to the piano writing found in early Scriabin (see Ex. 73). By doing this Zhao combines emotion (romanticism) and sense (modernism) together.



The image displays three staves of musical notation for piano. The first staff shows a complex harmonic structure with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) and a crescendo hairpin. The second staff features a grandioso chord in the right hand, marked with a dynamic of *mf* (mezzo-forte), and a long phrase in the left hand. The third staff shows a grandioso chord in the right hand, marked with a dynamic of *ff* (fortissimo), and a long phrase in the left hand. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings, illustrating the combination of emotion and sense in Zhao's music.





Example 72. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, mm. 311-326



Example 73. Alexander Scriabin, Sonata No. 4, Op. 30, mm. 148-151<sup>171</sup>

## 2. Consonance and dissonance

In this concerto Zhao applies three ways of combining tonal sections and atonal sections. First, certain melodic lines can be tonal, and Zhao uses polytonality to put this line in several tonalities simultaneously. An example would be from measures 695 to 698 (see Ex. 74). Here Theme 1 is played by the solo piano. The top voice in the right hand suggests a diatonic scale of B-flat major; however, the theme also exists in F major with

<sup>171</sup> Alexander Scriabin, Sonata No.4, Op.30, in *Ausgewählte Klavierwerke, Band 5: Sonaten 1-5*, ed. Gunter Philipp (Leipzig: Edition Peters, 1971), 91. International Music Scores Library/Petrucci Music Library: Free Public Domain Sheet Music. Accessed February 26, 2018. [http://ks.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/7/7d/IMSLP10998-Scriabin\\_-\\_Piano\\_Sonata\\_No.4.pdf](http://ks.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/7/7d/IMSLP10998-Scriabin_-_Piano_Sonata_No.4.pdf).

E-flat major in the middle voice blurring the identity of tonality in this part.



Example 74. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, mm. 695-8

Second, Zhao would put a tonal theme or motive in an atonal background. As an example, in the presentation of Theme 5 starting in measure 651 (see Ex. 75, the instrumentation from the top is bassoon, French horn in F, harp, and solo piano), the solo bassoon (top voice) plays Theme 5 in A-flat. And the solo piano (bottom voice) plays a fast running passage without a tonal center.



Example 75. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, mm. 650-2

Third, Zhao occasionally puts a tonal section between two more dissonant sections. As an example, a transformation of motive 1 appears from measures 677 to 684 (see Ex. 76). In the presentation of the motive, the music is tonal and rapidly goes through D-flat major, E-flat major, and A major. However, the measures before and after this section, measures 676 and 685, are more dissonant.



Example 76. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, mm. 674-685

### 3. Centered and centerless

Zhao claims that music in the twentieth century, especially serial music, is centerless. He believes that music should have a center, whether it is a pitch, an interval, or a combination of certain rhythmic patterns. In the previous section three core motives of this concerto were presented. Among these three motives, motive 1 is the most important one, as themes throughout the concerto are developed from it. Although the concerto does not have a tonal center, motive 1 functions as its center.

### 4. Control and without control

In this concerto, Zhao does not cover this pair of contrasting concepts. He does not present any influence from chance music.

## 5. Nationalism and internationalism

The elements of Chinese music in this concerto are not as prominent as in previous piano concertos such as the *Yellow River Piano Concerto*. In Fang's article, he claims that the opening melodic idea is "with Chinese national character,"<sup>172</sup> which refers to the fact that motive 1 can be viewed as being derived from a Chinese pentatonic scale. In my opinion, this concerto is a westernized piano concerto by a Chinese composer, though it may contain some pentatonic music ideas and Chinese percussion instruments like *muyu* and *paigu*. This concerto is clearly affected by modern Western compositional techniques such as polytonality (as in Ex. 74) and twelve-tone technique. Given the fact that this concerto was written in 1985, when Zhao just returned from his stay in the United States, it is not impractical to assume that this concerto reflected his experience of modern Western music.

Zhao uses twelve-tone technique as a tool. He did not apply the technique throughout the entire concerto, only using it in two places. The first instance is in the introduction, from measures 32 to 38 (see Ex. 77). Here the string section is divided into twenty-four parts, and all twelve notes of an octave are played at the same time.

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<sup>172</sup>Fang, "Transcend in the united force," 20.

Example 77. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite”, mm. 32-8

The second use of a twelve-tone row occurs in measures 705 to 808 (see Ex. 78). In this part Zhao expands motive 2 into a twelve-tone row and uses it as a counterpoint subject. Different instruments enter with altered pitches and note values. Toward the end of this part, the row is almost played in every instrument of the orchestra, and every beat includes all twelve notes of the tone row.



The image displays a page of musical notation for Zhao Xiaosheng's Piano Concerto No. 1, "Aphrodite", measures 793-800. The score is arranged in a multi-system format. The first system (measures 793-796) features a complex texture with multiple staves, including a prominent melodic line in the upper right and dense accompaniment. The second system (measures 797-800) continues this texture, showing a variety of rhythmic patterns and melodic fragments. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, various note values, rests, and dynamic markings. The overall style is characteristic of late 20th-century Chinese piano music, emphasizing melodic clarity and harmonic richness.

Example 78. Zhao Xiaosheng, Piano Concerto No. 1, "Aphrodite", mm. 793-800

## Conclusion

China's reform starting in the 1980s allowed many composers in China to be in touch with the West. With the introduction of modernism, Chinese composers began to explore a new path in piano concertos. Zhao Xiaosheng is one of them.

Zhao wrote his first piano concerto "Aphrodite" in 1985, under his theory of "neoromanticbinism". The core idea of "neoromanticbinism" is to combine and mix different ideas or styles in one composition. In this concerto Zhao combines romanticism and modernism, along with tonal and atonal music. He centers this composition on a motive that is derived from a Chinese pentatonic scale. Zhao does not simply take his Western colleague's path of modernism. He makes his own selections and judgements and attempts to create his individual style on them.

This piano concerto is influenced by modern Western music in two ways. First, the form of the concerto applies sonata form principles. Second, Western modern compositional techniques can be found in this concerto such as tone rows, twelve-tone technique, and polytonality. These modern techniques were intentionally ignored by Chinese composers in the past and were rediscovered in the 1980s. This concerto does not have clear references to traditional Chinese music. In his later compositions, Zhao places an emphasis on bringing more Chinese elements in the music.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSIONS

In this dissertation, I have attempted to trace the history of piano music and piano concertos in China, to review the existing scholarship on Chinese piano music and Chinese piano concertos, to provide a list of all piano concertos by Chinese composers that I can find, and to present analyses of three representative Chinese piano concertos.

After China's defeat in the Opium War in 1842, the Qing dynasty was forced to open its gates to the West, and along with Western merchants and armies came the piano. However, due to historical reasons the development of piano music in China was delayed. The first piano music composed by a Chinese composer was “*和平进行曲* [March of Peace],” by Zhao Yuanren in 1915. China's first conservatory, the National Institute of Music, was established in 1927. In 1934 and 1935, Russian composer and pianist Alexander Tcherepnin visited China. He held a composition competition of piano music with Chinese characteristics. He Luting's composition “*牧童短笛* [Buffalo Boy's Flute]” won first prize in the competition and was considered the first mature Chinese piano composition. Tcherepnin had a major influence on Chinese composers, encouraging them to base their compositions on the folk music of China, and to learn from European contemporary compositional techniques.

Chinese composers found it problematic to write a piano concerto since this idea came from the West. The main issue was balancing Chinese music with this Western genre. Jiang Wenye's Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 16 was written in 1936 and was the first



piano concerto written by a Chinese composer. The structure of this single-movement concerto reflects Western influences as it follows the standard movement layout of a concerto (introduction-fast-slow-fast). On the other hand, given Jiang's educational background, the nationalistic elements he used in this concerto were mostly Japanese folk music. Jiang Wenye's piano concerto was written at a time when Chinese composers were still seeking an independent style for Chinese music. Jiang followed the approach of putting nationalistic elements within a standard Western form, a rather safe step that many composers of nineteenth century nationalism such as Borodin and Dvořák chose. Later, Jiang developed a unique style of his own; however, he never wrote another piano concerto.

In 1942 Mao Zedong presented a speech on behalf of the Communist Party of China to indicate the Party's attitude towards the arts. According to Mao, music as a form of art should focus on serving the vast common people of China. Music should be based on folk music, should be patriotic, and should be easily understandable. Kraus, in his book *Pianos and Politics in China*, claims that this kind of music is populism. As the Communist Party of China came to power in 1949, their policy of art became official, and piano concertos from 1949 to 1966 were written in a nationalistic style. During the ten years of the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976, music was heavily influenced by ideology and politics. The *Yellow River Piano Concerto* was written in 1969. It was arranged from Xian Xinghai's *Yellow River Cantata* by a composition group of Yin Chengzong, Chu Wanghua, Liu Zhuang, Sheng Lihong, Shi Shucheng, and Xu Peixing. This concerto includes four movements, and mostly follows the structure of the original cantata. In the last movement "Defend the Yellow River," other music materials such as

“East is Red” and “Internationale” were used. The *Yellow River Piano Concerto* was still in the nineteenth century nationalist style. The emphasis on the strong melodies and the virtuosic piano writing made it a very popular piece among ordinary audience members. The reception of the concerto has varied from time to time. It was praised during the Cultural Revolution. After the Cultural Revolution, those who had experienced the chaotic years refused to mention it. From the 1980s on, it was revived again and was seen more as an independent composition rather than a political slogan of Jiang Qing’s ideology, though some composers like Wang Xilin still believed that this concerto is a leftover evil of the Cultural Revolution.

After the Cultural Revolution, China began its economic reform in 1978. The loosened political air allowed composers in China to explore and experiment with modern compositional techniques, and piano concertos from this period reflected more modernism. Zhao Xiaosheng’s Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite” (1985) includes many Western modern techniques such as tone rows, twelve-tone technique, and polytonality. This concerto is his application of his own theory of “neoromanticbinism.” The structure of the concerto refers to a sonata form. Though there are some hints of Chinese music in the composition, and Zhao claims that his music seeks a balance between nationalism and internationalism, this concerto is deeply westernized. Zhao’s piano compositions after Piano Concerto No. 1, “Aphrodite” included more Chinese elements, and perhaps this piano concerto is his practice on Western composition technique as he returned from the United States.

Overall, the history of Chinese piano concertos is a history of East meets West. The differences between the two cultures make it problematic for Chinese composers to

write in this genre that is rooted in the Western music history. In the initial stages, composers of Chinese piano concertos learned from and imitated Western composers, starting with the pioneer Jiang Wenye. Then after the establishment of the People's Republic of China, Chinese composers kept on finding their musical identity. Some piano concertos from this stage were the composer's graduation composition. These compositions indicate that Chinese composers were still learning and mastering the genre. Starting from the 1950s nationalism, especially nineteenth century romantic nationalism, became the main trend of Chinese piano concertos, and Chinese composers introduced folk songs and music of traditional Chinese instruments in their piano concertos. During the Cultural Revolution, ideology had a tremendous influence on music writing and composers were writing under political pressure. Piano concertos at the time were mostly transcriptions, and for them to be understandable by the common people, often these concertos included titles or programmatic elements. Starting from the 1980s Chinese piano concertos blossomed and more individuality can be found in the piano concertos. Many Chinese composers started to explore a combination of Chinese music with modernism.

Up to the present time, there are still many Chinese piano concertos that remain virtually unknown and are seldom performed. One step of further research is needed for the formation of a systematic study of the history of Chinese piano concertos, to provide in-depth research on all of these works. I hope this introductory research will raise awareness of this topic and that this music will be known to the world.

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