

**THE MUSIC INDUSTRY AND POPULAR SONG
IN 1930S AND 1940S SHANGHAI
A HISTORICAL AND STYLISTIC ANALYSIS**

SZU-WEI CHEN

Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**Department of Film and Media Studies
University of Stirling**

February 2007

Abstract

In 1930s and 1940s Shanghai, musicians and artists from different cultures and varied backgrounds joined and made the golden age of Shanghai popular song which suggests the beginnings of Chinese popular music in modern times. However, Shanghai popular song has long been neglected in most works about the modern history of Chinese music and remains an unexplored area in Shanghai studies. This study aims to reconstruct a historical view of the Shanghai popular music industry and make a stylistic analysis of its musical products. The research is undertaken at two levels: first, understanding the operating mechanism of the ‘platform’ and second, investigating the components of the ‘products’.

By contrasting the hypothetical flowchart of the Shanghai popular music industry, details of the producing, selling and consuming processes are retrieved from various historical sources to reconstruct the industry platform. Through the first level of research, it is found that the rising new media and the flourishing entertainment industry profoundly influenced the development of Shanghai popular song. In addition, social and political changes and changes in business practices and the organisational structure of foreign record companies also contributed to the vast production, popularity and commercial success of Shanghai popular song.

From the composition-performance view of song creation, the second level of research reveals that Chinese and Western musical elements both existed in the musical products. The Chinese vocal technique, Western *bel canto* and instruments from both musical traditions were all found in historical recordings. When ignoring the distinctive nature of pentatonicism but treating Chinese melodies as those on

Western scales, Chinese-style tunes could be easily accompanied by chordal harmony. However, the Chinese heterophonic feature was lost in the Western accompaniment texture. Moreover, it is also found that the traditional rules governing the relationship between words and the melody was dismissed in Shanghai popular songwriting.

The findings of this study fill in the neglected part in modern history of Chinese music and add to the literature on the under-explored musical area in Shanghai studies. Moreover, this study also demonstrates that against a map illustrating how musical products moved from record companies to consumers along with all other involved participants, the history of popular music can be rediscovered systematically by using songs as evidence, treating media material carefully and tracking down archives and surviving participants.

Dedicated to my two late grannies

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank my supervisor Prof Simon Frith for his enduring guidance and intellectual support throughout the length and breadth of my doctoral project. Thanks also go to my examiners Dr Philip Drake and Dr Rachel Harris for their invaluable comments on this thesis and suggestions for future work. I appreciate the advice on methodological issues from Dr Jacquie L'Tang and suggestions on musical analysis from Prof Derek Scott, Prof Jonathan Stock and Dr Raymond Monelle. Special thanks should go to Karen Forrest and Louise Womersley in the departmental office for the enormous administrative work they have done. I am particularly grateful to Rev Maxwell Craig and Mrs Margaret Rodgers for their help with proofreading and certainly any errors that may still remain are entirely my own.

I would also like to acknowledge the inspiration and intellectual stimulation from Prof Ricardo Canzio, with whose encouragement I decided to change the course of my life to pursue formally my interests and passion for music at an academic level. I am also deeply indebted to Prof Liu Shuen-Zen and his wife and Ass Prof Lin Hwey-Jane from the Graduate Institute of Accountancy, National Taiwan University, where I received my MBA, for their support along the journey to the doctorate.

I owe a great deal to those who facilitate my fieldwork in Mainland China. Prof Chen Gang from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music and Mr Lee Leng Kok from Singapore kindly helped me to approach informants. I should extend my thanks to my interviewees, all those elderly ladies and gentlemen in Shanghai who have been unstintingly generous with their time as well as elderly singers Jin Yi, Wu Yingyin, Yan Fei and Zhang Fan who shared their memory of old Shanghai pop with me. I would also like to express my gratitude to the staff of the Modern Document Reading

Room of the Shanghai Municipal Library and the Library of the Music Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Arts for the pleasant and productive days I spent there. I am much obliged to so many friends in Shanghai and Beijing, particularly Jiang Lei, Li Meng, Liu Chuan, Liu Jun, Xu Ming and Zhang Jing, together with my Chinese opera drum master Mai Xueyi and his family, for their hospitality during my stay in China. Special thanks go to Sis Mao who fed and looked after me all the time.

Thanks go to the congregation of the Church of the Holy Rude (especially members of the Church Choir and Music Director Dr John Burnett), members of the Stirling City Choir and Stirling and Bridge of Allan Operatic Society and gents at my local, Port Customs Bar, for their fellowship and support in all aspects of life in Stirling. I am especially grateful for the friendship I developed at the University with IT Advisor Oron Joffe, my doctoral colleagues Adam Behr, Inez Templeton, Mark Percival, Martin Duch, Matt Percival, Nicola Scott and Pedro Nunes, and my Taiwanese compatriots Ellen, Rebecca and Dr Yu Honglin. I would also like to extend my special thanks to my honorary English sister Francesca Young, my lifelong friend and soon-to-be best man Dr Lin Yung-Yao, and my patron and alter ego May, for their everlasting support and encouragement. Thanks also go to Prof John Izod, Jenny McKay, Dr Mark Brownrigg, Peter Meech and Richard Kilborn who shared with me their passion for music and life.

The love and support from my family has been unfailing. Thanks must go to my parents and sister who have stood by me through every trough and peak as well as to Auntie Christine who offered financial support towards the cost of accommodation in Shanghai. Last on the list but first in my heart, thanks go to my beloved fiancée Fan for her faithfulness, patience and everything she has done for me. Finally, I have earned my PhD and we can now have our Scottish wedding in my church.

Contents

Acknowledgement	iv
Notes on Romanisation	ix
Chapter One: Introduction	1
I. The legendary image	1
II. How did it start?	4
III. An underrepresented part of the modern Chinese pop history	9
IV. Shanghai popular song as a genre	13
V. Concluding remarks	31
Chapter Two: A Model for Understanding Shanghai Pop	41
I. Rediscovering Shanghai pop	42
II. Level one: reconstruction of the platform	50
III. Level two: analysis of the products	60
Chapter Three: The Society	76
I. The start of modern Shanghai	76
II. Social changes in Shanghai	83
III. New forms of mass entertainment	96
Chapter Four: The Platform	109
I. The producing process	109
1. Record companies	110
2. Composers and lyricists	122
3. Instrumentalists	125

4. Singers	128
II. The selling process	131
1. Agents and promoters	131
2. Publishers	132
3. Retailers	136
4. Film companies	140
5. Radio stations	147
6. Dancehalls	153
7. Regulatory institutions	159
III. The consuming process	164
1. Audience	164
2. The press	174
3. Critics	179
Chapter Five: The Products	201
I. Ethnicity in music	202
II. Chineseness in music	208
1. Musical texture	215
2. Musical scale	218
3. Tones and tunes	222
III. Examining Shanghai popular song	230
1. Singing voice	230
2. Instrumentation	236
3. Melodic content	246
4. Accompanying harmony	255
5. Words	263

Chapter Six: Conclusion	283
I. The rediscovered past	283
II. After the rediscovery	293
Appendix I: Map of Shanghai, 1935	297
Appendix II: Chronology of Shanghai Pop	298
Appendix III: List of Informants	301
Appendix IV: List of Song Examples Cited in the Text	302
Glossary	311
Bibliography	321
Discography	355

Notes on Romanisation

Hanyu Pinyin ('Scheme of the Chinese phonetic alphabet') is adopted in this study for transcribing Chinese proper nouns and publication, movie and song titles, and Chinese expressions when needed, into the Latin alphabet. Places names are written in Pinyin despite any other forms of transliteration used in historical documents, for example Huangpu and Suzhou instead of Whangpoo and Soochow respectively. Personal names are also written in Pinyin with the exception that author names in literature are cited as they were originally spelled.

Kunrei-shiki Rômaji ('Cabinet-ordered romanisation system') is used for transcribing Japanese names and movie and song titles.

Chapter One

Introduction

Shanghai, once a wonderland for adventurers and a paradise for gold diggers, has become again the financial centre of China, and it has been claimed that it will be one of the most important economic centres of the world in the twenty-first century. However it is argued, the development of Shanghai in the first half of twentieth century was the epitome of modern China. A considerable number of studies have been made of the growth, transition and boom of the city over the past decades. In addition, topics such as the people's livelihood, cultural interaction, foreign concessions and so on have been widely discussed.¹ Despite this, the popular music that came into existence and developed in the first half of the last century in Shanghai remains largely unexplored.

I. The legendary image

Since the British first arrived and began trade and investment in the middle of the nineteenth century, Shanghai developed steadily and later became so fascinating a metropolis that it attracted other Europeans as well as people from China's hinterland. Although originally Shanghai was only a trade centre, in the early 1930s people from different cultures and varied backgrounds came to live there and contributed to its development. The style of music that developed there was later to be known as Shanghai popular song and was the origin of the modern Chinese popular music industry. Classically trained White Russian musicians fleeing the October Revolution, Filipino instrumentalists seeking a better living in other shores, Chinese

composers, vocalists and artists with various performance skills, all contributed to make the golden age of popular music in Shanghai. Interestingly, this new repertoire was never sung in the Shanghai dialect but in Mandarin Chinese, and since this city was the place where the Chinese popular music industry first started, developed and thrived, they were called Shanghai popular songs. Nightclubs, restaurants, ballrooms, as well as live broadcasts to homes, were the venues for these songs, but we should not forget the place they had in films as well. The close cooperation among those different groups of people and the vast and brilliant production they left behind suggest the beginnings of Chinese popular music in modern times. However, little writing emphasises this important point. There is much to be researched about how varied cultural elements and social forces brought about the success of popular songs in Shanghai from the early 1930s up to the 1960s.

The first Shanghai popular song, ‘Drizzles’ (*Maomao yü*), was a tune in a folk style with four verses using what was considered at the time to be overly familiar expressions of love, which were not customarily used in public, and was accompanied by a band playing Western instruments in a rudimentary form of New Orleans jazz. In a historical recording, this song was sung by a young girl with a high-pitched and untrained voice, sounding like ‘strangling cat’ (*niesi mao*) and to most of us today, perhaps, unpleasantly harsh.² However, the commercial success of this tentative combination encouraged its producer to write more pieces in the same format and thereafter involved more musicians and artists in the task. In the ensuing two decades, diverse musical elements were integrated into Shanghai popular songs such as non-Chinese melodic, elegant, literary lyrics, as well varied rhythms and a richer instrumentation.

People could now hear the blue notes of jazz and the Western scale interwoven with pentatonic strains and folk tunes. Refined phrases and poetic expressions of longing for a better life and the inclusion of incisive views towards social phenomena, together with romantic clichés in colloquial language, went to produce sophisticated lyrics. The arrangements were marked by the strong pulsation of tango, rumba and foxtrot, and the string-dominated sounds in the Hollywood-Broadway tradition presented by a big band or by studio orchestras, as well as simple chordal harmony or regular beats delivered by a couple of Chinese fiddles and percussion. These Eastern and Western musical elements were fused in a harmonically balanced fashion, and so the classic *Haipai* ('Shanghai style' or 'Shanghai school') of Chinese popular music came into existence.³

Attractive as this music was, Shanghai popular song declined after the advent of the Chinese Communist regime when most foreign organisations were forced to leave or taken over. With the whole entertainment industry moving to Hong Kong, Shanghai popular song continued to thrive for another ten years, but the style gradually changed to become practically unrecognisable by the end of the 1960s. Thanks to a small group of enthusiastic supporters in Hong Kong and Taiwan, together with those from the overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia, some elderly artists continue to appear on stage and are still popular among audiences who feel nostalgic for the past. Shanghai popular song is known in Hong Kong as *shidai qu* ('song of the times') or in Taiwan as *guoyu laoge* ('Mandarin Chinese old song') and is now usually heard in a small number of nostalgic radio or TV programmes and played on special occasions such as concerts, enthusiasts' reunion events and festivals. The elegant lyrics and charming melodies still elicit admiration among many today.

In recent years, while some amateurs have set about collecting these now classical songs in the form of recordings and sheet music, others are writing down life accounts of the artists. However, what seems to be lacking is both a study of how Western and Chinese musical elements mingled and created a new era in the history of Chinese music, and a full discussion of the interaction between the musical elements which made up the characteristic style of Shanghai popular songs.

II. How did it start?

With the prosperity came the need for a variety of entertainment in which musical sounds played an important role. In the 1930s Shanghai was a metropolis famous for its nightlife and cabarets which outnumbered those of any other city in China. There were American, Filipino, Russian, Indian and other Oriental bands playing American jazz, ballroom dance music or Chinese popular songs in different venues. There were the theme songs of Chinese films and the songs played during the intermission, which not only captivated the audiences in the cinema but also often took the whole of Shanghai by storm and were sung in nightclubs and broadcast over the airwaves. Besides dance and cinema, people in Shanghai would attend regular concerts given by the Shanghai Municipal Council Symphony Orchestra, which was the first symphony orchestra started in East Asia. The programmes included European classical music and special performances for children held in theatres, together with outdoor orchestral concerts and brass band marches held in public parks.⁴ Those who preferred traditional Chinese music rather than a Western style performance might go to a Chinese theatre to listen to Beijing opera or other regional opera styles or might attend social occasions that favoured the instrumental

repertoire.⁵ Those with a penchant for political issues could go to the conventions called by the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang, KMT) where newly composed songs based on the style of school songs (*xuetang yuege*) were sung by the participants.⁶ They could also join the rallies organised by the leftist and sing the mass songs heard in films or specially composed by leftist musicians and writers.⁷

Almost all the kinds of musical sounds in Shanghai described above could be heard even without being there in person. It was a period of explosive growth for Shanghai's wireless broadcasting industries in the early 1930s and about half of the radio stations of China were established in this metropolitan area.⁸ Thus it was easy to pick up the swing of American jazz, the high-pitched tunes of Beijing opera or the latest film theme songs by simply tuning the knob of a radio. Another popular means to access those sounds was the gramophone record. The first record company in China, Pathé Orient, was established in 1908 with its first released recordings of Beijing opera. After a series of mergers and acquisitions between those record companies which owned subsidiaries in China, there were three major record companies operating in Shanghai, which included two transnational capital controlled companies, Pathé-EMI and RCA-Victor, and one Chinese-owned company, Great China, operated in Shanghai. These majors recorded a wide range of Chinese operatic, folk and popular songs with their own contracted artists, studios and equipment and sold their records in China as well as promoted them to the overseas Chinese. In the meantime, a host of local owned 'pocketbook company' (*pibao gongsi*), most of which specialised in traditional genres and catered to regional markets in different areas, negotiated recording contracts with local or regional musicians, and rented studios and manufacturing time from the majors to produce their records.

Among these kinds of music that could be heard in Shanghai, two types of songs are worthy of attention: popular song and leftist mass song. Seemingly, they were both hybrid genres and composed with already existing musical materials that one could hear in Shanghai as early as the 1920s, such as American jazz, the latest dance music, traditional Chinese melodies and European folk songs. However, to Chinese listeners living in the 1930s, these songs were, on the one hand, brand-new because of the unprecedented pleasure they afforded and, on the other, controversial for their close relation with *genü* ('sing-song girls') and with political issues such as national identity, anti-feudalism and anti-imperialism.⁹

The creation of popular song could be traced to the early 1920s when a Chinese musician, Li Jinhui, began to compose children's musicals and established the Bright Moon Ensemble (*Mingyue yinyuehui*) to play his compositions as well as to produce gramophone records. Li devoted himself to creating works with a view to instilling the next generation with the spirit of humanist enlightenment, anti-feudalism and nationalism, and to promoting the use of the official language, Mandarin Chinese. He began composing in 1921 when he was invited to teach in the Shanghai National Language Institute (*Shanghai guoyu zhuanxiu xuexiao*). He wrote several short musical dramas in standard Mandarin Chinese for the pupils of the primary school attached to this institute and organised a group in the school to perform these works. In 1923, he published the first of eleven children's musicals in instalments in a children's weekly magazine. With the enthusiasm and ambition to create a new approach to training youngsters in music and dance, in 1926 he established the China Song-and-Dance Institute (*Zhonghua gewu zhuanmen xuexiao*) but it was shut down after just one year due to lack of funds. Nevertheless, with the financial support of a

friend, he set up another institution, the All Beauty Girls' School (*Meimei nüxiao*) in 1927 and continued his training programme.

In order to re-establish his former song-and-dance institute, he reorganised the school into the China Song-and-Dance Troupe (*Zhonghua gewutuan*) in 1928 and started to tour Southeast Asia to raise more funds. Unfortunately, the tour did not succeed financially. Thus, Li's music style changed in 1929 when he found himself stranded in Singapore due to financial difficulties following the overseas performances of his troupe. He heard the news from Shanghai concerning the commercial success of the songbook containing several love songs he had written originally for the tour, and turned to the creation of love songs so that he could earn travelling fees to go back and raise capital for the institute. Finally he submitted a batch of love songs, including the famous 'The River of Peach Blossom' (*Taohua jiang*) and 'The Express Train' (*Tebie kuaiche*), to the same publisher and then returned to Shanghai. By then his feeling for children's musicals had gone and sentimental affairs were his new subject matter.

From that time onwards, a large number of love songs were created using a variety of styles, including jazz, Hollywood film music or Chinese pentatonic scales, together with lyrics in classical Chinese love poems or romantic clichés of Tin Pan Alley, and thus began the era of Shanghai popular song. Besides love songs, Li also composed a few theme songs for Chinese sound films (motion pictures of synchronised sound). With the growth of the broadcasting industry, the availability of gramophone records and the popularity of sound films, these popular songs reached almost every cinema, store, street corner and home. Many outstanding female performers who graduated from the institutes created by Li or came from some of the troupes he had founded also had stage careers in broadcasting, recording and in films.

In the late 1930s several members of Li's famous Bright Moon Song-and-Dance Troupe (*Mingyue gewutuan*) established by Li when he returned to Shanghai in 1930, and several Chinese musicians, also devoted themselves to the composition of popular songs. These composers included Xu Ruhui, Yan Hua (member of Li's troupe), Li Jinguang (Li's younger brother and member of his troupe) and Chen Gexin (a conservatory-trained composer and lyricist).¹⁰ It was Li who triggered the development of Shanghai popular songs, and his training institutes and song-and-dance troupes brought to prominence a host of stars who dominated the entertainment industry in Shanghai from the 1930s to 1940s.

Popular and successful as these songs were, they were inexorably criticised by leftists and Nationalists as 'decadent sounds' (*mimi zhi yin*) or 'yellow music' (*huangse yinyue*). Apart from the explosive growth of entertainment industry, the 1930s also witnessed Western imperialism, a sequence of territorial encroachments and the military attack of the Japanese on China. Since Shanghai popular song was closely linked to the seamy demimonde and the capital-controlled commercial activities, together with their glamourised female stars, it was regarded as poison to the Chinese people and 'a capitulation to commerce at the expense of the imperative of national salvation'.¹¹

A leftist young man, Nie Er, former student of Li Jinhui who studied music under the patronage of the Bright Moon Song-and-Dance Troupe, published a series of critical articles on the decadence of Li's popular music. He sought to create a new form of popular music that would stimulate and inspire the masses. Instead of the love poems and romantic clichés found in Li's popular songs, Nie Er tried to speak out on behalf of the masses in choral works based on didactic school songs, inspired by Soviet-style mass music and military marches, with lyrics dealing with themes

derived from his firsthand experience of the lives of workers, farmers, exploited children and soldiers on the anti-Japan front.¹² He used to work in collaboration with other leftist musicians and writers, such as Ren Guang, Tian Han and An E, who produced films showing the hard living conditions of ordinary people and encouraging the masses to fight for the future of the nation. Nie's musical works were thus widely circulated through films and later made into gramophone records. They were often distinguished from popular songs and referred to as 'mass songs' due to the different message they were meant to deliver. However, as these songs had a connection with the entertainment industry in the sense that they were disseminated through existing media, they were equally admired by some of the audience who were fascinated by whatever songs on radio, records or in films.

Therefore, the 1930s saw two types of songs which were created by the re-arrangement of existing materials: popular song and mass song. Both reached people through the same technology and media of entertainment. The spirit of mass song became the origin of Chinese communist revolutionary song which played a leading role in Mainland China until the late 1970s, whilst popular song, the subject of this study, however criticised, took Shanghai, or even the whole China, by storm from the early 1930s and thrived in Hong Kong for another decade after 1949.

III. An underrepresented part of the modern Chinese pop history

Originating in the late 1920s and early 1930s and developing through the 1930s to 1940s as the product of the interaction between Chinese and Western musical elements, Chinese popular music and its producers in the Shanghai era are seldom mentioned in the modern history of Chinese music. Most documentation of

and research into China's musical activities under Western influence through the first half of the twentieth century focuses on the reformation of education, composition and performance led by intellectuals and musicians within academies. Whilst mass songs, art songs, choral works and their composers are viewed seriously and discussed in detail by academics, popular songs are mentioned casually or even omitted in most works about the modern history of Chinese music. In a textbook of the history of Chinese contemporary music, Li Jinhui's contribution to children's musicals is recognised, but none of his musicals for song-and-dance troupes nor the popular songs composed later in his life are mentioned. Except for Li, no other composers or artists involved in popular music are discussed. In another article about the development of Chinese music in the first half of the twentieth century, Wang mentions Li Jinhui as the pioneer of Chinese entertainment music, and considers that the works written by him and his contemporaries deeply influenced the popular song styles in Hong Kong and Taiwan later in the twentieth century.¹³ Recently there have been some academic work on Chinese popular music which also features both Chinese and Western musical elements, yet those works focus mainly on *yaogun yinyue* (Chinese 'rock 'n' roll music') produced after the 1980s when the Communist China opened again its gate to the West rather than on popular songs created in the 1930s and 1940s before the advent of the Communist regime.¹⁴

Whilst popular song is not usually taken seriously in the history of Chinese music, several enthusiasts have examined its origins and written down life stories of composers and artists and their representative works. Liu Xing traces the beginning of Chinese popular music back to Li's musicals before the coming of sound films and reviews the works of several composers and lyricists from then on to the late 1970s, including those active after 1949 in Hong Kong and Taiwan. Liu Gouwei also

considers Li the father of Chinese popular song. Furthermore, he divides the development of Chinese popular song into three stages, the eras of Shanghai, Hong Kong and Taiwan and analyses the dissemination of popular song through radio broadcasts, sound films and television programmes. Wong Kee-Chee argues that the style of Shanghai popular songs, as well as those produced later in Hong Kong, is unique and different from that of the Chinese songs written later in Taiwan. He also indicates that these ‘authentic songs of the times’ declined in popularity after the 1960s.¹⁵ Besides these works, facts and figures about Chinese popular song can also be found in the biographies and the memoirs of stars and in some compilations of articles which include anecdotes about historic events based upon the author’s own recollections. In a collection of several articles originally written for newspapers, Shuijing discusses composers, lyricists and artists in the Shanghai era together with their styles, and recounts several interviews with some elderly directors and singers.¹⁶ Though without a systematic approach, he also talks about the lyrical content and the patterns of accompaniment, based on the lyrics and melodies he remembered.

Apart from the literature about the development of Shanghai popular songs, it is not until the pioneering work of Andrew F. Jones that the relation between popular songs and the formation of media culture in China in the 1930s has been discussed. While conventional critiques stress that ‘the original innocence of Li Jinhui’s early nationalistic efforts to promote children’s education is besmirched by his later descent into the tawdry world of commercial media culture,’ Jones recognises the fact that ‘Li’s contribution to Chinese media culture was just as complex and ambivalent as those of his leftist counterparts’, who were later enshrined as revolutionary heroes in the communist pantheon.¹⁷ Although derogated as decadent and pornographic music solely because of the form of performance in which the voices, images and personal

lives of mass-mediated females were consumed, Jones believes that Li created a new musical idiom. It is, on the one hand, a renegotiation of jazz music in national terms without entirely dispensing with the pentatonic markers of Chinese national character and, on the other hand, a new culture formed within an emerging transnational economy of musical production and consumption. However, rather than examining musical features in detail, Jones only roughly describes Shanghai popular songs as fusion of American jazz, Hollywood film music and Chinese folk forms. Moreover, all musical works he mentioned were composed no later than 1937, the year in which the Sino-Japanese War began, and there are more works created after 1937 to be discussed.

Recently, the rapid growth of the economy in Shanghai reminds the Chinese people of the past days of prosperity in this metropolis. A series of reissues of Shanghai popular songs have drawn the attention of the public and mark a revival of and nostalgia for these songs. In Mainland China, two sets of cassettes – a two-cassette set in 1985 and then another four-cassette one in 1993 – have been issued by the state-run China Record Company (*Zhongguo changpian gongsi*). As Jonathan Stock comments in an article, in which he compares the social and political backgrounds of the releases of these two sets, once criticised as unhealthy, these songs are now considered the rich and colourful national heritage of popular music of earlier times by the Chinese authorities, although the songs reissued were selected carefully. Strong consciousness of regional identity in China may provide an explanation for these reissues. To people in Shanghai today, these popular songs can be taken both as a symbol of cultural independence and as a token of the rehabilitated past of this thriving commercial city.¹⁸

In 1992 and the ensuing five years, EMI (Hong Kong) also released a series of audio CDs which collect a great number of historical recordings from those originally produced by EMI (China) in Shanghai before 1949 and those in Hong Kong after the record company moved there to the late 1960s. Despite the original plan to issue one hundred volumes, this series has been stopped for commercial reasons after the fifty-ninth instalment was released. More compilations of historical recordings were produced subsequently by EMI (Malaysia) from 2000 onwards. A step farther in Southeast Asia, a Singaporean gramophone record collector, Lee Leng Kok, has been trying to restore historical recordings and so far has published six audio CDs since 2000. Using an advanced audio restoration system, re-mastering the aged recordings and removing unwanted noise from old gramophone records, he makes it possible for us to experience the original aural effect. Though circulated mainly within a limited circle of supporters and fans, the reissue or restoration of historical recordings of Shanghai popular songs by Chinese people in different regions provides valuable source material for musicological analyses and further research.

IV. Shanghai popular song as a genre

Shanghai popular song, from the 1930s to 1940s, includes songs which had been deeply influenced by Western musical elements as well as those which were still composed and performed in traditional Chinese style. Listeners in Shanghai during this era might have encountered these pieces day and night in wireless broadcast programmes, in films, in cabarets, in the humming of people in the street or through gramophone record playing. Although today people categorise music that is commercially promoted by mainstream record companies and consumed in great

amounts by fans as ‘popular’, these songs were not referred to as ‘popular’ by people at that time. These songs were first referred to as ‘new song of the times’ or ‘contemporary song’ and these terms could be seen on copies of sheet music, the covers of songbooks or in contemporary entertainment magazines released in the 1930s. Words such as ‘social’ in English and ‘*shidai*’ (‘of the times’) in Chinese can also be found on the labels of some records.¹⁹ Since jazz or other Western style bands were employed to accompany the singing and, in contrast with the traditional repertoire, these songs were new creations, terms such as ‘jazz song’ or ‘modern song’ were later on widely used. In the light of the usage of these terms, it appears that listeners, publishers and editors had somehow recognised and treated these songs as a specific category distinct from those they considered traditional or folk, such as operatic arias, ballads or short simple strains.

Even today, these songs, generally known as ‘song of the times’ (rather than ‘new’ songs) or ‘Mandarin Chinese old song,’ are located in a reserved category. For example, in record shops, albums of Shanghai old songs are often shelved together; when young pop stars try to reinterpret Zhou Xuan’s hits on TV, elderly fans usually criticise them severely for their inauthentic style and the inappropriate accompaniment; when a radio programme plays 1960s Mandarin Chinese classics which were produced in Hong Kong, it is possible to recognise the taste of old Shanghai. We can then say that it is the style and form in which these songs were performed that made them unique and thus easily differentiated from the Chinese popular music prevailing nowadays.

How can listeners today and those who lived in Shanghai at the time tell these songs from other concurrently existing repertoires? What is the uniqueness of Chinese popular music in the Shanghai era and how can these songs be regarded as a

specific category of music by the Chinese? In the second half of the introductory chapter, the concept of musical genre will be applied to begin a preliminary analysis of the characteristics of this repertoire. Genre categories are nowadays widely used as a way of organising the music making, selling and consuming processes. In line with these preset categories, all the participants in the music market – performers, producers, shopkeepers, consumers and critics – have an idea in mind of the aural and visual effects they should expect when coming across certain categories of music.²⁰ Nevertheless, genre can also be an elusive term, neither a textual essence nor a comprehensive code, because no text will have all the traits of the genre to which it belongs nor are particular texts precisely identical with the categories in which they are included.²¹ Even so, as the formation of a genre is based upon a set of accepted rules that qualify the authenticity of the musical events making up that genre, it is useful to examine systematically what general features Shanghai popular songs have, according to Franco Fabbri's five groups of genre rules.²²

1. Formal and technical rules

The first group contains rules of musical form and playing conventions, the rules most discussed in musicological literature dealing with genres. From the melodic and harmonic point of view, traditional Chinese operas and folk songs are based mainly on pentatonic scales together with some so-called 'altered notes' out of the pentatonic scale and thus has a distinctive identity. Moreover, in Chinese thinking, a pentatonic scale is already a representation of harmony and therefore, to Western ears, traditional Chinese music lacks complex harmonies and is always played in unison.²³ Some of Shanghai popular songs sound quite traditional because their melodies are inspired by or extracted from folk tunes or story-telling ballads.

For example, Zhou Xuan's 'The Wandering Songstress' (*Tianya genii*) is derived from *tanci* (a traditional story-telling performance originated in Suzhou) and 'Betel Nut Picking' (*Cai binglang*) is adapted from folk dance music of Hunan. However, more Western elements can be observed in other newly composed works. In addition to traditional scales and melody contours, there is frequent use of chromatisms, the blue notes of American jazz, and the application of Western compositional techniques such as recurring motifs, augmentations and modulations from the tonic key of a song to its relative minor or major. Gong Qiuxia's 'Roses Blooming Everywhere' (*Qiangwei chuchu kai*) is a good case where the first section is in the major pentatonic scale without any altered tone, but it is then modulated into its relative minor in the second section featuring the raised leading tone. It can also be noticed that melodies or cadences are arranged in accordance with the progressions of European harmony, and instrumental introductions and intermezzi are played in part harmony.

From the rhythmic point of view, though both Chinese folk songs and Shanghai popular songs are usually in the 2/4 or 4/4 metre, with accents in odd-numbered beats, there are several popular songs composed in the 3/4 metre and performed in the form of a waltz but few in the 6/8 time of European folk dance. Some songs were originally written in syncopated rhythms with a flavour of American jazz, whereas others just remained plain in rhythm, close to the style of Chinese folk songs. Due to their relationship with ballroom dance culture in Shanghai, more rhythmic variations can be heard in the musical accompaniments of these popular songs than in folk music. Since these songs were arranged to be danced, they often took the form of modern dance numbers which prevailed in dancehalls or cabarets at that time, such as tango, rumba, waltz and foxtrot. For example, Bai Guang's 'Lingering Dreams' (*Hunying jiumeng*) and Zhou Xuan's

'Recalling My Husband' (*Yi liangren*) are famous tangos; in Bai Guang's 'Autumn Night' (*Qiuye*) and Ouyang Feiying's 'Shangri-La' (*Xianggelila*) we can hear the rhythm of rumba. As for waltz, while Bai Hong's 'Dance of Spring' (*Chun zhi wuqu*) is a Viennese waltz, Zhou Xuan's 'Good Night' (*Wan'an qu*) is a slow one. The well-known piece 'Rose, Rose, I Love You' (*Meigui meigui wo ai ni*) sung by Yao Li is arranged as a foxtrot.²⁴ There are also a great number of rhythmic patterns in traditional Chinese music, but they belong solely to the performance of percussion instruments and have little to do with melodies or any dancing step.

It goes without saying that traditional Chinese operas and folk songs are performed with or accompanied by traditional instruments, but these instruments are also used in Shanghai popular songs to give them a traditional flavour. A typical combination of Chinese instruments, widely used in the accompaniment of ballad singing or Beijing opera, contains a *huqin* (two-string bowed instrument), a *sanxian* (three-string plucked instrument) and a drummer's kit consisting of a pair of clappers and a drum. When accompanying a song, the instrumental line usually follows the vocal line in unison with some ornamental variation and fill-in melodies between vocal phrases. Zhou Xuan's 'The Wandering Songstress' and Wu Yingyin's 'Spring Sadness' (*Duanchang hong*) are examples representative of this combination and accompanying style. However, the use of Western instruments in varied combinations is one of the most fascinating features in most Shanghai popular songs. Among a wide range of combinations, some are small groups similar to those of the bands in New Orleans jazz, using a 'front-line of melodic' instruments, such as a trumpet, a clarinet or a violin which might play a fill-in solo phrase, and other 'rhythmic-harmonic backing' instruments, such as a piano, string bass and drums. The earliest Shanghai popular song, 'Drizzles' (*Maomaoyu*), and two late-thirties

works, Yao Li's 'Lovesickness for Sale' (*Mai xiangsi*) and Zhang Fan's 'Party Time' (*Manchang fei*), for instance, are accompanied by bands of this sort. There were also larger bands which were comparable to chamber orchestras, such as those string-dominated studio orchestras in Hollywood and Broadway or as those big bands of the swing era with expanded brass, reed and rhythm sections.²⁵ The lush arrangements and sonorous sounds of such an array of instruments can be heard in, to give a few examples, Li Xianlan's 'Evening Fragrance' (*Yelaixiang*), Bai Hong's 'Goodbye Shasha' (*Shasha zaihui ba*) and Ouyang Feiyang's 'Misty Rain' (*Yu mengmeng*).

As for the technical capacity of instrumentalists playing in the bands for Shanghai popular songs, it is believed that they had to follow music scores orchestrated by the arrangers when accompanying a singer, but it is not clear if they were expected to improvise as American jazzmen did in the fill-in instrumental solo phrases. It is also known that White Russian classical musicians and Filipino instrumentalists were both notable and competent at jazz or Euro-American style music in recording sessions or nightclubs or cabarets, but little is known about Chinese instrumentalists. A famous elderly lyricist, Chen Dieyi, remembers that there was no formal or in-house traditional Chinese musical band, or not famous enough to be remembered, and anyone who played *huqin* might be hired to form a pickup band.²⁶ Perhaps it required more members and close collaboration among them to organise a Western musical band, but two or three players were enough to accompany the singing with Chinese instruments, and it was thus not necessary for record companies to maintain large traditional Chinese bands.

From the vocal point of view, because the singers in the Shanghai era came from different backgrounds, two major singing styles existed at the same time in Shanghai popular songs. Some vocalists were naturally talented and learned to sing

by themselves, such as Yao Li and Wu Yingyin; some were trained in song-and-dance troupes, such as Bai Hong, Zhou Xuan and Gong Qiuxia; and others, such as Ouyang Feiying, Qu Yunyun and Li Xianglan, received formal musical training from private tutors.²⁷ Generally speaking, the nasal, high-pitched voice and the melismatic phrases used in traditional operas or folk songs can be heard in most historical recordings of Shanghai popular songs, while a deeper, more open-throated singing approach or a style like European *bel canto* or *coloratura* soprano, can also be found in several gramophone records. However, some singers changed the manner in which they sang several years after their first appearance as their voices became more mature or they tried to interpret songs in a different way. For example, compared to the immature and strident voice in ‘Lovesickness for Sale’ released in 1937, Yao Li had developed into a warm, rich and elegant style ten years later in ‘A Broken Heart’ (*Yike poxin*) recorded in 1948. While Bai Hong interpreted ‘Crazy Musical Band’ (*Fengkuang yuedui*) in a traditional Chinese approach, she intimated a *coloratura* soprano style in ‘Enchanting Lipstick’ (*Zuiren de kouhong*).

More interestingly, in traditional Chinese operas or folk songs both genders participate in singing, but most of Shanghai popular songs in historical recordings were sung by female performers. Male performers often served as characters who were secondary in importance to the main female role in duets and choruses, or as vocalists for backing harmonies. Though some male singers also made their own recordings, such as Yao Min, Yan Hua and classically trained Sheng Jialun, Huang Feiran, overall, they left behind considerably fewer works than their female counterparts.

As with the singing style, when looking at the rules governing lyrics we find that there is more than one lyrical form in these popular songs, including classical

Chinese texts, refined literary language and vernacular expressions. The language style of a song depends on its lyricist. As the lyricists of popular songs in the Shanghai era usually came from the ranks of scholars, writers (Fan Yanqiao), film directors (Hu Xinling, Wu Cun) and journalists (Chen Dieyi), and most of them were well educated and open to the new culture or brought up with training in classical literature, it is explicable that such different uses of language should have existed. In general, the lyrics of most songs draw on the vernacular idioms and phrases originating from classical works or words only used in writing, and thus the free-form composition of lyrics is similar to what was then called the ‘new poems’ (*xinshi*).²⁸ A number of them are written in a more literary way with classical words and regular metre, while at the other end of the spectrum some are totally colloquial. The lyrics of Zhou Xuan’s film song ‘The Little Nuptial Chamber’ (*Xiaoxiao dongfang*) were written in a classical poetic form by the director, with eight lines in total and seven words in each line, whereas those of Qu Yunyun’s ‘Young Lady In A Pedicab’ (*Sanlunche shang de xiaojie*) were in plain vernacular without any classical idioms or refined words. Interestingly enough, in whatever language a song may be couched, it is possible to find in its lyrics intimate expressions that may be frowned upon if uttered in public.²⁹

To sum up, from the point of view of the overall form, Shanghai popular songs mainly use the pentatonic scale with variations based on Western compositional techniques, mostly sung by female singers in nasal, high-pitched voices, and accompanied by bands featuring Western instruments and arrangements in European-American style. It was a new sound for the audience at that time, and for us today constitutes a particular performance style. However, there were also pieces composed

in traditional scales, performed in the style of story-telling ballads and accompanied with Chinese instruments.

2. Semiotic rules

The second group of rules refer to the ways in which the meaning of a song is conveyed. While to us today, discussing Chinese popular music of the Shanghai era, these popular songs can be regarded as a musical product which emerged in a particular social context when traditional Chinese culture met Western entertainment, to those living in the 1930s to 1940s in Shanghai or other areas in China, these modern songs portrayed an imaginary world beyond the hard reality of the country at the time – the encroachment of the Japanese and Western imperialists.

From the point of view of textual strategy, although the true intention of the composers, lyricists or performers of these Shanghai popular songs is not clear, what we can see in these texts is not only fantasy but representation of the real world in which listeners at the time could find themselves. Songs express sentiments that can be perceived as the listeners' own feelings, describe events that can take place in the listeners' everyday life, and draw pictures of a wonderland that listeners might yearn for. For example, the lyrics of Zhou Xuan's 'Recalling My Husband' (*Yi liangren*) (*liangren*, 'husband', or literally 'good man') read:

My husband is on the way to the long march

My husband is at the vanguard on the main road

May spring wind send my regards

May spring wind bring him endless happiness

The 'good man' could be any Chinese woman's husband at the front of the Sino-Japanese War and these words could represent the heartfelt wishes of any Chinese soldier's wife.

A close look at various themes in the lyrical contents will show that, for a wide range of listeners, the principal communicative purpose of Shanghai popular songs is an emotional one. Sentimental affairs and topics stressing the pleasure of the moment are common subjects in most songs, although the lyrical contents of Shanghai popular songs cover a broad range of issues. Generally, we can see several typical events, such as the dialogue or monologue of courtship, conjugal bliss, the pang of pain of separated young couples, the sorrow of unrequited love or lovesickness, and the desire for affection in this transitory life. In addition to romantic love between couples, there are songs dealing with family or filial love, including subjects such as gratitude for parental love, family reunion, and nostalgia for the homeland during endless wanderings. Compared to romantic love songs, these are usually direct descriptions of events without too many metaphors or double meanings.

Apart from sentiments, ordinary people's livelihood is another theme in popular songs. In lyrics we may find portrayals of farmers' work, young girls picking tea leaves, people preparing for a wedding, a description of a fishermen's typical day or the beauty and plenty of the land. We may also come across accounts of a broken homeland, of people starving and drifting aimlessly, of homelessness and of dreams of paradise while living in misery. We find incisive views on social phenomena, such as criticism of reckless youth squandering a fortune, the seamy side of the city's nightlife or social inequality. In contrast to these songs full of grumbling and discontent, those calling for the salvation of the nation or service to society are more

positive and constructive. Good examples of this are songs about the coming of spring or of the Chinese New Year with expectations of riches and a better life.

Whether these events are described directly in plain words or abundantly with metaphors, the lyrics are often filled with colourful descriptions of natural scenery, as they have been in many vernacular and literary works. These images may be taken merely as part of the story, serving as a backdrop to create an atmosphere, but sometimes they may be used to suggest something through their metaphoric meanings conventionally perceived in Chinese society. The seasons, wild life, the weather, celestial bodies and the landscape appear again and again. Spring is frequently used to suggest the revival of nature and the experience of romantic love. Some songs praise the bounty of spring and encourage people to cherish it and work enthusiastically, while others appeal to couples in love. Autumn and winter are usually taken as symbols of depression, solitude and hardship.

Wildlife, such as birds, butterflies, fish and flowers are widely used in songs and each of them has its traditional meaning in Chinese society. Mandarin ducks, swallows, butterflies in couples or a pair of phoenix usually symbolise conjugal bliss; a swallow departing South or a nightingale calling at night can be associated with unrequited love and lovesickness; fish swimming in water implies the joy of intercourse. The bird metaphor is equivocal and may be contradictory in different contexts. For example, a flock of swallows or orioles are sometimes regarded as a scene of prosperity and sometimes perceived as a horde of women, even, derogatorily, as flirtatious women. As for plants, the peach flower is customarily synonymous with women but 'peaches and plums' refer to students, especially those who have graduated; a willow by the riverside is a poetic image, but 'flower and willow' is a euphemistic expression for indiscreet behaviour and promiscuity. Roses, though rare

in traditional Chinese literature, are common in popular songs and can be interpreted as the female protagonist in the love narrative or as romantic love itself.

Wind, rain, cloud and fog are common metaphoric images for obstructions and gloom, but they may connote different things in works of literature and in popular songs alike. A spring breeze can be interpreted as a touch of freshness in the air and announces the advent of prosperity, but it can also be seen as the stirrings of love. A girl waiting for a spring breeze suggests her longing for love. 'Rain and cloud' are associated with sex, and raining with man's ejaculation. Sun, moon and stars and land features such as rivers, lakes and hills, are normally used in a straightforward way as backdrops for the narrative. However, 'blue sky and bright sun' and 'red sun' might be politically associated with the Nationalist and the Communist parties, respectively, due to the colour and design of the flags of the two parties.

Since Shanghai popular songs were often played in dancehalls and served as dance music no matter for what purpose or in what context they were created, questions are raised as to the meaning of these songs to the hostesses and their clientele in Shanghai. What was conveyed to these people beyond the rhythmic pulses accompanying dance steps? How did people feel about the sentiments, events and images pictured in these songs? For example, Bai Hong's 'No Rain, No Red Flowers' (*Yu busa hua hua buhong*) reads:

You are a dragon in the sky

I am a bunch of flowers on earth

If the dragon does not turn his body over, there is no rain

If rainwater does not sprinkle over the flowers, the flowers do not turn red

In contrast to its monstrous image of something formidable or baneful to Western people, the dragon is conventionally in Chinese society a symbol of the male, of the monarch, and hence of power and wealth. Besides, according to Chinese myths, ‘the Dragon King of East Sea’ (*donghai longwang*) is the deity in charge of rainfall, and it depends on his mood as to whether there is enough rain for plants to thrive on earth. The allusion presented in the words of this song may, on the one hand, create a picture of how a vulnerable girl needs a powerful man’s careful attention, but on the other hand imply sexual intercourse in line with the aforementioned raining as a sign of ejaculation. However, except for these inferences from the usage of metaphor, there is no further proof of how these words might be perceived by a man and the taxi dancer in his arms at a cabaret in Shanghai.³⁰ It is thus not clear whether the connotative messages conveyed by the songwriter were received by the listeners.

As for the relationship between performers and audience, because not everyone in Shanghai at that time could afford to attend a live performance in the cabaret or to dance with the accompaniment of a band and singers in a dancehall, Shanghai popular songs spread to ordinary people mainly through radio broadcast programmes and gramophone records. Thus most of the audience received these popular songs as disembodied sound, mediated through records, radio and films rather than as a face-to-face musical experience. The most common approach through which the unseen singers could come to the gaze of their fans was by printed materials, such as copies of sheet music, gossip tabloids and celebrity pictorials where their portrayals or photos were shown. Another economical and popular way to access these songs and singers was by going to the cinema, where people were able to enjoy the latest songs through high-quality speakers, while at the same time they could watch the look and demeanour of their favourite artists on the screen. Some

cinemagoers even went to watch the same film several times because they were fascinated by the songs and wanted to listen to them again.³¹ As a result, although some songs were exclusively written for the screen, with their lyrical contents adapted to the narrative and the musical settings arranged in harmony with the plot, other songs, not necessarily relevant to the scenes in films, were added as a publicity stunt in order to promote the films.

3. Behavioural rules

The third group of rules cover performance rituals on and off the stage and apply both to artists and to audiences. Due to the lack of firsthand knowledge of the type of audience that these popular songs catered for, as well as the relationship between audience and performers, it is not clear which were the rules of conversation and codified etiquette current in the popular music scene in the Shanghai era, such as the appropriate behaviour of performers in interviews, the proper response to gossip on magazines, and the guidelines for the spectators during live performances.

According to Yao Li, one of the living elderly singers once active both in Shanghai and Hong Kong, most people at the time would pay more attention to the singing than to the singer's appearance. When giving a live performance in dancehalls, she was always in *qipao* (Manchurian-style female long gown) and never wore any makeup because people usually closed their eyes and just listened to her songs.³² Nevertheless, Yao Li did not mention whether audiences then applaud loudly, shouted 'bravo' (*hao*), encouraged the singer in any other way or even behaved in a manner similar to the ways in which young fans today revere their pop idols in live concerts. A known fact about audience feedback is that in contests

sponsored by various entertainment periodicals in the 1930s, readers were asked to send in ballots ranking their favourite singers so that the popularity of the singers could be gauged by readers' responses.³³ However, more detailed data about behavioural rules must be left in abeyance until more reliable information can be gathered.

4. Social and ideological rules

The fourth group contains the rules which cover the social image of artists and the nature of the music community and its relationship to the world beyond. On the one hand, popular singers in this era relied a great deal on record companies for their continuing performing careers; on the other hand, they maintained an ambiguous relationship with the audience. Record companies came to China with a view to opening up a new market of their record players and recordings. With this new technology, these companies made it possible to store the sounds of stage performances and to sell them in the form of a commodity. To singers, making recordings (either for films or for gramophone records) was the best way to circulate songs quickly in the country and thus to make their names known to a wider audience. Although record companies could reap a great profit for their own sake from contracted singers, it was under the support of these companies that the artists could become established and their stage careers last a long time in the entertainment industry. Therefore, it was of vital importance for singers to keep on good terms with record companies.

However, to listeners, a record company was just a commercial institution, similar to countless other companies who promoted Western inventions and amenities

in Shanghai at the time; it did not matter which institution released the records. What the audience really paid attention to were songs and singers, who fascinated the ordinary public with their syrupy voices. Despite the fact that entertainers, such as story-telling singers and opera players, had long been stigmatised in traditional society, people were not only attracted by popular singers' musical works but also interested in their personal matters. A Chinese saying goes that 'a whore has no feeling for love; an opera player has no sense of honour and justice' (*biaozi wuqing xizi wuyi*). In spite of being looked down upon in such a way, in the past the players used to comfort themselves with the proverb that 'whoever is human listens to opera' (*fanshi ren jiudei tingxi*). These words indeed shed light on the views of the public on Shanghai popular singers at that time – for them, while entertainment is essential for life, it is low and degrading to provide entertainment.

From an ideological point of view, the Shanghai era saw two extreme attitudes in response to popular music. When this new form of entertainment that fused Chinese traditional and Western musical elements first enjoyed success and popularity, the ranks of scholars, moralists and nationalists derided it and tried to ban it as decadent and pornographic and even denounced it as opium for the masses. They argued that this singing and dancing valued immediate pleasure without thought for the future and created an illusion of peace and prosperity. Nevertheless, it could not be denied that to those living the harsh reality of Chinese social conditions at that time, popular song meant escape, while for those chasing flashy and fleshy excitement, cabaret dancing was a fashion and fad as well as a mark of urban superiority. It is possible to argue that, on the one hand, Shanghai popular music involved a multitude of commercial activities in conflict with the morality of traditional Chinese society and was incongruous with calls for the salvation of the

nation, while on the other hand, these songs filled the needs of sectors of the public for amusement at the same time as the vivid imagery they conveyed reflected most people's longing for a happier life.

5. Economical and juridical rules

The last group in Fabbri's rules deals with the commercial activities that guarantee the survival and prosperity of a music genre. The song-and-dance troupe may be the earliest form of commercialisation through which Shanghai popular songs were produced and promoted. The organiser of a troupe wrote songs, trained singers, arranged performances and signed contracts with record companies to make recordings of their stage appearances. For example, Li Jinhui's Bright Moon Song-and-Dance Troupe once signed an exclusive contract and then recorded no less than one hundred records within the course of six months.³⁴ Another common way of promoting songs was through the music society, smaller groups of singers and instrumentalists which usually appeared over the airwaves in programmes sponsored and supported by commercial firms. Some music societies, such as the Great Unity Club (*Datong she*), even promoted their musical works by implementing the use of radio broadcasts with an effective use of printed material – they periodically published collections of songs, as a guide for tunes and lyrics with pictures of their singers on the cover page endorsing the products of advertisers as a means to support the publication.³⁵

Besides their work for the song-and-dance troupes and music societies, some Shanghai popular singers also made a living by performing in restaurants and cabarets. For instance, Wu Yingyin had sung in dancehalls and nightclubs before she

made her first recording. Yao Li, after rising to fame with the success of her radio programmes and records, also performed in top dancehalls in Shanghai. In addition to those live performances, films played an important part in the production and dissemination of Shanghai popular songs. Good songs usually helped to promote films and drew a wide range of people, and on the other hand, the songs of commercially successful films were later made into records, published in collections of song sheets, and performed again in broadcasts and dancehalls.

The three major record companies active in Shanghai – the British-based EMI (China), the American RCA-Victor and the local Great China Records – produced popular songs in their own studios with their own contracted artists and promoted them all over China and abroad. By the end of 1930s EMI (China) controlled most of the Shanghai popular music market and most composers, arrangers and female singers signed exclusively to EMI during the most crucial stage of their careers. Existing records indicate that in EMI most business decisions were made by foreign managers and song lyrics were usually translated into English to be approved by them before a recording session, whereas Chinese employees provided their musical expertise or worked as compradors responsible for negotiating with performers and local distributors. There was certainly a well-functioning mechanism dealing with copyright of songs and lyrics, as well as recordings because, even now EMI (Hong Kong) still pays royalties to the living elderly singers of the Shanghai era or their descendants when old recordings are reissued.³⁶ However, because the documents about the organisation structures of these companies were lost or destroyed during the chaos of political change, most facts about the decision-making processes within companies and the legal relationships between artists (including singers, musicians, composers and lyricists) and companies remain unclear.

V. Concluding remarks

The review of the rise of Shanghai popular song reveals that Li Jinhui's love song triggered the creation and development of Shanghai popular song, and that through gramophone recordings, radio broadcastings and sound films, this new form of musical entertainment enjoyed great popularity throughout Shanghai and other regions of China, regardless of severe criticisms from certain sectors of society. Because these musical works were dismissed as decadent sound and neglected in the history of modern Chinese music, most facts and figures about the popular music industry were not preserved properly and were lost or scattered in Mainland China, Hong Kong and the Southeast Asian Chinese communities due to the political change on the Mainland after 1949.

As shown in the preliminary analysis of the features of Shanghai popular song from the perspective of music genre, there is indeed much variety in the musical elements of these songs, though, generally speaking, most combine traditional Chinese melody and singing styles together with Western orchestral accompaniment. Despite the fact that these songs tend to be concerned with sentiment and put stress on the pleasure of the moment, other issues can be found in the contents of the lyrics as well. Notionally, from the perspective of formal and semiotic features, it is not entirely satisfying to define a genre where songs are mainly in one style but where other various stylistic elements are incorporated here and there into the repertoire. However, taking into consideration the social and historical context in which Shanghai popular song came into existence, it is not difficult to understand why different forms of performance still existed while the main style had been developed through the combination of specific musical materials from the two cultures.

Shanghai was China's first modern industrial, commercial and financial centre as well as one of the world's most prosperous cities in the first half of the twentieth century. All kinds of modern technology and amenities were introduced to Shanghai soon after their appearance in other Western major cities; however, Chinese tradition and habits still existed in people's everyday lives. Similarly, while people were intoxicated with the fusion of the Chinese pentatonic scales and the Western instrumental accompaniment in Wu Yingyin's 'Meet by Chance' (*Ping shui xiangfeng*), they never forgot the lasting charm of the *huqin* and story-telling ballad in Zhou Xuan's 'The Wandering Songstress' and never stopped enjoying the resonant *bel canto* singing in Sheng Jialun's film song 'Singing in the Midnight' (*Yeban gesheng*).

Ever since Li Jinhui began the composition of love songs, arranged commercial performances and made them into gramophone records, the production and spread of Shanghai popular songs had been dependent on the collaboration between artists (song-and-dance troupes, music societies or other contracted musicians and performers of record companies) and commercial institutions (radio stations, film companies and record companies). Due to insufficient knowledge regarding the details of business practices in the Shanghai popular music industry, it is not clear whether there was someone in an executive position in the music society or song-and-dance troupe or a department in the record company functioning as the equivalent to the A&R person in today's major record companies, i.e. responsible for the style of musical works and the image of a star. Nevertheless, the musical elements, lyrical contents and forms of performance of these popular songs reflect a collective style of these participating artists and institutions and, at the same time, bygone audience tastes.

The review of the rise of Shanghai popular song and preliminary analysis of its generic features provide a good point of departure for a reconstruction of a neglected part in its history. More evidence will present a clearer picture of the context in which the various musical events took place and take us a step further in our understanding of this interesting period in the modern history of music in China.

Endnotes

¹ To give a few examples: Hanchao Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights: Everyday Shanghai in the Early Twentieth Century* (Berkeley, Cali. and London: University of California Press, 1999); Sherman Cochran (ed.) *Inventing Nanjing Road: Commercial Culture in Shanghai, 1900-1945* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell East Asia Series, 1999); Frederic E. Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai, 1927-1937* (London: University of California Press, 1995); Frederic Jr. Wakeman and Wen-hsin Yeh (eds), *Shanghai Sojourners* (Berkeley, Cali.: Institute of East Asian Studies, 1992); Yingjin Zhang (ed.), *Cinema and Urban Culture in Shanghai, 1922-1943* (Stanford, Cali.: Stanford University Press, 1990).

² The first Shanghai popular song was written by Li Jinhui in 1927. The historical recording (Shanghai Pathé 34278 A & B) mentioned here was performed by his daughter, Li Minghui, and was released by the EMI (China) in Shanghai. It appears that the critical remark 'strangling cat' was first made by the noted writer Lu Xun.

³ The term *Haipai* was originally used by the literati in the late nineteenth century to disparage the more vibrant, liberal and commercial-oriented local painting, theatre and literature that was produced in Shanghai and which contrasted with the

supposedly more conservative and traditional *Jingpai* ('Beijing style'). However, in the early twentieth century this designation was gradually accepted by people in Shanghai and applied to them with a positive connotation. For a further discussion of the history and meaning of the term, see Zhang Zhongli (ed.), *Jindai shanghai chengshi yanjiu* (Modern Shanghai studies) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1991), pp. 1130-59.

⁴ For more details about the history and organisation of Shanghai Municipal Symphony Orchestra, refer to Robert Bickers, "The greatest culture asset east of Suez": the history and politics of the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra and Public Band, 1881-1946', in Chi-hsiung Chang (ed.), *China and the World in the Twentieth Century* (Taipei: Institute of History, Academia Sinica, 2001), pp. 835-75.

⁵ There were several amateur groups, such as the Heavenly Cadence Society (*Tianyun she*), the Great Unity Music Society (*Datong yuehui*) and the Midnight Music Society (*Ziye yuehui*), striving to preserve the tradition of serious instrumental music and operatic performance. They also carried out research in the compilation and translation of Chinese music manuscripts into Western notation, and improved the design and manufacture of Chinese musical instruments. These groups usually gave regular concerts in their own right or other programmes in hotels and private banquets by request. Among these groups is worth remarking the Midnight Music Club whose founder, Xu Ruhui, a former member of the Great Unity Music Society, conducted his music ensemble accompanying popular songs written by him; the performance featured Chinese percussion playing frenetic jazzy rhythms. For more details of Xu's life account and his popular songs, see Xu Wenxia, 'Wode fuqin Xu Ruhui yu

Zhongguo zaoqi liuxing gequ' (My father Xu Ruhui and Chinese early popular songs) *Musicology in China*, 1 (2002), p. 86.

⁶ School songs are tunes and lyrics collected and published as educational materials for teaching singing in elementary school or at higher levels. The earliest group devoted to these works was the Music Study Society (*Yinyue jiangxihui*) founded by Chinese visiting students in Tokyo. Shen Xingong, Li Shutong and Zeng Zhimin were three of the most prolific composers in this society. For their propositions and contributions to Chinese early music education see Gerlinde Gild, 'Early 20th century "reforms" in Chinese music,' *Chime*, 12-13 (1998), pp. 119-21.

⁷ In 1933, leftists Tian Han, An Er, Ren Guang, Zhang Shu and Lü Ji formed the Soviet Friend Society (*Sulian zhi you she*) in order to study Soviet mass music and composition. In the next year they set up another group, the Music Unit of the Left-wing Dramatists Union (*Zuoyi julian yiyue xiaozu*), to integrate more musicians into the production of music and films and thence to devote to communist revolution. See Qin Qiming (ed.), *Yinyuejia Ren Guang* (The musician Ren Guang) (Anhui, China: Anhui wenyi chubanshe, 1988), pp. 13-17.

By the end of 1935 over a hundred choirs and singing societies had been founded across the various social strata in Shanghai. These societies gathered regularly to sing patriotic songs in the hope of boosting the morale of Chinese people and army. See Wang Yuhe, 'New music of China: its development under the blending of Chinese and Western cultures through the first half of twentieth century, part II', *Journal of Music in China*, 30:2 (2001), p.189.

⁸ In the mid-1930s, there were eighty-nine radio stations running in China and forty-three of them were situated in Shanghai, among which four were operated by foreigners and catered mainly for Western communities, two were state-owned, and the others were all local commercial stations. See Shanghai tong she (ed.), *Shanghai yanjou ziliao xuji* (Shanghai research materials vol. 2) (Shanghai: Shanghai tong she, 1935), pp. 564-9.

⁹ The Chinese word *genii* can be understood literally as those females who sing to earn their living. However, it was usually used as a derogatory term because actresses or entertainers had been traditionally stigmatised in traditional Chinese society, and performers who ‘sell songs’ to the public might sometimes be associated with courtesans and their sexual services.

¹⁰ Li Jinguang, Chen Gexin and another three prolific composers, Yao Min, Yan Gongshang, and Liang Yueying, were regarded as the most influential and were later nicknamed the ‘Gang of Five’ of Chinese popular music by critics.

¹¹ Andrew F. Jones, *Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in the Chinese Jazz Age* (London: Duke University Press, 2001), p. 74.

¹² Examples of Nie Er’s songs are, ‘Song of Dockers’ (*Matou gongren ge*), ‘Song of Picking Water Chestnut’ (*Cailing ge*), ‘Song of Newspaper Boys’ (*Maibao ge*), and ‘The Volunteer’s March’ (*Yiyong jun jinxingqu*), which later on became the national anthem of the People’s Republic of China.

¹³ See Wang Yuhe, *Zhongguo jinxiandai yinyue shi* (A history of Chinese contemporary and modern music), 2nd edn (Beijing: People’s Music Press, 1994), pp. 87-92; ‘New music of China: its development under the blending of Chinese and

Western cultures through the first half of twentieth century, part II', *Journal of Music in China*, 30:2 (2001), p. 189.

¹⁴ For example, Tim Brace, 'Popular music in contemporary Beijing: modernism and cultural identity', *Asian Music*, 22:2 (1991), pp. 43-66; Huang Hao, 'Yaogun yinyue: rethinking Mainland Chinese rock 'n' roll', *Popular Music*, 20:1 (2001), pp. 1-11; Nimrod Baranovitch, *China's New Voices: Popular Music, Ethnicity, Gender, and Politics, 1978-1997* (Berkeley, Cali.: University of California Press, 2003).

¹⁵ Liu Xing, *Zhongguo liuxing gequ yuanliu* (The origins of Chinese popular songs) (Taichung, Taiwan: Taiwan shengzhengfu xinwenchu, 1988); Liu Guowei, *Jinqu wushi nian: guoyu liuxing gequ shiyong baodian* (Fifty years of the golden songs: a practical treasury of Mandarin Chinese popular songs) (Taipei: Donggong guoji guanggao youxian gongsi, 1996); Wong Kee-Chee, *The Age of Shanghainese Pops: 1930-1970* (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing, 2001).

¹⁶ Shuijing, *Liuxing gequ cangsang ji* (A record of the vicissitudes of popular song) (Taipei: Dadi chubanshe, 1985).

¹⁷ Jones, *Yellow Music*, pp. 94, 136.

¹⁸ See Jonathan Stock, 'Reconsidering the past: Zhou Xuan and the rehabilitation of early twentieth-century popular music', *Asian Music*, 26:2 (1995), p. 129.

¹⁹ Wong, *The Age of Shanghainese Pops*, pp. 12-13.

²⁰ For the details of how genre labels work, see Simon Frith, *Performing Rites: On the Value of Popular Music* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), ch. 4.

²¹ Jason Toynbee, *Making Popular Music: Musicians, Creativity and Institutions* (London: Arnold, 2000), p. 103.

²² See Franco Fabbri, 'A theory of musical genres', in David Horn and Philip Tagg (eds), *Popular Music perspectives* (Göteborg and London: IASPM, 1982), pp. 52-81.

In this article, Fabbri defines a musical genre as a set of musical events (real or possible) whose course is governed by a definite set of socially accepted rules and further suggests five groups of rules involved in the definition of a genre.

²³ In Chinese music, one single note in itself could be seen as an experience of harmony which can trigger off other extra-musical harmonious references. For a rough guide of the melody and harmony concept of Chinese music, see Otto Karolyi, *Traditional African and Oriental Music* (London: Penguin Books, 1998), pp. 150-56.

²⁴ As a curiosity, it is worth remarking here that 'Rose, Rose, I Love You' was the first Chinese song with English lyrics that made it in the international market. The interpretation by Frankie Laine (Columbia 39367) became very popular during the 1950s, but most Western listeners had no idea of its Chinese origin when they first came across the song.

²⁵ For instrumentation of jazz in these two eras, see Avril Dankworth, *Jazz: An Introduction to Its Musical Basis* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp.54, 62.

²⁶ See Shuijing, *Liuxing gequ cangsang ji* (A record of the vicissitudes of popular song) (Taipei: Dadi chubanshe, 1985), pp. 166-7.

²⁷ Seeking higher musical artistry, Ouyang Feiying and Qu Yunyun studied European classical music and art songs under foreign vocalists, Mrs Ford and Mrs Levi. They later gave several concerts with Shanghai Municipal Symphonic Orchestra. See Ouyang Feiying, *Wochang Xianggelila: Ouyang Feiying huiyi lu* (I sing Shangri-la: a memoir of Ouyang Feiying) (Taipei: Yuzhouguang chubanshe, 1998), p. 56.

²⁸ The use of vernacular as opposed to classical Chinese in writings and textbooks had been insistently demanded by some intellectuals since the May 4th movement of 1919. As a result, the Ministry of Education acceded to their appeal and officially mandated the use of vernacular in public schools in 1921. Consistent with these demands about using the vernacular, some of the May 4th intellectuals had been writing the so-called ‘new poems’ (as opposed to classical poems), discarding classical rules of tonal patterns and rhyme schemes for free style and plain words.

²⁹ To name a few, *lang* (‘man’) and *ge* (‘elder brother’) used by females when addressing their loved men, *nu* (literally, ‘slave’) used by females referring to themselves, and *jie* (‘elder sister’) or *mei* (‘younger sister’) meaning either girls or women.

³⁰ A taxi dancer is a professional dance partner, employed by a dancehall or nightclub to dance with patrons who pay a fee for each dance.

³¹ See Wong, *The Age of Shanghainese Pops*, p.19

³² See Shuijing, *Liuxing gequ cangsang ji*, p. 205.

³³ Two examples of these periodicals are *Popstar Pictorial* (Gexing huabao) and *Nightly News Magazine* (Dawanbao fukan).

³⁴ See Jones, *Yellow Music*, pp. 95-6.

³⁵ This Great Unity Club, where Yao Li and Yao Min played important roles, had no connexion to the abovementioned Great Unity Music Society which was devoted to traditional Chinese music.

³⁶ For example, Wu Yingying was invited by EMI to Hong Kong several times to collect royalties when she still resided in Mainland China and a royalty was also kept for Zhou Xuan's sons after she passed away. See Liu, *Jinqu wushi nian*, p. 51.

Chapter Two

A Model for Understanding Shanghai Pop

Apart from great popularity among Chinese fans, an interesting combination of various musical elements and fragmentary historical accounts of the pop industry and its participants in Shanghai, what else about Shanghai popular song is known to us today? Just as the Chinese audience took pleasure in popular songs in the 1930s and 1940s, with the rise of the broadcasting industry, the availability of gramophone records and the popularity of sound films, so did people in the West enjoy a wide range of popular music during the same period. However, whilst nowadays there is a vast literature about the development, the makers and consumers and contents of Western, particularly Anglo-American, popular music in this period, there are few writings that provide comparable facts and figures of Shanghai popular song.¹ As mentioned in the introductory chapter, there is only sketchy information about record companies, artists' life accounts, anecdotes about historic events and commentaries on a few musical works scattered in various types of publications, such as biographies, popular periodicals and liner notes for recordings. In order to rediscover this underrepresented part of the modern history of Chinese popular music, a systematic approach is required to gain a better understanding of the industry where Shanghai popular songs were produced, sold and consumed, as well as all the components that make up those popular songs.

I. Rediscovering Shanghai pop

Legendary as Shanghai popular song is, what made it so popular from the early 1930s to 1940s in Shanghai and for more than a decade up to the 1960s in Hong Kong? It is generally believed that Major transnational record companies which manufactured both recordings and record-play equipment came to Shanghai and other major cities in Asia in order to open up new markets and expand their businesses.² It is a historical fact that the proceeds from selling a collection of love songs to a Shanghai publisher resolved Li Jinhui's financial difficulties and initiated the creation of Shanghai popular song. Since the late 1920s, Chinese popular music entered the mass market in the form of purchasable commodities primarily through songbook publishers, record companies, radio stations and film companies and live performances in entertainment venues. The underlying rationale for the business Li and these institutions had been doing is straightforward, as Simon Frith indicates, 'to make money out of music'.³

Since music is not a thing but an experience which is transient and ungraspable, the key to make money out of music is to turn it into something that can be traded for financial profits. It is not sounds but the storage of sounds that we buy and sell. Shanghai popular song came to existence at the time when a new technology of musical storage and retrieval was developed and introduced to China. The recording technology not only created a new industry sector, the manufacture of records and record players, but also established the structure of the modern music industry. Frith describes the music industry as 'a business in which both the supply side (the musicians) and the demand side (the consumers) are irrational' and record companies 'make their money from bringing supply and demand into line'.⁴ Keith Negus suggests that the industry should be understood as 'both a commercial business

driven by the pursuit of profits and a site of creative human activity in which some very good popular music has come and continues to emerge'.⁵ It is not clear how much financial benefit was gained by the record companies involved in the production and distribution of popular songs in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai. These companies indeed filled various needs of musicians, including singers, songwriters, instrumentalists and consumers (not only the audience who listened to songs but also those whose business relied much on the use of songs, such as radio stations and film companies).

These economic facts can be broken down into three facets, each of which suggests one of the three cornerstones of the modern music industry: musical events, commercial activities and technological developments. Musical events include creation of songs by composers and lyricists, interpretation of songs by instrumentalists and singers in recording sessions and live performance, and appreciation of musical works by the audience. Commercial activities consist of a variety of activities concerning management and operation of the business, including processes occurring inside a record company, such as recruiting and contracting artists, planning the production and manufacturing records, as well as those processes leading to the outside, such as promotion and distribution of products and licensing the use of them. Technological developments refer to invention or improvement of musical storage and retrieval devices, and new music carriers which are intended to make recorded sound quality better, recording sessions more flexible and record storage and preservation easier, as well as to other technologies, such as sound films, radio and television, which help in the distribution of music to the mass market.

These three cornerstones not only play their roles individually but also interrelate dynamically to one another. Although it is musical events that bring about

musical supply and demand in the industry, browsing through the history of the record industry, it is not difficult to note that how music is composed, performed and listened to is influenced by technology. For example, the development of electric pick-ups, microphones and amplification in the mid-1920s made it possible to balance small, weak human voice with sonorous sound produced by accompanying bands both in live performances and recording studios and thus gave rise to the intimacy singing style with a languid, caressing voice and more personal sentiments in lyrics of American Tin Pan Alley songs.⁶ The development of the durable vinyl 45-rpm record in the late 1940s, together with the growing popularity of compact transistor radios since the mid-1950s, played important roles in the course of the formation of a new music genre, rock.⁷ Moving on to the 1970s, the arrival of tape cassettes and cassette recorders gave listeners a new means of control over the sounds and allowed them to 'compile LPs and radio shows for themselves' and 'use a Walkman to carry their soundscapes around with them'.⁸ Nowadays, the utilisation of digital technologies such as MIDI and sound editing software makes it possible for musicians to compose on a computer and to record without the need of the good acoustic environment of the studio. These historical facts certainly show us how musical events may be shaped by technology.

As for the impact of commercial activities upon musical events, the bureaucratic system of production and promotion in most record companies serves as good evidence. In order to realise optimal returns, i.e. maximising profits from success and minimising losses from failure, record companies establish contract-based relationships with artists and seek control over issues such as the release schedule, the choice of the producer, songs to be released and the song order in an album, the promotional strategy and the licensing policy.⁹ The musical style, image and other

particular characters of a final product are usually, if not always, determined in accordance with the corporate policy. Reluctant to risk stylistic experiments or innovation when very few records actually generate a profit, producers may simply follow standardised formulae which govern style, text, melody, formal structure, harmonic progression and the like.¹⁰ It is a business decision that contributes to the homogeneity of a certain musical style in the market. The recent emergence of 'world music' is another example of commercial influence on musical events. The term 'world music' was originally coined in a 1987 meeting by eleven independent record labels to name the many various forms of music unclassifiable in terms of Western genre labels in order to improve the music's sales situation.¹¹ However, in the 1990s even major record companies started packaging and marketing their artists and, in the name of world music, musical elements draw from non-Western repertoires were intentionally added or rearranged. Hence, a new fashion of music production started. At the same time, a new sect of 'world' fans gradually formed in the market, attracted by any kind of non-Western music promoted by record companies regardless of what the music really was. Many artists also tried to integrate into their compositions or performances non-Western instruments and musical materials of the minorities as a mark of 'world'.

The collaboration between technological developments and commercial activities can be observed through the complex history in which acquisitions, mergers and joint ventures have been made by several transnational corporations, such as the British-based Thorn-EMI, the Japanese Sony Corporation, the Bertelsmann Group of Germany and the American Time-Warner conglomerate, which not only own record companies but also have interests in media, leisure and entertainment, domestic and industry audio-visual products and telecommunication equipment.¹² As the

production and mass distribution of commodified culture items, i.e. musical products in the case of the music industry, are usually faced with an uncertain and unpredictable environment, there are needs for the involved entrepreneurial organisations to diversify into related technologies and entertainment business to disperse the risk incurred in developing new products and markets. Moreover, with the arrival and improvement of new technologies for home entertainment and mass media such as tapes, video, compact discs, the Internet and cable or satellite TV, according to Keith Negus, 'the positioning of artists in various media and the construction of image' has moved 'beyond sound production'.¹³ In order to extend the exposure of artists and their music as well as to increase the circulation of musical commodities, record companies have to make the most of and expand their interests across information technologies and various media outlets. Corporate policy also has to be modified accordingly in response to the change of technologies so that new technologies can offer a competitive advantage in the pursuit of commercial success.

It is across these three facets that musical products can be manufactured, circulated and consumed. In previous studies, the production, distribution and consumption of popular music is usually examined as a series of industry processes, despite scholars' various perspectives on the actual functioning of these processes. Bound up with the stress on the systematic nature of the production process in capitalist societies, Theodor W. Adorno argues that popular music is produced by a culture industry, which he compares to an 'assembly line' turning out its products by synthetic, planned methods, just like those industries which manufacture consumer goods. Musical desires are created, controlled and exploited in the industry and thus 'a circle of manipulation and retroactive need in which the unity of the system grows ever stronger' is formed'.¹⁴ According to Adorno, whilst artists fit their musical

works to rigid patterns of pre-existing formulae and norms, the audience passively accept standardised musical products manufactured by the assembly line.

Different from Adorno's extreme standpoint of industrialised mass manufacture, Paul Hirsch developed an 'industry system' model of the production of culture products in which artists and mass audiences are linked by an ordered sequence of events. Creative raw materials are first proposed by artists in the 'creative subsystem' and then admitted to and selected for sponsorship together with promotion by producers and administrators in the 'managerial subsystem'. The selected output is filtered by mass media gatekeepers in 'the institutional subsystem' and finally introduced to the public in 'the societal subsystem'.¹⁵ In this model, music as a raw material is processed through a system with preselection strategies at each stage, and musical products arrive at the consumption stage only when they succeed in firstly being selected by an entrepreneurial organisation and secondly receiving mass-media coverage. However, apart from making selections to cope with uncertainty, Hirsch sheds little light on the impact of these strategies on musical works and moreover, it appears that in this model the music industry staff have no influence on the shaping of products.

In a study of country music songwriting John Ryan and Richard Peterson show a loosely linked 'decision chain' through which songs pass and reach consumers. At each link in the chain, numerous specialists make decisions and pass the work to the next stage, but 'songs are often rewritten or reinterpreted at several points along the way' before they are presented to the consuming audience. The industry staff may shape products according to a 'product image'.¹⁶ For example, a song may be modified after the producer listened to the demo to fit the image he wants to convey and the appearance of a song may keep changing during the

recording session and at the postproduction stage. Adding to this point, Negus contends further that the industry personnel are not only involved in filtering or contributing to product images but also actively intervene and change the sounds and images as they are being put together.¹⁷

Obviously, both the ‘industry system’ and the ‘decision chain’ are unidirectional: musical products are passed stage by stage from artists to the public. Derived from the results of a research work on the record industry in France, Jean-Pierre Vignolle indicates that popular music is manufactured in a manner of collective creation by horizontal collaboration between various specialists and there is no ‘absolutely fixed logical or chronological order of precedence’ in the entire process in which songs are manufactured and marketed to the public. He also suggests that the professionals in creation are linked to the public with a fundamental connection and thus the consumer can be regarded as part of the productive forces of music.¹⁸ Vignolle’s argument shows that the production of popular music is not determined in one direction but is a collective creation and involves the production and the consumption side interactively.

In an attempt to gain a better understanding of the pop industry in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai rather than debate the diversity and appropriateness of models of the industry, a working model is proposed in this study based on the concept of the ‘industry chain’, ‘decision chain’ and ‘collective creation’, together with the dynamic interaction of the abovementioned three cornerstones. In our society, the popular music industry functions as a platform on which musical products flow from the supply side to the demand side through several business processes. The platform is set up by various participants involved in various musical events, commercial activities and technological developments and thereon musical products stored and

retrieved in different forms are produced, sold and consumed. The products both shape and are shaped by all the processes occurring on the platform. Fig.1 illustrates a simplified model of music industry with its product flow from the supply side.

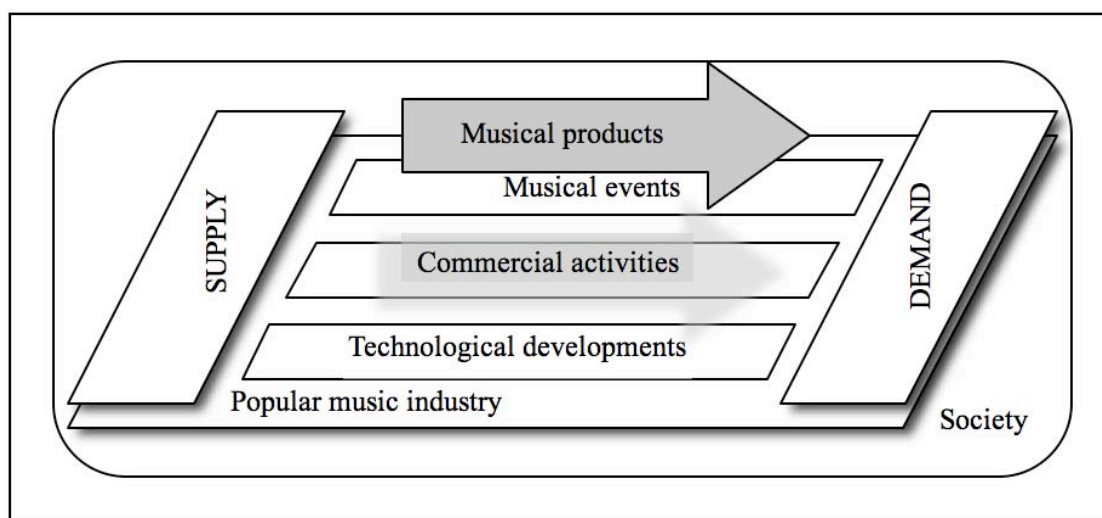


Fig.1 Simplified model of the popular music industry

Although this model basically draws on historical facts and recent developments of the Anglo-American music industry and might not be fully applicable to the pop industry in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai, it can serve as a good starting point for this study. Thus, grounded on this proposed model, the work of rediscovering Shanghai popular song can be carried out at two levels: first, understanding the operating mechanism of the ‘platform’, which includes the producing, selling and consuming processes in the popular music industry, and second, understanding the components of the ‘products’, which are musical elements and lyrical contents in Shanghai popular songs. The two-level work should begin by reconstructing a historical view of the industry and continue with an analysis of lyrics, melodies, instrumental arrangement and interpretation of song works.

II. Level one: reconstruction of the platform

In the proposed working model of the music industry, it is suggested that musical events, commercial activities and technological developments impact upon one another and musical products may shape and be shaped by all of these processes. However significant on the industry platform these interactions are, the mutual dynamics can only be detected and described by virtue of tracing through the course through which music comes into existence from its creators and reaches consumers in the form of purchasable commodities in the market place. Hirsch's 'industry system', Ryan and Peterson's 'decision chain' and Vignolle's 'collective creation' are all grounded on observations of the flow of musical products, whatever determinants of the appearance or image of final products they have discovered. Thus, in order to reconstruct a historical view of the Shanghai popular music industry, it is useful and necessary to investigate the physical flow of musical products and thereby to understand the operating mechanism of the platform.

North America and Europe are undoubtedly places where the modern music industry began and where relevant technologies were innovated and improved, recording and producing processes established and commercial practices developed. During the 1930s to 1940s, two of the three major record companies involved in the production and publishing of popular music in Shanghai were owned by transnational capital, the British-based EMI and the American RCA-Victor. A third one, Great China Records, originally funded and established by both Chinese and Japanese capital, ran its business with limited facilities on a much smaller scale compared to the two foreign companies and never competed with them. Therefore, business practices and manufacturing processes in the Shanghai popular music industry might run parallel to those in most major record companies based in American and

European countries. In view of this assumption, a hypothetical flowchart that shows how popular songs move from record companies to consumers along with all the involved participants in the industry can be sketched out according to our knowledge of the modern record industry, regardless of limited, fragmented information of the industry in old Shanghai available at the beginning of this study.

In the hypothetical flowchart (Fig.2), the product flow is divided into three processes, the producing, selling and consuming. The producing process is centred in record companies, controlled by transnational or local capital, where various contracted or freelance artists, including lyricists, composers, instrumentalists and singers, collaborate with other administrative and technical staff on music production. The selling process involves several channels, including songbook publishers, wholesalers or retailers, film companies, radio stations and dancehalls. The producing and selling processes are connected by agents and promoters who help in arranging local distribution of records and cooperation between record and film companies, as well as to organise live performances in radio stations and dancehalls or other entertainment venues. However, singers and instrumentalists may give regular live performances and composers may write songs for songbook publishers and film companies in their own right rather than in association with record companies. In the consuming process, the audience purchases musical products, or simply hears it for free, in various forms such as sheet music, gramophone records, soundtracks in the cinema and live performances, critics judge the merits of those music works and the press collects and comments on all kinds of information about musical products and events around them. Both critics and the audience offer their views to the press, but the audience also relies on the press to obtain more information. The consuming process is linked to the producing process by feedback on music products from critics,

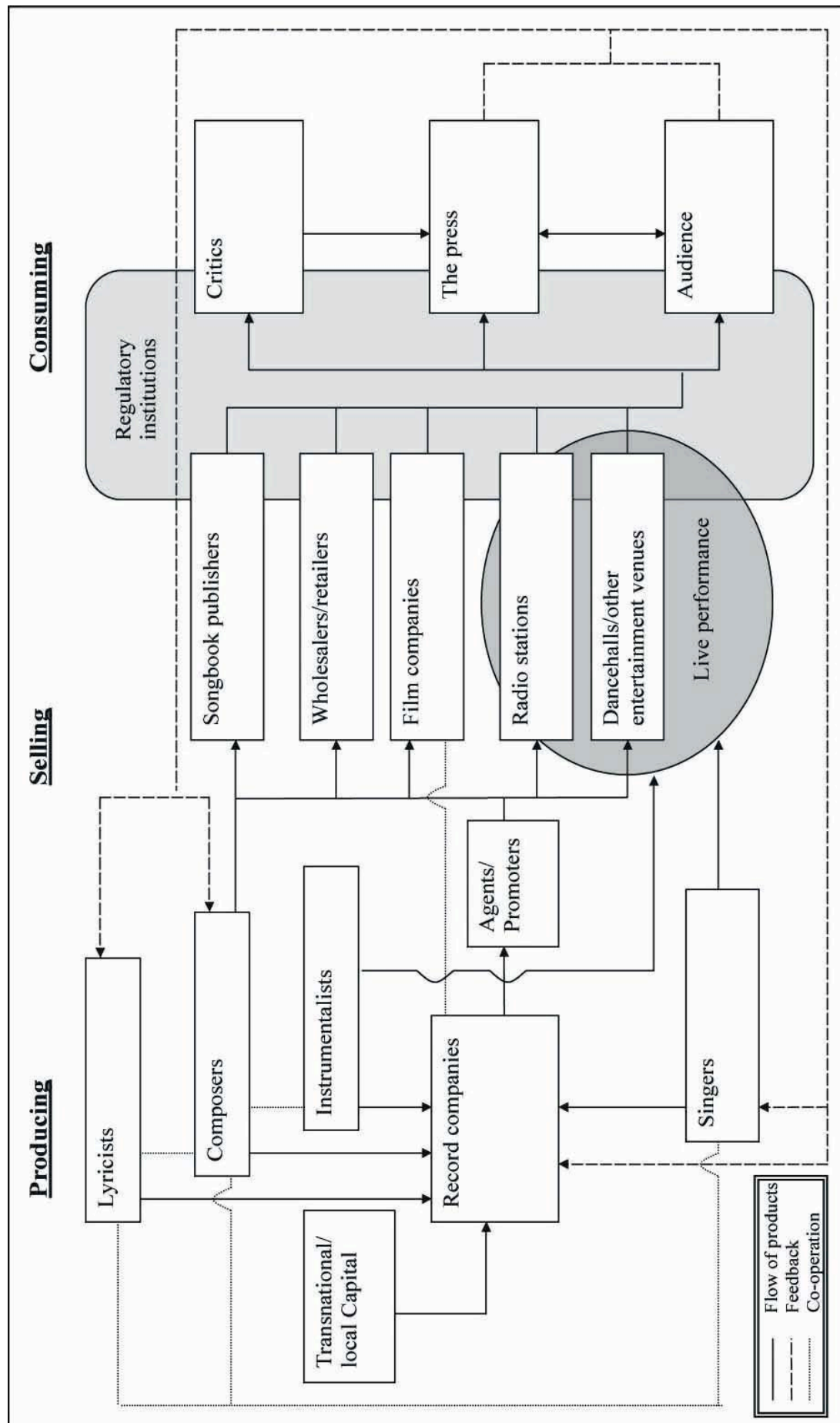


Fig. 2 Hypothetical flowchart of Shanghai popular music industry

the audience and the press. Moreover, loosely around the selling and consuming processes, there are also regulatory institutions, either governmental authorities or other private organisations, which are responsible for censorship as well as setting up and enforcing regulations regarding what can be distributed to the market.

Having each participant's position and connection to others defined in the flowchart, the level-one exploratory work lies in discovering the details of activities they are involved in, artistic or technical expertise they had, interaction and communication among them and the social context in which the industry platform is erected.

In his article about research methods Vic Gammon indicates that 'the greatest single problem in the historical study of popular music is that we are for the most part unable to hear the music we wish to study.'¹⁹ Obviously, the music he mentions is the music which was played before the advent of recording technologies and therefore not stored for our reference today. Fortunately, Shanghai popular song came into existence after recording and playing devices were introduced to China, or rather it was partly in the form of recorded sounds that these songs were disseminated and became popular, and thus nowadays some Shanghai popular songs can still be heard in historical recordings, which are useful source materials for analysis of the music *per se*. As for reconstructing a historical view of the bygone Shanghai popular music industry, it requires more evidence of the music producing, selling and consuming processes so that facts and figures of musical and related commercial activities can be verified. However, due to the chaos caused by the Sino-Japanese War from 1937 to 1945 and the civil war between the National Party and the Chinese Communist and the political change in 1949, details of those processes are no longer intact. A clear

picture has yet to be pieced together through exhaustive investigation of various types of evidence.

Based upon his empirical historical work on musical activity in nineteenth-century southern England, Gammon divides qualitatively various forms and sources of evidence into two categories and examines their usage and limitation. The first is direct evidence, which includes artefacts of musical activities and other materials produced by the participating musicians. Although the value of evidence in this category is the direct relation to a researched subject, it is important to note whether a single piece of evidence is typical and to what extent it can be generalised to reflect the view of the whole industry. As we are not likely to recover all the necessary information from direct evidence, whose validity may need further assessing, the second category, indirect evidence, should then be employed to examine the representativeness of direct evidence and as a supplementary way to gain more understanding of the subject under investigation. Indirect evidence can be usually found in circulating printed matter such as newspapers, magazines and literary works produced by journalists, critics or writers at the time in question, and in collections and works of antiquarian collectors and informed amateurs. The problem of this type of evidence is the subjectivity of producers. As journalists, critics and writers would impose their own categories of perception on what they observe and the situation could be altered due to their presence, what is observed may not be the norm and therefore what is written down and published may not be representative. The collectors and amateurs are also highly selective in what they record and preserve. Only what they regarded as genuine items and valuable information, judged by the criteria they have evolved, will be taken down. To overcome these difficulties, one

should 'assembly a quantity of diverse material relating to an observed phenomenon and sift out the elements most or all of the accounts possess.'²⁰

The historical study of the Shanghai popular music industry must draw on a wide range of direct and indirect evidence so that facts and figures of specific events or common phenomena can be crosschecked. Historical materials to be investigated, according to their source, fall into four groups, which are items released by record companies, official reports or annals issued by governmental authorities, printed matter and films circulated in Shanghai and narrative accounts and evidence collected from living participants of the industry. The uses of these four groups of materials and major problems that will be confronted in dealing them with are discussed below.

The materials issued by record companies, including internal business documents, posters, catalogues, sheet music and gramophone records and sleeves, are good sources of direct evidence of activities in the industry. These primary sources reveal a range of historical facts such as the structure of record companies, the decision-making routine and business process, publication information and how acts were produced and promoted. Nevertheless, the original three major record companies in old Shanghai no longer exist and neither their internal documents nor text material released to the public then were preserved properly or transferred to any institution.²¹ Most of these items are now individual collections scattered around the world. As private collectors usually only seek and acquire what they are interested in and institutions only curate what they are donated or entrusted to, it is unlikely to find a single collection of primary source documents which cover chronologically the whole period in question or all types of printed and published matter circulated at a specific time. Therefore, any material retrieved may only reveal partial details of a single event but not reflect a full view or a trend over a long period. Moreover, some

primary sources are not clearly dated. For example, a gramophone record released in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai usually bears no date. The publication year was never printed on the record label or sleeve nor was it given on a poster or in a catalogue. It causes problems when a date is needed to assess, for instance, when a specific commercial practice was introduced or the impacts of an incidental event over the ensuing years.

Official documents to be consulted consist of official statistics and census, tax and tariff files, court proceedings, reports from regulatory institutions and government annual reports, by which socio-economic backgrounds such as the demographic structure, cost of living, dispensable household income, purchasing power, commercial law, publication regulations and government attitudes towards popular song, can be better understood. Before tracking down legal records and official reports of demographic and commercial information, it is essential to understand by whom and how they were generated. The city of Shanghai was governed by three separate and distinct municipal entities, the International Settlement, the French Concession and the City Government of Greater Shanghai. As different governing entities had different political or economic concerns, it is possible that data were gathered and processed for different political reasons and different perceived policy relevance. The three administrations in Shanghai might have varied political attitudes towards a specific subject and therefore only revealed in their publications what was relevant for their own benefit and probably omitted or even distorted what was disadvantageous against their positions. It may be particularly problematic when it comes to transnational issues such as conflicts between Chinese and other nationalities, and the situation can be even more intractable after late 1941 when the Japanese began to take over the whole of Shanghai. Above all, apart from those

which are held in archives and libraries in Shanghai, official documents of the three administrations may nowadays be scattered over those countries which once had settlements in Shanghai, or have long been lost during the turbulence of war and regime transitions.

Printed matter circulated in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai reveals many interesting facets of the industry. Songbooks are important sources of tunes and lyrics when historical recordings of specific songs are not available. Moreover, the song selection in a songbook does not merely reflect the editor's personal preference but may also imply what were popular among the audience at the time. Whereas details of live performances, performing and consuming practices and attitudes of performers and customers in various entertainment venues can be found in settings and dialogue in novels or other contemporary literature, information on the particulars of the venues together with customer guidelines are provided in tourist guidebooks. In periodicals and newspapers, one can discover anecdotes and life accounts of artists, the audience's listening habits and information about commercial activities of record companies, government policies and social criticisms on popular music. In addition to those produced during the 1930s and 1940s, recently released biographies and memoirs may disclose more inside stories which have never been reported in the past. Although these printed materials undoubtedly contain details of participant and business processes they were involved in pertinent to the reconstruction of the platform, as not all materials were written by well cited writers or released by established institutions such as a leading daily newspaper or reputed publisher, it may sometimes be difficult to assess the credibility of their contents. As for films, since screen songs were often used as a publicity stunt to promote a film and the commercial success of a film in turn gave a publicity boost to its obligatory songs,

investigating how songs fitted into the context of a film and how many of the songs used in a film were released by a record company helps in understanding the cooperation between film and record companies. It also sheds light on the audience's musical preference on the silver screen. Moreover, as with literature, settings and dialogue in films can provide clues to how popular songs were performed and consumed as well as how the audience interacted with artists at various venues. Nevertheless, sometimes it is problematic to trace a song back to the film for which it was originally written, because while the screen song is so attractive that it is still known to the public today, the film has long been forgotten so the song in question is not even remembered as a screen song. In addition, the most challenging task is searching for films. Unlike gramophone records, which can be easily played and thus usually collected by more people, film reels are not popular collectibles. Although some early films produced in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai have recently been re-released on VCD or DVD, it is known that scenes were cut out either due to technical or political issues or simply because the surviving reels are not intact.

Ideally, at least one member out of each position in the hypothetical flowchart of the industry should be included on the list of interviewees so that not only can information gleaned from documentary sources be crosschecked but also its incompleteness can be compensated for. Because some members such as composers and managers of a record company are no longer alive and other members such as Filipino or Russian musicians can no longer be reached, the list of interviewees certainly can never be satisfactory. The snowball sampling technique is to be employed to access informants. Interviewees will be approached through two primary contacts: Chen Gang, a professor from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music and the elder son of Chen Gexin (the composer of 'Rose, Rose, I Love You'), and Lee Leng

Kok, a Singaporean gramophone record collector. Fans, instrumentalists, singers and a former employee of EMI were interviewed individually. As Shanghai popular song was once criticised as decadent and pornographic, elderly people usually feel reluctant to talk about issues regarding Shanghai pop and only after properly introduced and gaining their trust can one have a dialogue with them.²² Although sample members are not selected from a sampling frame but from among the acquaintances of existing contacts and thus may be subject to some biases, in such a historical study in which informants are difficult to reach, it is through snowball sampling that industry details can be gathered from more surviving participants. Above all, it is more important to consider how to compare and combine all the comments and recollections of their involvement in the industry from different informants rather than to pursue all living members. The political environment, the development of technologies and the spread and preservation of these popular songs vary in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and other overseas Chinese communities. This influences the way in which people remember and recount the events they have experienced and the phenomena observed. As a result, informants from different political regions may have different views toward a similar subject. Moreover, there will possibly be contradictions in the comments on the same event made by different informants who were in different positions of the industry. For example, since audience interpretation of media content is often highly variable and unpredictable, based on their own perception fans might associate songs with a social phenomenon or a political change which artists and producers did not intend to associate with.

The four groups of historical materials are all valuable raw materials for the work of reconstruction, yet only those which have been sifted through the mesh of contextual sense can be used to lay the foundation and restore the whole platform.

Every piece of evidence from the past, in whatever form, must be interpreted with a thorough understanding of the conditions in which they were generated, that is, to place the texts ‘in their original context in order to gain a better of grasp of their omissions, biases and peculiarities’.²³ As Gammon puts, ‘historical work on popular music requires carefully analysis, a detailed knowledge of context and a degree of sympathy and imagination’, the work of reconstructing a historical view of the Shanghai popular music industry needs an image borne in mind – Shanghai’s prosperity and, at the same time, its political turbulence.²⁴

III. Level two: analysis of the products

Just as most contemporary popular music takes the form of song, so the musical products manufactured by the Shanghai popular music industry reached the audience in the form of song through various carriers: gramophone records, songs broadcast over radio waves, songs crooned in sound films, songs performed in entertainment venues and songs printed on sheets or in books. When a song has just been written out in the supply side of the industry, it is a piece of musical work consisting only of the melody (a sequence of musical phrases, a tune) and lyrics (a set of organised words, verses). However, when reaching the demand side, it is usually a performance with aural effects generated by human voices and instrumental sounds or moreover, together with visual effects, atmosphere and interactions between performers and the audience if such a performance is carried out live in front of the audience. The creation of a popular song can be viewed as a process in which the primitive musical conception is transformed to audio-visual and other effects (Fig.3).

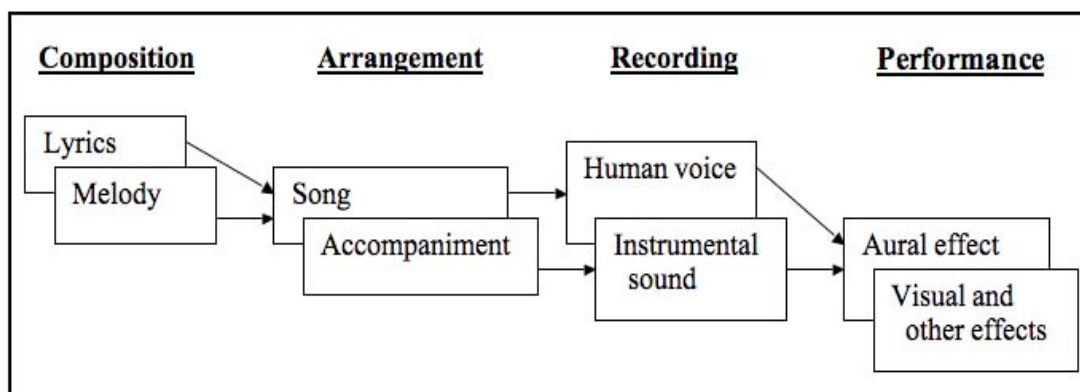


Fig.3 Composition-to-performance process of song creation

The birth of a song begins at the work of composition. A composer creates a line of melody to which a lyricist compiles a group of words to fit or vice versa.²⁵ In the modern music industry popular song is often criticised as formulaic, full of clichés. We do sometimes experience in some latest hit songs similarities in melodic patterns or word usages to one another or to those we have heard somewhere else before. However, it is the melody and lyrics, whatever stereotypical tune or hackneyed verbiage, that form the core of the performance of a song. It cannot be denied that some songs are so enchanting that the tunes or the words imprint on our mind immediately after we hear them and therefore we cannot help ourselves humming or singing repeatedly after picking up them. Some of them may become so-called 'evergreens' and will be passed through decades, interpreted again and again by several singers accompanied by different combinations of instruments with various arrangements. Nevertheless, the original melodies and lyrics, the underlying bases of those songs, remain unchanged. The craft of songwriting, that is, the skill of carving out melodies and lyrics, certainly plays an important role at the very beginning of the process.²⁶

In addition to the exquisite craftsmanship of writing a melody and lyrics, it is the art of arrangement and the recording session that makes a popular song be presented vividly in a certain style and become something can be felt and appreciated. The work of arrangement organises the order and repetition of verses and the chorus and harmonies and adds parts for instrumental accompaniments. In a recording session, the musical arrangement is turned into audible music, well-organised human voices and instrumental sounds, and stored. Antoine Hennion regards a song before the arrangement as nothing and argues that the creation of a song ‘occurs not really at the moment of its composition but far more at the moment of orchestration, recording and sound mixing’.²⁷ This is quite comprehensible because the arrangement of a song tends to influence its style and gives the final product a particular character, which may not have been devised by the songwriter at the stage of composition. Furthermore, however a song has been arranged, its final image will not be decided until the singer sings it and the instrumentalists play it during the recording session, where these artists not only follow the musical notations and the instruction of the producer but also interpret and perform the song with their own imaginations and capacities.²⁸ Even if the singer of a song is also its writer, producer or the accompanying instrumentalist, only when the musical work is performed can his or her musical idea be put into practice, registered by ears and perceived by mind.

When a song has been performed by a singer in collaboration with instrumentalists and backing vocalists or harmony singers, recorded by technicians using proper studio technology and processed with sound engineers’ skill in post-production editing, it becomes a performance. It can be well said that while we are listening to a recorded song, we are listening both to the song, i.e. the tune and words contrived by the creator, and to its performance, i.e. the rendition of this piece by a

group of participants in a musical event taking place in the past. In terms of communication, artists who perform a piece of musical work function as a medium, a channel through which the writer's musical ideas are transmitted to audiences but this medium also modifies the original creation with its own will in the transmission process. From the perspective of performance art, on the one hand, artists are objectified as the medium of the art, whose qualities of being existent are determined by the work, and on the other, they subjectify themselves as the site of the work, deciding what happens in the whole event.²⁹ On the occasion of playing a record or tuning the dial on a radio, the singer's voice we hear is in fact not only a carrier of sounds and words but also the singer's own character. When the performance is delivered in front of the audience, it even involves the interplay between both sides and is no longer unidirectional audio-visual effects. Ergo, the popular song we consume is a performance. Taking it as a human body, its skeleton is formed by the melody and lyrics at the stage of composition, then its flesh added after the work of arrangement and finally its soul gained when performed in the recording session or on other occasions of performance.

The composition-to-performance view explicates notionally how a popular song is moulded step by step from a rudimentary tune and words to a mature work of performance, yet in practice the whole process does not necessarily take place in a specific order and may change from genre to genre. In some genres, the entire image of a song, its audio-visual presentation in performance, may be contemplated at the beginning of creation and is an indivisible whole. Taking rock music as an example, many individual artists or groups, who are actually singer-songwriters and thus create original works and provide the sole instrumental accompaniment for themselves, would usually set out to compose with the instruments they play in the performance at

hand and arrange all performing details at the same time, although further change may be made in the future. In other genres, the work of arrangement is undertaken after the essential musical idea, the lyrics and melody, is implemented. For example, in the field of country music, a songwriter's creation is first accepted by a publishing firm and then made into a demonstration tape, in which the song is carefully arranged to appeal to a potential producer and artist.³⁰ After the song is chosen for a recording singer by a producer, it will be rearranged by other specialists in ways which best fit the singer's established image. That is to say, the arrangement and required effects are adaptable to and dependent on the performer's individual style.

The creation of Shanghai popular song is similar to that of country music. Although there was certainly no such thing as the so-called 'demo' in the 1930s and 1940s, songs were surely written in composers and lyricists' own style and orchestrated by arrangers at a later stage for recording. Based on the composition-to-performance view of song creation, the analysis of products manufactured by the Shanghai pop industry should cover all the aspects of a song, its skeleton, flesh and soul. Hence, ideally, what should be examined in the product analysis includes not only the melody, lyrics and accompaniment but also the human voice, instrumental sound and all audio-visual effects presented in performance. That said, for the purpose of understanding a pop industry in the past whose sole extant products are historical recordings, it would be impracticable to cover in the product analysis all effects in performance and how a musical work is interpreted in performance. Although most people in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai enjoyed recorded performances conveyed through gramophone horns or cinema loudspeakers, they also listened to live performances delivered over the airwaves. Those who afforded merrymaking at a cabaret or dancehall even had opportunities to watch singers reinterpreting the hits of

other artists or probably rendering their own recorded works in a different expressive manner. If every performance can be considered unique and unrepeatable because it is impossible on another occasion to reproduce the exact same environment in which a performance has been carried out, then renditions of the same song in different spatial and temporal contexts can never be the same. In other words, only when a performance is pristinely recorded can the same rendition of a song be heard again. However, provided 'listening' itself can also be treated as part of a performance, when the audience listen to the same recorded song, on radio, record, or in a film, they are also participating in a one-and-only performance. Therefore, in the case of Shanghai popular song, an investigation into all aspects of performance seems to be unfeasible. Since in a surviving historical recording the melody, lyrics, arrangement, singer's voice and instrumental sounds of a Shanghai popular song has been unalterably stored no matter on what occasion it is played back, considering the availability of materials to be examined, it is proposed to narrow down the scope of the product analysis to what can be observed in historical recordings.³¹

In early discussions of popular music, sociologists used to focus on words, investigating lyrical contents and how they are related to general social conditions, whereas musicologists tended to pay much of their attention to music itself, analysing the structure and constituent elements of musical texts through notated scores. Scholars from both fields have their particular strengths in dealing with different facets of popular music. However, as both lyrics and music (the melody and accompaniment) are the ingredients of a musical product, it would be inadequate to emphasise one at the expense of the other. Therefore both lyrical and musical parts should be treated with equal significance in product analysis.

From the lyrical side, the meaning of words is the easiest part of a popular song to be read by its listeners though they usually understand only the sheer verbal meaning of lines in their own imaginations. This can be seen in most if not all cases of officially banned songs. The authorities of censorship in a country would ban a song if anything in the lyrics is considered unacceptable, i.e. against the regime or social mores or harmful to the well-being and stability of society.³² Once a song is banned due to its lyrical content, the performance of its melody is also inevitably forbidden because it is the words that make the tune significant. The musical features of popular song may function as those of wordless classical music, which usually suggests emotive and narrative connotation, yet, as popular song depends on the use of language, according to Rick Altman, 'titles and lyrics so dominate public evaluation of a popular song's emotive and narrative content that a song rarely signifies separately from its linguistic content'.³³ From this point of view, it can be said that it is because the words are remembered that the song is remembered.³⁴

However, from the musical side, it is also empirically true that the words of a song are memorised because the melody is imprinted on mind. Words without music would be difficult to remembered because it takes much less effort to learn the lyrics of a song by heart by singing them out for several times in a relaxed manner than just reading aloud. We are more willing to sing than to learn written words by rote. This may explain why schoolchildren can learn discipline, proper behaviour and morality more effectively through singing than read aloud printed text. Music also helps to keep things in mind and to recall them easily, for it impresses us with more intensity. We can recognise a song, perhaps singing along with it immediately, when it reaches us only with the melody, but we may find it difficult to identify a lyric when it comes as a printed text without any hint of its tune.³⁵ We are still able to keep humming the

tune of a song to ourselves if several lines of the lyrics cannot be remembered, but it is never the case that we begin to recite the words because the melody is forgotten. What is more, on the musical part of popular song, in addition to the tune itself, the accompaniment plays a role which does not only support and make the melody brighter but also has its own illumination and offers a clue to the melody.³⁶ From this point of view, it can be argued as well that it is because the music is remembered that the song is remembered.

Despite the fact that in the performing process a song is an integrated whole in which words and music are bound together, when it comes to 'song analysis', it is essential to deconstruct a song into its basic components. In other words, even though pleasure of popular song can by no means be derived from separated lines of words, notated pitches and rhythms or accompanying instrumental parts, in order to set out the analysis, these components have to be separated from one another based upon their theoretical juxtaposition. In exploring approaches for song analysis, scholars working on the nineteenth-century German art song, *Lied*, have developed a variety of theories and practices which treat the relation between words and music in several ways and may be summarised into four different perspectives.³⁷ From the first one, song is regarded as a musical structure by which words are transformed into a musical form and thus disappear as words. From the second, there is an irreducible relationship between words and music and both of them coexist without losing their individual essences. The third point of view places words and music in a hierarchical structure where 'words lie at the top to provide access to meaning, while the music lies at the base to support the signification of text'. The fourth, in an eclectic way, explains song as including three independent but overlapping areas, words, music and song itself. Words and music are considered an input of song but retain a degree of

autonomy to be viewed outside the song in their own right, whereas song exists under the influence of words and music but holds its ultimate identity not to be limited in the frame of words or music. However the connection between music and words is considered, it cannot help being somewhat arbitrary, but it also serves as a basis for analysis.

In product analysis of the Shanghai pop industry, taking the second of the abovementioned four perspectives together with the proposed composition-to-performance view of song creation, it is assumed that while lyrics and music elements of a song fuse naturally in performance, all of them can be identified separately for further investigation. In historical recordings, the lyrical part of a Shanghai popular song is the melodised words uttered by the singer and the musical part includes the tune delivered through the singing voice and the instrumental accompaniment which may contain a duplicated or modified vocal line, an independent melody and other harmonic, non-harmonic and rhythmic parts. Even though apart from recordings there are still other existing materials such as sheet music or songbooks available for product analysis, these materials only provide lyrics and tunes. Unlike in the West, where there are usually piano-vocal scores prepared for the sheet music market and thus a hint of chord progressions for accompanying a song set either by the songwriter or arranger can be found, in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai there was only the melodic line of a song written in the simplified notation on a sheet without the piano accompaniment or any other harmonic settings. Therefore, as proposed earlier, the analysis will basically focus on historical recordings.

Based on the concepts of the ‘industry chain’, ‘decision chain’ and ‘collective creation’, together with the dynamic interaction of the abovementioned three

cornerstones, a working model is proposed. In this model, the popular industry is viewed as a platform on which musical products were produced, sold and consumed through several business processes. To understand Shanghai pop, the first level of work is to reconstruct the platform, sifting through existing historical materials to discover the details of activities the participants are involved in, artistic or technical expertise they had, interaction and communication among them, and the social context in which the industry platform is erected. The second level is to analyse the products manufactured and traded on this platform by breaking down performances stored in historical recordings into recognisable components and examining the features of them. Before presenting the reconstructed platform and the product analysis in the ensuing chapters, the next chapter will introduce the development and social background of Shanghai, where the pop industry is located.

Endnotes

¹ To name two academic examples: Allen Forte, *The American Popular Ballad of the Golden Era, 1924-1950* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995), a study which employs modern analytical procedures to explore the large repertoire of beautiful love songs written during the heyday of American musical theatre, big band, and Tin Pan Alley; Lewis A. Erenberg, *Swingin' the Dream: Big Band Jazz and the Rebirth of American Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), a book which provides valuable historical narratives of the audience response and their interaction with musicians in the swing era.

² See Pekka Gronow, 'The record industry comes to the Orient', *Ethnomusicology*, 25:2 (1981), p. 251. Gronow's pioneering work on the earlier years of the record industry provides precious and summarised information of the expansion of major record companies and their activities in Asia and North Africa. For more details of the business of these companies in other regions, see also 'The record industry: the growth of a mass medium', *Popular Music*, 3 (1983), pp. 53-75.

³ Simon Frith, 'The popular music industry' in Simon Frith, Will Straw and John Street (eds), *Pop and Rock* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 26.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁵ Keith Negus, *Popular Music in Theory: an Introduction* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1996), p. 36.

⁶ See Charles Hamm, *Music in the New World* (London: W. W. Norton and Company, 1983), pp. 371-2. For another account of how the utilisation of the microphone and amplifier in radio broadcast influenced song styles, see also Hughson F. Mooney, 'Songs, singers and society, 1890-1954', *American Quarterly*, 60:3 (1954), pp. 228-9.

⁷ For more details about the association between technology developments and the emergence of rock music, see Simon Frith, 'The industrialization of popular music', in James Lull (ed.), *Popular Music and Communication*, 2nd edn (London: Sage Publication, 1992), pp. 58-62. See also Richard A. Peterson, 'Why 1955? Explaining the advent of rock music', *Popular Music*, 9:1 (1990), pp. 100-102.

⁸ Frith, 'The industrialization of popular music', p. 70.

⁹ Notes taken from a lecture by Simon Frith at the University of Stirling, 11 March 2003.

¹⁰ Peter Manuel indicates that the heavy reliance on standardised formulae is one of the undeniable features of Western popular music which draws bitter contempt from scholars like Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer. See Peter Manuel, *Popular Music of Non-Western World: An Introduction Survey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 10.

¹¹ See Simon Frith, *Performing Rites: on the Value of Popular Music* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 84-5.

¹² For a brief history of the acquisitions, mergers and joint-ventures among major record companies and more details of the various investments in different areas made by these transnational corporations, see Keith Negus, *Producing Pop: Culture and Conflict in the Popular Music Industry* (London: Arnold, 1992), pp. 1-4. See also Gronow, 'The record industry comes to the Orient', pp. 254-270.

¹³ See Negus, *Producing Pop*, p. 5.

¹⁴ See, Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1998), p. 163. For a concise guide and criticism on Adorno's theory on popular music, see Richard Middleton, *Studying Popular Music* (London: Open University Press, 1990), ch. 2.

¹⁵ See Paul M. Hirsch, 'Processing fads and fashions: an organization-set analysis of culture industry systems', *American Journal of Sociology*, 77:4 (1972), pp. 639-59.

¹⁶ For more details of each link in the decision chain, see John Ryan and Richard Peterson, 'The product image: the fate of creativity in country music songwriting', in James S. Ettema and D. Charles Whitney (eds), *Individuals in Mass Media Organizations: Creativity and Constraint* (London: Sage Publication, 1982), p. 12-21.

¹⁷ See Negus, *Popular Music in Theory* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1996), p. 59.

¹⁸ See Jean-Pierre Vignolle, 'Mixing genres and reaching the public: the production of popular music', *Social Science Information*, 19:1 (1980), pp. 87-88, 101.

¹⁹ Vic Gammon, 'Problems of method in the historical studies of popular music', in David Horn and Philip Tagg (eds), *Popular Music perspectives* (Göteborg and London: IASPM, 1982), p. 16.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²¹ EMI (China) ceased operation in 1949 and its internal documents were then either discarded or confiscated by the Chinese Communist. The Japanese controlled RCA-Victor (China) was taken over by the Nationalist Party after the Sino-Japanese War in 1945, but the business never started again. Great China was captured by the Chinese Communist when Shanghai was 'liberated' in 1949. It is known that all the facilities of these three majors were reallocated for other uses and a 'People's Record Factory' (*Remin changpian chang*) was formed later under the instruction of the new regime, but the whereabouts of these companies' internal documents remain unknown.

²² Before receiving contact details of informants from Chen and Lee, efforts were made at the early stage of fieldwork to approach elderly people who gather on weekday afternoons to listen to and dance to 'Shanghai oldies' in a community hall located in the former French Concession in Shanghai. Although it is believed that they used to be fans of Shanghai popular song and might be able to offer precious information, when approached, they appeared to be suspicious of the motive of such a study about 'decadent and pornographic' music and claimed that they knew nothing about Shanghai pop.

²³ Deacon, David, Michael Pickering, Peter Golding and Graham Murdock, *Researching Communications* (London: Arnold, 1999), p. 30.

²⁴ Gammon, 'Problems of method in the historical studies of popular music', p. 29.

²⁵ Whichever comes first, as Vignolle puts, 'at all events, much toing-and-froing is needed for a satisfactory result to be achieved at the prosodic level.' See Vignolle, 'Mixing genres and reaching the public', p. 88.

²⁶ It is not difficult to find a book titled such as 'How to Write a Hit Song' which explains, as the author would claim, everything would-be songwriters have to know at the stage of composition, and usually advises them to let arrangers and producers do the rest once their work is done. Obviously, all they have to know is the craft of writing a tune and words.

²⁷ Antoine Hennion, 'The production of success: an anti-musicology of the pop song', *Popular Music*, 3 (1983), p. 163.

²⁸ It is particularly true during the days, before the arrival of the technology of multi-track recording and magnetic tape, when a singer had to sing synchronically to the accompaniment of a musical band during a recording session. It would not be uncommon if any of them did not follow exactly the musical notations but rather interpreted the song in a more extemporaneous manner. Modification of the original arrangement and improvisation were not only created by the singer's or bandsmen's own talents but also, undoubtedly, inspired by everyone's reaction during the session.

²⁹ See Frith, *Performing Rites*, pp. 204-5. Frith's argument 'is not just that in listening to popular music we are listening to a performance, but, further, that

“listening” itself is a performance’. For a better understanding of this view on how pop performance works, see *ibid.* pp. 203-25.

³⁰ See Ryan and Peterson, ‘The product image’, p. 15.

³¹ Certainly the possibility of altering the content of a historical recording with the aid of modern digital recording technology is not considered here.

³² A case in point is the notable and controversial Shanghai popular song ‘When will the gentleman come back again’ (*Heri jun zailai*), which was banned by the Nationalist Party, the Communists and the Japanese military in the 1940s.

³³ Rick Altman, ‘Cinema and popular song: the lost tradition’, in Pamela Robertson Wojcik and Arthur Knight (eds), *Soundtrack Available: Essays on Film and Popular Music* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001), p. 23. In this article on film music, Altman considers ‘classical’ music ‘wordless’ because art song and opera, which obviously have words, are not regularly used in film music.

³⁴ Maurice Halbwachs argues that the musical memory of those who have no knowledge of musical notation is always attached to metamusical experience; the melody is remembered because the words are remembered. See Alfred Schutz, ‘Making music together: a study in social relationship’, in Arvid Broderson (ed.), *Collective Papers II: Studies in Social Theory* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), p. 164.

³⁵ See Frith, *Performing Rites*, p. 160. Frith gives an example of the TV pop quiz show in which panellists usually cannot identify a lyric that winds along the bottom of the screen but they can immediately recall it with the help of a couple of notes of the music.

³⁶ In Hennion's opinion, when one whistles the melody of a popular song, though unconscious, it is in fact the accompaniment that 'gives intensity to the recollection of the melody'. See Hennion, 'The production of success', p. 171.

³⁷ These perspectives are drawn from four competing explanatory models for the analysis of *Lied* summarised by Kofi Agawu from other scholars' previous studies. For more details of these models and comments on the problems of their application, see Kofi Agawu 'Theory and practice in the analysis of the nineteenth-century lied', *Music Analysis*, 11:1 (1992) pp. 5-8.

Chapter Three

The Society

Although originally a muddy wetland outside the walled old Chinese town, this area turned into the core of an international metropolis and the most important city in China by the twentieth century. This area was a place where old China encountered Western culture and innovations, a place where Chinese people adapted themselves to Western lifestyle while maintained their long-standing traditions, and a place where traditional performing arts were repackaged and new forms of entertainment arose. It is Shanghai, the place where Chinese popular music in modern times started. Before exploring the Shanghai popular music industry in the 1930s and 1940s, the platform on which musical products, Shanghai popular songs, were manufactured and circulated, it is essential to understand the society where the platform was built. This chapter introduces the backdrop against which modern Chinese popular music was created.

I. The start of modern Shanghai

Despite its status as the largest in China and one of the six biggest cities in the world at the beginning of the twentieth century, Shanghai was small in the sense of the actual area of its urban district. By the end of the Republican era in 1949, the city was only 31.8 square miles, including the former foreign concessions which covered an area of only 13 square miles. It was in this area, originally meant to be a small piece of land reserved for Westerners but unexpectedly opened for Chinese and

expanded several times, that two cultures confronted and intermingled, providing a production base for Shanghai popular song. The pre-treaty-port Shanghai had been long regarded as a fishing village, as described in a guidebook written for foreigners and published in 1934, 'little more than an anchorage for junks, with a few villages scattered along the low, muddy banks of the river'.¹ In fact Shanghai had already attained the status of a walled town in 1554. The walled town became a third-class county in the early nineteenth century and enjoyed commercial prosperity, due to the thriving cotton trade in the Qing period. What the guidebook depicted, before the International Settlement and the French Concession were founded in the mid-nineteenth century, is actually the scene in the northern outskirts of the county town, an area with a rural landscape of rice and cotton fields, uncultivated wetland and meandering waterways. The countryside that later on developed into the metropolitan district of Shanghai is exactly where modern Shanghai arose.

Westerners recognised the potential of Shanghai as early as the 1830s. In 1832, the supercargo Hugh Hamilton Lindsay sailed up the coast of China from Macao, on a commercial mission entrusted by the British East India Company to investigate the possibility of opening trade in the north. After being refused entry to Xiamen (Amoy), Fuzhou and Ningbo in succession, he was given a hearing by the Chinese local authority in Shanghai. This first recorded attempt by Westerners to open Shanghai to foreign trade was fruitless as the Chinese authorities ruled that foreign trade should be confined to Guangzhou (Canton). However, Lindsay noticed the favourable geographic location of the city and indicated in his report to the company that Shanghai had great possibilities as a commercial centre.² He would probably have never anticipated that Shanghai, together with the three cities to which he was denied access, would be opened due to a military engagement ten years later.

In May 1839, the Chinese authorities in Canton confiscated and destroyed large quantities of opium from British warehouses, which British merchants were importing illegally from India to be sold to Chinese dealers. This incident and other ensuing conflicts finally led to the First Opium War (1840-42) between China and Britain. After sporadic land and naval battles, the war ended in complete victory for Britain and *The Treaty of Nanjing* was signed on board a British warship on 29 August 1842, under which Guangzhou, Xiamen, Fuzhou, Ningbo and Shanghai were to be open to foreign trade. Thus, these five cities became the so-called 'treaty ports'. On 8 October 1843, the Supplementary Treaty was signed in Humen (Bogue), which specified terms and detailed how the British could move in. According to the Supplement, the local Chinese authority in accord with the British consul in each treaty port should designate a specific area where the British could reside and a limited zone within which foreigners could travel.³

In Shanghai, following the formal announcement of the opening of Shanghai to foreign trade made by George Balfour, the first British consul in Shanghai, on 14 November 1843, the British started to seek a suitable site for dwellings and storehouses. Finally, the Land Regulations (*Dipi zhangcheng*) was signed by the Shanghai *daotai* ('circuit intendant') Gong Mujiu and Balfour in 1845, as an agreement which provided a basis for the legal status of the foreign settlement in Shanghai. Under this agreement, although foreigners were not allowed to purchase land in law, technically they could negotiate permanent leases with Chinese landowners within the designated area of 138 acres in the northern suburb outside the county town, stretching from the Bund in the east to Barrier Road in the west, and from the Yanjingbang Creek in the south to Lijiachang (at the confluence of the Huangpu River and the Suzhou Creek) in the north. Although it was an area reserved

for the British, in the spirit of free trade, all nationalities and their consuls were welcome to the settlement to develop their business.

Subsequent to the British action, the United States and France also signed treaties with China on 3 July and 24 October 1844 respectively and acquired the same right of trade in treaty ports. In Shanghai, after the creation of the British Settlement came the formation of the French Concession and the American Settlement. On 6 April 1849, the Shanghai *daotai* Lin Gui and the first French consul in Shanghai, Louis Montigny, reached an agreement that the area of 164 acres between the Chinese city and the British Settlement would be allocated for the French. Unlike the British and the French settlements, rather than an officially designated area, the original American Settlement was formed based on the American Episcopal Church Mission established in Hongkou, a district north to the Suzhou Creek, under the direction of Bishop William J. Boone in 1848. It was not until February 1854 that the American national flag was raised in the district and not until June 1863 was the boundary of the Settlement, which enclosed an area of 1,309 acres, officially defined by the Shanghai *daotai* Huang Fang and the American consul George Frederick Seward. Three months later, a new community of interest, the International Settlement, was formed resulting from the merger of the British and American Settlements on 21 September 1863. Although a proposal was once drawn up that the French Concession and the International Settlement should be united, it was never realised because the French insisted on the maintenance of a separate concession in Shanghai.

Thus, foreigners started constructing their own town and set up administrative institutions in Shanghai within the boundaries of the allocated area, which expanded several times and finally reached a total of 13 square miles in 1914, and has remained unchanged ever since. In July 1854 foreign residents held a public meeting to amend

the Land Regulations and choose the first elected Municipal Council. In September 1869, the revised regulations were formally approved by the Chinese government in concert with foreign envoys in Beijing and became the legal basis for the organisation of an administrative government in the International Settlement – Shanghai Municipal Council. Under the revised regulations, ratepayers in the settlement elected councillors to form the municipal council and held the ratepayers' meeting annually to approve the report of the council and pass the budget. Although officially the French Concession was governed by a separate French Municipal Council (Conseil d'Administration Municipale de la Concession Française de Changhai), established in May 1862, and not subjected to the Land Regulations, in practice the administration of the concession was similar to that of the International Settlement, except that the French Consul General still held the power of veto over the Council's decisions. These two separate municipal entities governed the core of the modern Shanghai city until the settlement was abolished in 1943.

As the original Land Regulations prohibited Chinese people from renting or purchasing property within the boundaries of foreign settlements, from 1845 on Chinese residents gradually left the area reserved for foreigners. Except as domestic servants or in service for trades, Chinese were generally excluded in foreign settlements and therefore the area became almost segregated. However, two revolts against the Chinese Qing dynasty unexpectedly steered the Chinese back to the foreign areas, which led to the official abandonment of the segregation by the British consul and made way for the formation of a Sino-foreign city.

The uprising on 7 September 1853 organised by the Fujian-based secret society Small Swords (*Xiaodaohui*) started to drive the first surge of refugees into foreign settlements. As the rebels seized the county town of Shanghai and continued

to attack other county towns nearby, throwing Shanghai and its vicinity in turmoil for seventeen months, Chinese people from the county town of Shanghai and those from neighbouring occupied towns flooded into foreign settlements, camping along the Bund or staying in wooden boats off quays.⁴ Consequently, some foreigners started their business to build dwellings for the refugees. Persuaded by the majority of the foreign merchants who were trying to make capital out of the chaotic circumstances, the British consul Rutherford Alcock, though concerned about the security of the foreign community, agreed to abolish residential segregation. The decision was adopted into the Land Regulations and passed by the public meeting in 1854. Following this new policy towards refugees there came a boom in the business of building and renting houses to Chinese people. By 1860, most of the 8,740 houses in the British settlement were owned by the British and Americans but occupied by Chinese residents.⁵ The other driving force that caused population mobility into the foreign areas in Shanghai was the fifteen-year long Taiping Rebellion led by Hong Xiuquan. Beginning in the southern province Guangxi in 1850 and spreading throughout most of the central and lower Yangtze region, the insurgents occupied Nanjing in March 1853 and established their capital there until it was crushed in 1864.⁶ While the capture of Nanjing had already let loose crowds of people moving from the Jiangnan region to Shanghai, Taiping's several attacks on the county town and foreign settlements during 1860 to 1862 caused more to pour into the foreign areas. By the end of the rebellion, over 110,000 Chinese people had moved into the foreign settlements in Shanghai.⁷

Officially approved to move in, the Chinese population in the International Settlement and the French Concession kept growing and finally far exceeded the number of foreign residents, yet Chinese ratepayers had no voice at either of the

ratepayers' meetings, nor could they be elected as representatives in the governing councils. This political inequality did not change until the second half of the 1920s when two Chinese Ratepayers' Associations were formed in the respective foreign settlements and Chinese members elected by the ratepayer's associations were added to their respective municipal councils. It was first in the French Concession that two Chinese representatives were added to its municipal council in 1926 and three more the next year, which then totalled five Chinese out of a total membership of seventeen. Along the same path, in the International Settlement three Chinese members joined the Shanghai Municipal Council in 1928 and the Chinese membership was increased to five out of a total of fourteen in 1930.⁸ Up until the end of 1941, foreign concessions in Shanghai were mainly under Western control; Chinese councillors had no power or influence over important issues, such as finance, public utilities or rate assessment.

In January 1942, barely a month after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japan seized and reorganised the Shanghai Municipal Council by appointing K. Ogazaki, an official from the Japanese Embassy, as the chairman. Except two obviously non-Anglo-American European councillors, A. Glathe and R. Von der Crone, the rest of the members were either Japanese or 'traitors to the Chinese nation-race' (*hanjian*). In the French Concession, although the governing organisation remained intact, the French Municipal Council lost its autonomy and virtually operated on the instructions of the Japanese. At this stage, both municipal councils existed in name only. In 1943, forced by Japan, on 31 July France returned the French Concession to the Chinese government – the Japanese-controlled puppet Wang Jingwei regime. The executive power over the International Settlement and the ownership of public facilities and other assets in the settlement were also transferred to the Chinese government on 1

August. Hence, the Japanese military and the Wang's regime ruled the whole of Shanghai until the end of the Sino-Japanese War in August 1945. Four years after it was returned to the Chinese National Government, Shanghai was 'liberated' by the Chinese Communist in May 1949.

Whereas the designation of foreign settlements turned the natural landscape in the northern outskirts of the Chinese city from rural fields into populated towns, it was the abolition of residential segregation that decided how the populated towns would develop, under the Western administration but inhabited mainly by Chinese people, into a metropolis where Western values and innovations were imported and acclimatised to Chinese society.

II. Social changes in Shanghai

The economic prosperity and its ambiguous political status attracted a great variety of both Westerners and Chinese from outside the Shanghai area and literally every corner of the world. It is the only one of the original five treaty ports that kept growing and promised to be China's biggest city. The city not only served as a stage for traders, entrepreneurs, diplomats and politicians but also, as it required neither visa nor passport to enter, offered the dispossessed, the ambitious and the criminals a fresh start.⁹ Among foreigners, the three largest contingents, the British, the American and the French, whose concessions made up the city centre, were the most influential. Although the British and American concessions merged to become the International Settlement as early as 1863 and all nationalities were welcomed to come to the settlement, up to the 1930s the Shanghai Municipal Council was still dominated by the British and Americans. More Japanese people moved to Shanghai after the

Treaty of Shimonoseki signed in 1896, which granted Japan the same rights and privileges as other foreigners in China, including that of mining, building railways and factories. Later in the Republican era, White Russian émigrés, who fled the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, and stateless Jewish refugees, especially those from Europe who arrived after 1930, also disembarked at the city and became the two largest sectors of foreign population. In addition to these major constituent nationalities of Shanghai's foreign communities, there were other expatriates from different countries. According to a census conducted in 1930, there had already been forty-eight distinct nationalities represented in Shanghai.¹⁰

Although it was foreigners, particularly those of the three treaty powers, who laid the foundation of modern Shanghai, setting up the administration system and importing Western novelties and commercial practices, the ever-increasing Chinese population, who far outnumbered foreigners, were indeed the majority of the inhabitants of the city.¹¹ All those who had migrated to Shanghai had their stories to tell. As early as 1933, in his book *Shanghai Life (Shanghai shenghuo)*, Xu Guozhen has already recognised two major driving forces behind the immigration: living and entertaining.¹² While millionaires from the interior who fancied an extravagant lifestyle came to Shanghai for pleasure, the penniless from the impoverished surrounding countryside or hinterland flocked to Shanghai to survive. Those who had accumulated a great fortune might not have the opportunity in their hometowns to ride in a motorcar, to visit various entertainment venues full of novelties and to indulge in all sorts of Chinese and Western cuisines – only in Shanghai was it possible to experience a life of luxury and glamour as much as one could afford. As for those who could hardly eke out even a scanty livelihood in other provinces, or who craved for more than what they could earn, Shanghai, as China's largest industrial and

commercial centre in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, appeared to be the Land of Promise to them, though many destitute immigrants never hit the jackpot, but rather ended up being rickshaw coolies or begging on the street. Apart from these two reasons, immigrants moved to Shanghai for yet other reasons. To give a few examples, political dissidents fled to the foreign concessions to take shelter, provincial youths came to Western educational institutions in search of a broader intellectual horizon, young women unfettered themselves from conventions of decorum to seek the freedom in this modern metropolis, and criminals travelled to this bustling port to continue their illegal activities. Whether taking the initiative or being forced, all who trekked tirelessly to and pinned their hopes on Shanghai, as Hanchao Lu pinpoints, 'had a simple, shared goal: to find a better life.'¹³

The confluence of different groups of people in Shanghai, from diverse backgrounds with all sorts of wishes to fulfil, on the one hand inevitably created a city full of strangers competing for survival, which led to the cataclysmic change in moral standards and traditional social order, but on the other hand it also constructed a showground full of possibilities and imaginations, where people developed their careers free from the burden of traditional values and norms. In this metropolis the Shanghainese developed their unique way of life and personality, which contrasted sharply with those in the rest of China.¹⁴

Following Westerners' lead

The administration of foreign settlements in Shanghai imbued Chinese people, either those who had moved in within foreign boundaries or those who still resided in the Chinese town, with a new sense of citizenship. The public participation in the

management of the settlements, as Zhang Zhongli indicates, demonstrated a contrast between the two systems and provided an alternative option of municipal administration for Chinese people.¹⁵ Conventionally, the magistrate (*zhixian*) in a Chinese county town is regarded as the so-called ‘parental official’ (*fumuguan*) and residents are ‘filial civilians’ (*zimin*), who are not allowed to participate in the municipal administration. Residents are merely dwellers rather than citizens of the town. On the contrary, foreign settlements in Shanghai are built on the Western system, in which citizens enjoy a degree of autonomy, though only property owners and taxpayers are qualified to vote, and the governing council acts on behalf and for the benefit of its citizens. Under the influence of Westerners, Chinese residents in the concessions gradually realised their obligation to observe bylaws and dropped deplorable habits, such as disposing of household waste, defecating or urinating, wherever they wanted.

In the Chinese county town, seeing the convenience brought by public facilities and administration in the foreign settlements, some of the gentry put forward proposals to emulate the Western model of municipal administration. They publicised propositions in newspapers, such as recruiting street cleaners and wardens to maintain public health and sanitation, as well as installing street lamps for the purpose of public safety and security.¹⁶ In 1895, the Bureau of Road Engineering (*Malu gongchengju*) was set up in Nanshi, the southern district of the county town, to clear an area ravaged by fire in the preceding year and construct new roads. In addition to the construction and maintenance of roads, the bureau later assumed the responsibility for all matters around the roads it built, such as granting planning permission. After 1900, this system was adopted in other Chinese districts, including Zhabei (to the north of the

International Settlement), Pudong (the district in the east bank of Huangpu River) and Huxi (west Shanghai).¹⁷

Just as Chinese people learnt from the Western municipal administration to transform themselves from dwellers to citizens, so they accepted and made the most of Western innovations, following a process of irrational resistance, careful observation and understanding. For example, there was no gas or electricity in Shanghai before Westerners came. When street gas lamps were introduced in 1865, people thought gas was fire from underground (*dihuo*) and would infuse poison into human bodies when walking on the street. When proposals were made for the introduction of electricity in 1882, they thought electricity was gathered from lightning in the sky, and thus using electricity was irreverence to God and they would be struck by lightning as a punishment. Nevertheless, after they understood those innovations were harmless but convenient to everyday life, they simply embraced the modern technology. In 1893, Shanghai even had one of the largest electric plants in the world.

Coexistence of two ways of life

While all kinds of modern technology and amenities, such as electricity, gas, running water, telephones, trams and automobiles, were introduced to Shanghai soon after their appearance in other Western major cities. However, Chinese traditions and habits still existed in people's everyday life. An intellectual who worked for a foreign company in a skyscraper and went to church on Sundays might live in a narrow mezzanine room, always purchase daily necessities from corner shops in the neighbourhood, and enjoyed conversations taking place outside a hot water shop.¹⁸

Among a range of coexistent habits and traditions is the calendar. Although the Chinese republican government, which was established after the 1911 revolution, had abrogated the traditional Chinese lunar calendar (*yinli*) in favour of the Western Gregorian calendar (*yangli*, ‘solar calendar’) as the official calendar (*guoli*, ‘national calendar’), the lunar calendar was actually still in use. The lunar and the solar systems both appeared in the free calendars printed and given away by most shops and department stores. Even those released by the China National Goods Company (*Zhongguo guohuo gongsi*), which shouldered the awesome responsibility of promoting ‘national goods’ (*guohuo*), were in the form of a ‘mixture of yin and yang’ (*yin yang hebi*). Sticking to the time-honoured tradition, Chinese people continued to celebrate the New Year according to the lunar calendar and even the foreign community generally took days off at that period, while the Chinese governmental offices all functioned as usual. Chinese daily newspapers in Shanghai also observed a two-day holiday at Chinese New Year, though small extras might be issued. However, some Chinese newspaper offices did strive to catch the spirit of the Chinese government’s decree and newspapers were duly printed, but unfortunately, as the delivery staff generally failed to show up, newspapers would not usually reach the readers.¹⁹

In such a fashion, while the Shanghainese celebrated Chinese New Year and other traditional feast days such as Mid-Autumn Festival and Dragon Boat Festival according to the lunar calendar, they revelled in parties over Christmas and New Year in the Gregorian calendar. Although not everyone could afford to celebrate both Chinese and Western festivals, the coexistence of two calendars reflects the adaptability of the Shanghainese to the new culture and their perseverance with the old tradition. Just as an article commented in a humorous manner,

one would prepare two sets of clothes, one being a Western suit and the other a Chinese outfit; one would marry two wives, one being a modern lady in high heels and the other an old-fashioned foot-bound woman; one would learn two ways of showing courtesy, one being a handshake or bow and the other raising high in front of the chest a fist made with both hands and then lowering it or kowtow.²⁰

It might not necessarily be true in all cases, yet it illustrated a picture in which two ways of life could be practised simultaneously.

Towards luxurious life

Some customs survived while the new way of life offered more choice and added variety to the old society, yet some traditional values were no longer cherished. For instance, in ancient Chinese thinking, living a frugal life and not showing off one's wealth was held as a virtue. People were encouraged to practice austerity: clothes that could keep bodies warm and houses that could shut out wind and rain were sufficient for their domestic life. Moreover, it was the norm that a person's way of life, such as living conditions, clothing and public behaviour, should match his or her status in society. While the magistrate of a county town travelled in a sedan chair shouldered by four carriers, with a well-decorated red roof and blue woollen curtains, in theory an ordinary person without an official title, however wealthy, should only ride a modest one carried by no more than two men. However, in Shanghai, these century-old beliefs had been gradually given up with the rise of the new commercial culture in the city.

Shanghai welcomed all visitors and immigrants by offering them a vision that once a fortune was accumulated in hand and all the requisite accoutrements put on,

they could easily climb the social ladder and ascend to the upper class, despite their origins and previous occupations. The boundaries between social classes were no longer impenetrable. As tasteful clothing, lifestyle and consuming habits would facilitate the upward movement of individuals to a higher social stratum, people purchased high-quality, extravagant items of merchandise or services to gain a further boost to their identity as urbanites, who could afford a modern life in Shanghai. Acquiring material goods and keeping up to date with the latest fashion became an essential part of urban living in Shanghai. Consumption of excessive luxury was no more considered against the ethics, but rather perceived as a means of self-realisation and an honour to win.²¹ In a satirical newspaper commentary on bad customs in Shanghai, the writer, under an interesting pseudonym of ‘the guest who has watched foreign phenomena in Shanghai for nineteen years’, gave a list of seven matters which the Shanghainese considered disgraceful:

Not wearing glamorous clothing;

Not riding the sedan chair;

Flirting with a cheaper whore;

Not having expensive food;

Travelling by wheelbarrow;

Not having an official cap (an honorary official title could be obtained by contributing a certain amount of money to the Treasury);

Taking the third-class seat in a theatre.²²

Thus, spending enormous amounts to flaunt one’s wealth or to pretend to be rich was undoubtedly appropriate and failing to do so seemed to be shameful.

Nevertheless, apart from mindlessly pursuing showy extravagance, the Shanghainese could also choose what they really needed from a wide range of commodities, according to their purchasing ability. As more objects of Western material culture were introduced to the city, either brought by foreign residents for personal needs or imported by Chinese merchants in commercial concerns, the Chinese population gradually adopted some aspects of the lifestyle of Western residents and their taste of fashion. With the increasing division of labour and the commercialisation of the supply of household goods and daily necessities, a wider range of products were available on the market at different quality levels and in varied price ranges. For example, people could buy imported bed linen and pillowcases in the Sincere Company, or find high-quality domestic manufactured products in Sanyou Company's showroom on Nanjing Road, or get some mediocre substitutes at the linen shop in an alleyway.²³ Moreover, in Shanghai, by virtue of using mechanised production facilities, commercial products of acceptable quality were manufactured in large quantities and thus sold at affordable prices to the general public, particularly low- to middle-income populations. In other words, even factory workers were able to acquire mass-manufactured commodities to maintain a minimum level of comfort within their means.

Changing social relations

Western practices and commercial prosperity brought the Shanghainese convenience and material comfort that people in the rest of the country could not enjoy, yet the complicated interpersonal relations in this big city also created more tension that people from other areas would find difficult to deal with. A scene from the novel *A Short History of Civilisation* (*Wenming xiaoshi*) serves as an example.

There was a fight in a teahouse arising from an unsuccessful mediation of an extramarital affair. An expelled female student of a Western-style school clad in casual-style clothing with showy jewellery and a clerk hired by a Western trading firm, to whom the young lady was the mistress, were about to break up. Unable to end this immoral relationship satisfactorily, the couple's original introducer, a cart driver who made money by arranging such love affairs, engaged a runner from the detector's office of the Shanghai Municipal Police to intervene in the dispute. After entangled in a scuffle, the couple were dragged by the runner and then arrested by two policemen, a Chinese and a red-turbaned, dark-faced foreigner, both presumably called on by the runner. The couple were taken to the police station, and if this case could not be settled there, they would be transferred to a foreign judge in the Mixed Court, which dealt with legal problems concerning Chinese people. Seated at the next table in the teahouse was a provincial degree-holder, together with his son and three disciples, all of landed gentry background. Shocked by the young lady's indecorous demeanour and speech, the ensuing fight and the interference of the runner and policemen, only after overhearing some gossipy conversations from other customers in the teahouse did they figure out what had just happened.²⁴

The old master took these four young country gentlemen to Shanghai with a view to expanding their knowledge and witnessing Western civilisation; however, they were confronted with an unexpected cast of unconventional characters in such an absurd scene even before starting their exploration of Western amenities and educational institutions in this city. Initiating an extramarital relationship through a 'part-time' dating agent and involving the police and perhaps finally a foreign judge in ending the affair were things they had never heard of or learnt to deal with. As Wen-hsin Yeh commented, apart from wonders and novelties of Western material

goods, there were ‘open violation of moral norms, blatant transgressions of gender roles and foreign assertions of political authority’ in full view in the public places in Shanghai.²⁵ All of these were simply beyond the understanding of those who came from other areas and still held traditional Chinese ethics as moral principals that governed interpersonal relationships. Moreover, these country gentlemen could not even imagine that cohabitation, choosing one’s own spouse or divorce were socially acceptable in Shanghai, particularly in foreign concessions. Whereas in the interior, elopement was an offence and once detected the running off couple would be convicted, in Shanghai it would not be the case as long as the two made the choice of their own free will. Shanghai was thus considered the paradise of eloping couples, as well as a place to pursue romantic love for those who opposed traditional arranged marriage. In the early twentieth century, novels depicting plots in violation of traditional expectations about proper decorum, for example, a monk getting married or a widow falling in love, were all published in Shanghai, because it was the only place at that time where novels of these subjects would be accepted.²⁶

Contempt for outsiders

Besides those unfamiliar social relations, people from other areas would encounter the Shanghainese utter contempt for outsiders. Due to a sense of regional superiority, people in Shanghai showed a scornful attitude towards those Chinese from the hinterland. They referred to those who were not local to Shanghai as *waidiren* (‘people from other areas’). Although the word *waidiren* is literally in no sense derogatory, in Shanghainese eyes ‘people from other areas’ were simply ‘people from the countryside’ (*xiangxiaren*), which implied the backward, uncivilised masses. As *waidiren* or *xiangxiaren*, who only came for a visit or had just moved in the city,

were not as adept as the local Shanghainese at coping with the fast-paced and ever-changing life in the city, these newcomers were always treated by locals with disdain in an unreasonable manner. For example, Xu Guozhen once witnessed an incident, which he could not understand in the first place but would regard as normal after staying in Shanghai for several years. In a cinema, seeing a gentleman seated next to him strike a match to light a cigarette, a chap asked, 'May I borrow the fire, please?' Aware of his non-local accent, the gentleman turned the head, stared ferociously at him and replied in a harsh voice, 'Borrow the fire? When would you return it?' The 'fire' was certainly not lent out because the chap did not ask in a favourable manner. In Shanghai one was expected to 'beg for' rather than 'borrow'.²⁷ The gentleman was probably also from the hinterland and only arrived somewhat earlier than the innocent chap, but several months' urban life turned him into a snobbish, aloof local.

The Shanghainese sense of superiority can be understood as self-congratulation for the achievement of survival in a highly competitive environment. As Shanghai is an immigrant city, in a sense, except those who had lived in the original muddy wetland or the Chinese town for generations, almost all Shanghainese are *waidiren*.²⁸ Once settled and acquainted with this city, people considered themselves superior and would sever their relations with all the matters concerning their past. In Yu Ling's stage play *Shanghai Night (Ye Shanghai)*, a wealthy widow who had just fled to Shanghai from the countryside turned down those who tried to persuade her to rent a flat so that she could make a profit by subletting the rooms. Whereas upon arrival she considered it meaningless to make a fortune since her husband had died, half a year later she successfully transformed herself into a cunning sub-landlady, who, when approached by relatives from her hometown for help, would reply coldly that those country folks' difficulties were none of her business.²⁹

The Shanghainese arrogance and their contempt for those from the countryside can also be found in the path of development of the modern Shanghainese dialect. In the first few decades after Shanghai was opened to become a treaty port, the original form of Shanghainese dialect, a branch of the Songjiang dialect with a Pudong accent, was still commonly used in either foreign concessions or the Chinese town. However, adopting expressions and idioms of the Suzhou and Ningbo dialects, brought by numerous immigrants in the late nineteenth century, as well as incorporating some words from Western languages, the dialect underwent some changes and a modern Shanghainese dialect was gradually formed. The modern dialect, spoken in the foreign concessions and the surrounding areas, then became a mark of urban superiority, while the original Shanghainese dialect somehow came to be relegated as the rural tongue. Crossing the Huangpu River to Pudong on the east bank, one could only find a slight difference in people's accent there, but the difference was sufficient to make the urban Shanghainese from the west bank feel that they were in the countryside.³⁰ Therefore, to the local Shanghainese, those who did not speak the 'modern' Shanghainese dialect were simply *xiangxiaren*. The development of the modern Shanghainese dialect demonstrates the city's acceptability of outsider and outside influences; nevertheless, outsiders were accepted on condition that they integrated into the society by following the gradually formed rules of social behaviour in this city. If the chap in the cinema had 'begged for' the fire with the proper Shanghai accent, the snobbish gentleman would not have treated him in such an arrogant manner.

III. New forms of mass entertainment

In such a highly populated metropolis and immigrant society, the physical distance between individuals seemed to decrease, yet people were actually becoming mentally distant from one another because of more frequent but shorter contact with others from all walks of life and incessant changes of roles one had to play from dawn till dusk. Confronted with complicated social relations and new rules of social behaviour, the immigrants in Shanghai might not develop a strong affiliation or share beliefs and values with one another as those in more closed rural communities. Therefore, there was a need for communal interests and subjects of daily conversations to hold distant individual members of the general public together. Along with the immigrants' pursuit of social affiliation came a range of mass entertainment. Wen-hsin Yeh argues that modern advertising in Shanghai, which played a crucial role in the construction of urban consumer culture in the Republican period, involved both mobilising the conventional communication approaches towards the production of new meanings and adopting new-style media to disseminate age-old ideas. For example, silk retailers in Shanghai hired story-singers to broadcast commercials in the form of *tanci* on radio; tobacco companies engaged Chinese artists to make calendar-poster advertising paintings (*yuefenpai guangao hua*) featuring Chinese women with shapely figures and seductive smiles.³¹ Similar to advertising for consumer commodities, mass entertainment in Shanghai included contemporary ideas conveyed by conventional media and old subjects repackaged in a new format. The rise in popular readings and redevelopment of stage performance are two good examples.

Popular reading

The late nineteenth century in Shanghai saw the emergence of pictorial magazines, which, quite different from ordinary newspapers or periodicals, featured far more photographic or hand-painted pictures than text. With the aid of graphic illustrations, these pictorials, lowbrow but with wide circulations, could spread the latest news and general knowledge in a straightforward way to the general public, particularly those immigrants from rural areas and ordinary people, who had no advanced reading skills to appreciate books or periodicals which only contained pure textual messages. Although in the early years what these popular pictorials carried sometimes seemed to be drivel or worthless anecdotes, for example, in *Pictorial from the Stone Tablet Studio* (*Dianshizhai huabao*) a disobedient son struck dead by a thunderbolt and a drunk bloke riding a bull, it was these light-hearted, nonsensical fantasies that caught the attention of normal people and provided them with materials for daily conversations.³²

Moving on to the twentieth century, pictorial magazines became a medium, which not only appealed broadly to the general public but also targeted specifically middle class readers who had more leisure time and disposable income. Through these pictorials, readers learnt information of domestic and international events, theoretical and practical knowledge of modern science, and the latest news of fashion, urban lifestyle and consumer products. For example, *Young Companion* (*Liangyou huabao*), one of Shanghai's most popular and successful pictorials of the 1920s and 1930s, frequently introduced interior design and decorative arts for homes to draw the attention of well-educated women who had an interest in cosy and stylish domestic life.³³

In addition to pictorial magazines, there was also popular literature to accommodate those who were more willing to read text. Popular literature in Shanghai, which was originally intended to appeal to middle and lower class tastes, broadly included the so-called ‘mandarin and butterfly school’ (*yuanyang hudie pai*) fictions, which specialised in sentimental affairs and physically unrequited love, and a wide range of fictional genres, such as detective thrillers, supernatural stories, martial heroes, knights-errant and social scandals. In these fictions, the Shanghainese not only read stories in an imaginary world but also saw a reflection of themselves. In other words, besides fictitious plots, readers might encounter similar scenarios that actually happened in real life. As E. Perry Link argues, these urban popular fictions reflected the anxiety and worry of those who dwelt in the metropolis, and of those whose desire to keep up with the ever-changing world had long been replaced by the desire to forget the fact that they could never keep up with it.³⁴ A well-known slogan in the advertisement for a popular fiction magazine *Saturday (Libailiu)* reads: ‘[I] would rather not have a concubine than not read *Saturday*.’ Advertising catchphrase as it was, it indeed depicted how people were fascinated by those fictions. According to Zhou Shoujuan, one of the editors of the magazine, eager readers would wait outside the publishing house on Saturday mornings for new issues to be released, and then rushed to purchase the latest copies of *Saturday* once the doors of the building were opened, just like those who shouldered their way to a breakfast stall in order to buy baked wheat cakes.³⁵

In such a fashion, on the one hand what used to be spread through oral communication in a closed rural community, such as legend, rumours or current affairs, were now distributed through pictorials and fictions in Shanghai, and on the other, what used to be employed to deliver the teachings of Confucius and classical

literature, i.e. the printed matter, was now a medium to distribute knowledge of Western science and technology, as well as nonsensical thoughts and gossips.

Stage performance

A form of stage performance, ‘new drama’ (*xinju*), arose in the late nineteenth century. Compared with traditional Chinese theatrical works, new drama is similar to Western spoken drama, laying more emphasis on dialogue without performers acting abstract gestures and movements or singing against the ear-piercing instrumental accompaniment. Due to its straightforwardness in the aspect of communication, in the late Qing dynasty, new drama was commonly used by the reformists to promote their ideal of democracy and advocate establishing a Chinese republic. After the overthrow of the Qing dynasty, the agitated political fervour and formulaic sentiment-rousing speeches that had been conveyed in those stage plays were no longer appreciated by the audience. As a result, transformed from a device for propagation into a form of mass entertainment, from instilling the general public with political beliefs into accommodating the audience’s needs for sheer pleasure, domestic news and plots from traditional opera and popular fictions were integrated into new drama in Shanghai.³⁶ The audience could see in stage plays familiar images of ordinary people, dramatic presentation of everyday trivialities, clichéd narratives of romantic or parental love, the dark facets of social life and shocking inside stories of celebrities and criminals. Therefore, before the film industry mushroomed and sound films gained popularity in the 1930s, new drama had been an important form of entertainment offering the Shanghainese onstage what could only be read in fictions and learnt about from magazines or newspapers.

Nevertheless, the popularity of new drama never dampened people's enthusiasm for traditional operatic performances. Like people in other areas of China, attending live performance of traditional opera and story-telling ballads was also one of the important leisure activities for the Shanghainese. Conventionally, traditional stage performances were carried out in tea gardens (*xiyuan*) and small teahouses (*chaguan*), where a square stage was set in front of tables and chairs, and tea and a range of refreshment were served to the viewers. However, Shanghai provided these traditional performing arts with new stages for further development.

There were privately owned pleasure gardens, usually boasted with pavilions, trees, rockeries and flowers blooming throughout the year. Unlike in a tea garden, which allowed only one performance at a time on the stage, in a pleasure garden people could attend several programmes delivered by various entertainers in different corners of the garden at the same time. Following the construction of the first Western-style theatre, the Lyceum Theatre (*Lanxin xiyuan*), by European residents in the French Concession in 1874, Chinese entrepreneurs also started building the so-called 'stages' (*wutai*) for Chinese operas in the early twentieth century. These 'stages', duplicating the layout of Western theatres, were fitted with tiered seats, a raised, large stage, as well as lightning equipment and alternating backdrops. Among these new theatres was the New Stage (*Xin wutai*), opened in 1908, which had 5,000 seats and a stage spacious enough for the scenery and extra large pieces of props. At the same time as the rise of new theatres in the first two decades of the twentieth century, a number of larger entertainment complexes appeared in Shanghai. These multi-storey establishments provided a much wider range of amusements than pleasure gardens, from a mixture of performances, such as traditional operas, ballads, acrobatics, magic shows and stage dramas, to other attractions, such as cinemas,

department stores and stalls selling all manner of snacks and refreshments. The New World (*Xin shijie*) in the International Settlement and the Great World (*Da shijie*) in the French Concession were the most two famous entertainment centres of this kind in Shanghai.

These Western-style establishments not only repackaged old stage performance to bring a new theatrical experience to the audience but also constructed a new arena for performers to introduce more onstage devices and gimmicks for audio-visual effects, which were never seen on the traditional stage. In traditional Chinese opera, a play is presented on an almost bare stage and an actor portrays a character through specific gestures and movements, as well as delivering the sense of time, space and imaginary objects through body language.³⁷ However, in Shanghai, because of the ample space available in new theatres for stage movement and the use of a greater amount of stage properties, more magnificent stage sets, dazzling acrobatics, bigger accompanying ensembles, fancier electric lighting device, and even illusive tricks and live animals were all employed in traditional operatic performance. Moreover, besides the traditional repertoire, there were newly composed plays in Shanghai, bringing subject matter shown in new drama into traditional opera, and therefore theatregoers could also see current events and contemporary life acted on the operatic stage. Hence, this more vibrant, liberal and commercial-oriented form of operatic performance was labelled as *Haipei* ('Shanghai style'), as opposed to the supposedly more conservative and traditional *Jingpai* ('Beijing style') opera.

The chaos caused by the two rebellions unexpectedly drove the Chinese back into the areas originally designated for foreign residents, and thus allowed people of old Cathay to experience and emulate Western civilisation in everyday life. The economic prosperity kept drawing more to the city from its vicinity, the hinterland, as

well as from overseas, for a better life. From a walled Chinese county town together with a piece of muddy wetland, Shanghai transformed into a metropolis where traditional life coexisted with Western practices and civilisation, an immigrant city where newcomers had to acquaint themselves with the fast-paced life and complicated social relations, and a big stadium where new forms of entertainment were created and old performing arts redeveloped. If two ways of life could be practised simultaneously in this city, and if there could be comfort and pleasure in various entertainment commodities, why could not musical elements from two traditions be drawn together to amuse people and ease their stress and anxiety here? If novels and amenities were only available in this city, and if commercialisation of the supply of daily necessities offered a better quality of life, why could not a new form of musical products be created here and distributed through the flourishing new media and entertainment industry? As Lu Hanchao suggests, ‘if Shanghai was a place where two cultures – Chinese and Western – met but neither prevailed, it was not because the two were deadlocked but because both showed remarkable resilience.’³⁸ Similarly, if Shanghai was a place where new matters arose but the old did not perish, it was because the old could be repackaged to join the new while the new could embrace the old to assure prosperity on both sides. This is the place where Chinese popular music industry started, developed and thrived.

Endnotes

¹ *All About Shanghai and Environs: A Standard Guide Book* (Shanghai: University Press, 1934/1935; repr. with an introduction by H. J. Lethbridge, Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 1.

² *Ibid.*, p. 2

³ Imperial Maritime Customs (eds), *Treaties, Conventions, Etc., Between China and Foreign States, vol. 1* (Shanghai: Statistical Department of the Inspectorate General of Customs, 1908), p. 200.

⁴ For more details of the uprising, refer to Shanghai shehui kexueyuan lishi yanjiusuo (eds), *Shanghai xiaodaohui qiyi shiliao huibian* (Collection of historical materials on the Shanghai Small Sword Uprising) (Shanghai: Shanghai remin chubanshe, 1958; repr. 1980).

⁵ See Hanchao Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights: Everyday Shanghai in the Early Twentieth Century* (Berkeley, Cali. and London: University of California Press, 1999), p. 140.

⁶ For a comprehensive source of the rebellion, see Philip A. Kuhn 'The Taiping rebellion' in John K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 10: Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911, Part I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 264-317.

⁷ Zou Yiren, *Jiu Shanghai renkou bianqian de yanjiu* (Research on population change in old Shanghai) (Shanghai: Shanghai remin chubanshe, 1980), pp. 3-4.

⁸ Ch'en, Jerome, *China and the West: Society and Culture 1815-1937* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1979), pp 211-2. For more details of the qualifications for the enrolment in the Chinese Ratepayers' Association, see Shanghai zujie zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (eds), *Shanghai zujie zhi* (A chronicle of concessions in Shanghai) (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexue yuan chubanshe, 2001), pp. 177, 181.

⁹ Harriet Sergeant, *Shanghai* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1991), p. 2.

¹⁰ *All About Shanghai*, p. 35-7. The census showed that in 1930 the Japanese, with a total of 18,796, were the largest single group in the city as a whole, the British were in a distant second place with 8,449, less than half the Japanese population, and the Russian took third by 7,366. Interestingly, though regarded as treaty powers, the American only ranked fourth by 3,149 and the French a far eighth by 1,406. These figures and rankings, nonetheless, changed variously in the ensuing two decades with the development of international political situations.

¹¹ To give two particular instances, in 1937, before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, the whole city of Shanghai, including the foreign concessions and the Chinese municipality, had a population of 3,851,976, among which only 63,148 were foreigners; moving on to 1942, after Japan declared war on the Allies, the foreign population increased to 86,389 against a total of 3,919,779. For more statistics in other years, see Shanghai zujie zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (eds), *Shanghai zujie zhi*, pp. 116-8 and Zou, *Jiu Shanghai renkou bianqian*, pp. 90-91.

¹² Xu Guozhen, *Shanghai Shenghuo* (Shanghai life) (Shanghai: Shijie shuju, 1933), pp. 13-6.

¹³ Lu, *Beyond the Neon Light*, p. 43.

¹⁴ While the 'Shanghainese' was a label reserved for Chinese people who had settled down in Shanghai, either foreign concessions or the Chinese city, Westerners, excluding Russian exiles whom were not considered white, usually addressed themselves as 'Shanghailanders'. For an interesting commentary on Shanghailanders, refer to 'The Shanghai boom', *Fortune*, 11:1 (January 1935), pp. 30-40.

¹⁵ Zhang Zhongli (ed.), *Jindai Shanghai chengshi yanjiu* (Modern Shanghai studies) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1991), p. 753.

¹⁶ See *Shenpao*, the 23rd of the 3rd month the year kuiyou (1873) and the 24th of the 11th month the year renshen (1872).

¹⁷ Wei, Betty Peh-T'I, *Shanghai: Crucible of Modern China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 81-2.

¹⁸ As most alleyway houses in Shanghai did not have hot water facilities, residents usually relied on professional hot water services in their neighbourhoods. For more discussion on the tenacity of Chinese traditions in daily life of old Shanghai, refer to Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*, pp. 307-15.

¹⁹ See Gao Ping, 'Yinli de yanyong' (Continue using the lunar calendar), *Xinsheng zhoukan*, 1:1 (10 February 1934), p. 13; 'We have Chinese New Year with us again', *The China Weekly Review*, 67:11 (10 February 1934), p. 397. The 'mixture of yin and yang' is still seen in printed calendars circulated in China, Taiwan and other Chinese communities around the world.

²⁰ Gao, 'Yinli de yanyong', p. 14.

²¹ This would also explain why one's appearance mattered a great deal in Shanghai. Some people, though staying in a small room on a mezzanine (*tingzijian*) and living on a shoestring, would put their Western-style trousers under their pillows every night to maintain the creases in the trousers so that they looked at least properly dressed when they strutted down the street.

²² Haishang kanyang shijiunian ke, 'Shenjiang louxi' (Bad customs in Shanghai), *Shenbao*, the 11th of the 3rd month the year kueyou (1873).

²³ The Sincere Company (*Xianshi gongsi*) is the first Western-style department store in Shanghai; the Sanyou Company (*Sanyou gongsi*) is a local manufacturer specialising in quality interior decorative items and bedclothes.

²⁴ Li Boyuan, *Wenming xiaoshi* (A short history of civilisation) (Beijing: Tongsu wenyi chubanshe, 1955), pp. 101-2. Originally published in serial form 1903 to 1905, set in the early twentieth century against the background of the whole nation, this novel provides vignettes of change in all areas of Chinese society under Western influences. For an English version, refer to Li Boyuan, *Modern Times: A Brief History of Enlightenment*, trans. Douglas Lancashire (with an introduction by Douglas Lancashire, Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1996).

²⁵ Wen-Hsin Yeh, 'Shanghai modernity: commerce and culture in a republican city', *China Quarterly*, 150 (1997), p. 384.

²⁶ Yuan Jin, *Yuanyang hudie pai* (Mandarin duck and butterfly school) (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1994), p.36.

²⁷ Xu, Shanghai Shenghuo, p. 32.

²⁸ According to a 1950 census, 85% of the population in Shanghai before 1949 were first-generation immigrants from other parts of China, many from the countryside. Zou, *Jiu Shanghai renkou bianqian de yanjiu*, p. 113.

²⁹ Yu Ling, *Ye Shanghai* (*Shanghai night*) in, *Yuling juzuo xuan* (A selection of Yu Ling's stage plays) (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1979), p. 266.

³⁰ Qian Nairong, *Shanghai fangyan liyu* (The Shanghai dialect and slang) (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexue yuan chubanshe, 1989), p. 73.

³¹ Yeh, 'Shanghai modernity', p. 387. For the subject of *tanci* as a new advertising medium for women's fashion clothing, refer to Carlton Benson, 'Consumers are also soldiers: subversive songs from Nangjing Road during the New Life Movement', in Sherman Cochran (ed.), *Inventing Nanjing Road: Commercial Culture in Shanghai, 1900-1945* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell East Asia Series, 1999), pp. 91-132; for the use of calendar-poster as tobacco advertisements, see Sherman Cochran, 'Transnational origins of advertising in early twentieth China', *ibid.*, pp. 37-58.

³² *Pictorial from the Stone Tablet Studio* was first issued in May 1884 as a supplement to *The Shun Pao Daily (Shenbao)*. For a study on how this pictorial shaped Chinese readers' views of politics and society, refer to Christopher A. Reed, 'Re/collecting the sources: Shanghai's Dianshizhai Pictorial and its place in historical memories, 1884-1949', *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture*, 12:2 (2000), pp. 44-71.

³³ For more details of how pictorials of this kind and art magazines promoted commercial arts and consumer industries, see Carrie Waara 'Invention, industry, art: the commercialization of culture in Republican art magazines', in Sherman Cochran (ed.), *Inventing Nanjing Road: Commercial Culture in Shanghai, 1900-1945* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell East Asia Series, 1999), pp. 61-89.

³⁴ The creation of 'mandarin duck and butterfly school' fictions can be traced to a best-selling sentimental novel *Jade Pear Spirit (Yulihun)* of this type, written by Xu Zhenya and first published in 1912. The term 'mandarin duck and butterfly' was coined due to the frequent use of poems comparing lovers to pairs of mandarin ducks and butterflies in novels of this kind. See E. Perry Link, 'Traditional-style popular urban fiction in the teens and twenties', in Merle Goldman (ed.), *Modern Chinese*

Literature in the May Fourth Era (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977), pp. 327-30.

³⁵ Zheng Yimei, *Shubao hua jiu* (Talk of old times in books and newspapers) (Shanghai: Xuelin chubanshe, 1983), p. 164.

³⁶ Zhang, *Jindai Shanghai chengshi yanjiu*, p. 1099.

³⁷ For a succinct introduction of the development and performance of Chinese opera, refer to Jiang Xinyu, 'Traditional Chinese drama', in Wu Dingbo and Patrick D. Mauphy (eds), *Handbook of Chinese Popular Culture* (London: Greenwood Press, 1994), pp. 215-35; for a discussion on the use of terms 'opera', 'drama' or so on in Chinese stage performance, see Jonathan Stock, *Huju: Traditional Opera in Modern Shanghai* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 4-7.

³⁸ Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*, p. 297.

Chapter Four

The Platform

This chapter presents details of the participants and the activities in which they were involved the Shanghai popular music industry, the platform where music products were created and delivered to the audience. Following the physical flow of musical products as suggested in the hypothetical flowchart of the industry proposed in Chapter Two, the reconstructed platform is divided into three sections: the making, selling and consuming processes.

I. The producing process

The producing process involves record companies, songwriters, instrumentalists and singers. Although there were some functioning departments, similar to today's A&R, marketing and sales, in major record companies such as EMI and RCA-Victor, few documents were left to illustrate how different departments cooperated with each other. However, it is clear that after Chinese composers were employed by major record companies as full-time staff, they started taking charge of the production, deciding what to record and coordinating singers and session musicians. This section reveals the operation of record companies and backgrounds and activities of all the involved artists – songwriters, instrumentalists and singers.

1. Record companies

After a series of mergers and acquisitions between those record companies which owned subsidiaries in China, the Electric and Musical Industries (China) and the RCA-Victor Company of China became two major foreign record companies equipped with recording studios and manufacturing facilities operating in Shanghai. The forerunner of EMI (China) is Pathé Phono Cinema Chine which was founded by a Frenchman, E. Labansat, in Shanghai in 1908 and was reorganised to Pathé Orient in 1921 when the company expanded and built a new recording studio. In 1928 the British-based Columbia Gramophone Company purchased Pathé Frères, Pathé Orient's parent company in France, and took over Pathé Orient's properties in Shanghai in 1930. Thus, the French Pathé Orient became the British Pathé Orient. Three years after the Columbia Gramophone Company merged with the Gramophone Company to form the Electronic and Musical Industries, Ltd. in Britain in 1931, the Electric & Musical Industries (China) was formally established in Shanghai on 25th June 1934, with an authorised share capital of 1,000,000 Mexican dollars registered as manufacturers and distributors of gramophone records, gramophones, cinema equipment and radios.¹ Interestingly, although reorganised and given a new name, the company was still called Pathé Record Company (*Baidai changpian gongsi*) by Chinese people. EMI ceased operation in April 1949, a month before Shanghai was 'liberated' by the Chinese Communist.

The Victor Talking Machine Company in Shanghai was originally controlled by Nippon Victor, a Japanese subsidiary of Victor Talking Machine. In 1928, the giant Radio Corporation of America acquired Victor Talking Machine Company and RCA-Victor Company formed. In China, the title 'Victor Talking Machine Company' with a supplementary line of lengthy words 'Radio America-Victor

Talking Machine Corporation' (*Meiguo wuxiandian shengli changji hezu gongsi*) was used until July 1930 when the company officially turned its name to 'RCA-Victor Company of China'.² RCA-Victor Coompany of China was registered as an agent throughout China for the American RCA-Victor group, which also manufactured radios and some other domestic appliances, with an authorised share capital amounting to 500,000 US dollars.³ As with EMI, RCA-Victor was habitually called Victor Record Company (*Shengli changpian gongsi*) by consumers. As most equipment was badly damaged during the Sino-Japanese War, RCA-Victor shut down its factory in 1945 and has never resumed production ever since.

Besides the two majors, there were another two foreign companies, Beka China (known to Chinese consumers as *Beikai*) and Odeon China (known as *Gaoting*), which had once been involved in the production of Chinese popular music. In Germany, Beka and Odeon had been acquired as early as 1910 and 1911 respectively by Lindström, which was in turn sold to the Columbia Gramophone Company (UK) in 1926 and became part of the EMI concern. However, Beka China and Odeon China were still operated under their own trademarks as independent companies through their agents in Shanghai. Unlike EMI and RCA-Victor, Beka and Odeon did not build their own factories in Shanghai, but instead made recordings and stamped their records on a smaller scale with EMI's facilities. The two companies appeared to be out of business in the 1940s, after the Japanese took control of the whole of Shanghai following the Pacific War, because no information on them has since been found in either yellow pages or advertisements in other print media.

Although it was foreign companies that started and dominated the Chinese record industry, Chinese people had their indigenous record companies. The Great China Record Company (*Dazhonghu changpian*), which was established by Dr Sun

Yat-Sen with Japanese capital in 1916 but had turned into a locally owned company by 1927, was the only Chinese company that owned facilities to make recordings and manufacture records. However, Great China ran its business with limited facilities on a much smaller scale compared to the other two major foreign companies and could never compete with them. There were also a number of local record companies, dubbed 'pocketbook companies', operating in Shanghai. The reason for being so called is that the most valuable asset of a 'pocketbook company' was usually a 'pocketbook' which held details of recording contracts with artists, manufacturing contracts with the major companies and a small amount of petty cash. These local companies specialised mainly in traditional repertoire, such as folk songs, regional operas and story-telling ballads, not in popular songs. Renting studio and manufacturing time from those companies equipped with production facilities, they carried out all production activities in Shanghai and then distributed records to the different regions in China they specifically catered for.⁴

Although there were many record companies in Shanghai, by the end of 1930s EMI controlled most of the popular music market in China and most songwriters and singers signed exclusively to that company during the most crucial stage of their careers. EMI's activities and its interactions with other institutions or individuals can be viewed as the epitome of the popular music industry in China in the first half of the twentieth century. Taking into consideration EMI's dominant position and the imbalance in the types of information available, particular attention will of necessity be paid to EMI and RCA-Victor in the following historical account of record companies' activities.

Production organising

At the early stage of the development of recording industry in China, both major and local pocketbook companies were dedicated to making recordings of traditional operas. As knowledge of Chinese music was not widespread in the West, directors of foreign record companies had to count on local intermediaries to arrange the selection of artists and music to be recorded. These middlemen, presumably, had to look for performers who were well-known to most people or vocalists who could perform what was popular at the time. Since Li Jinhui captivated audiences with his children's musical dramas and love songs, record companies had been keen to approach him about recording his compositions. It was because of Li's reputation and the enormous financial benefit his works could bring in that record companies contacted him through local middlemen. By the mid-1930s, some Chinese were formally employed to be in charge of music production within the recording organisation. A post of Musical Director was created in Pathé Orient in 1932 whereas in RCA-Victor positions of A&R were taken by Chinese employees by 1935. It was not until then that Chinese personnel in foreign record companies began to lead the production. Although during the time of the French Pathé Orient a Chinese collaborator, Zhang Changfu, had been engaged by Labansat to arrange recording contracts with local artists since the business started in Shanghai, he was never regarded as a member of the production team in the company, but rather only a comprador.⁵

Ren Guang, a musician who studied composition in France, was invited by a foreign manager to work in Pathé Orient upon his return to Shanghai in 1932. The company engaged him as Musical Director and concurrently as Chinese Manager (*huaren jingli*), as opposed to foreign managers, in the hope that he would help to

select appropriate works for new records, from the repertoire of Chinese regional operas and Cantonese music, in order to increase its sale volume. He may have been the first Chinese to be offered an official position in charge of record production in a foreign record company. Thereafter, Pathé Orient had its own 'expert' on Chinese music and thus matters such as scouting for artists and negotiating contracts with local musicians were processed within a department in the company, rather than dealt with by agents who might have no fixed connexion to the company. Ren left EMI and moved to Paris again in 1937 because the Japanese Consulate in Shanghai found out that he was the one who, under the pseudonym Qianfa, composed the anti-Japanese song 'Fighting the Way Back Home' (*Da hui laojia qu*) which had been a great morale booster for Chinese people following the outbreak of Sino-Japanese War.⁶

The vacancy was soon filled by another Chinese, Fu Xiangxun, with a different title, Dramatic Director. Fu worked as Dramatic Director there for several years, probably including the period 1942 to 1945 when the company was under Japanese control. There is little information left about Fu's personal life, but during his term in EMI more Chinese composers certainly joined the company. Before 1937, songwriters usually worked freelance though some of them might have been employed by film companies to write film songs and supervise the audio production.⁷ These composers received royalties from record companies only when their compositions were made into records and released. However, after Fu joined the company, from the late 1930s EMI began to engage composers as full-time staff and provided offices where everyone had his own piano and worked all day.⁸ It was not clear when Fu left EMI, but Li Jinguang, a full-time employed songwriter, was promoted to take up the position of Musical Director no later than 1945. Despite the fact that British owners had regained control of the company from Japanese directors

after the end of the war in 1945, British managers only paid attention to sales figures and it was Li and other songwriters who made all decisions regarding music production.

J. P. O. Yang and M. T. Poo are the earliest A&R personnel of RCA-Victor in Shanghai who can be identified in the extant documents. Poo worked in the company with the title A&R until 1942 when the Japanese took it over and appointed a compatriot, Y. Kishi, to head the A&R department. Nevertheless, Poo continued to be employed as Inspector and Chinese Manager, and then transferred to be the manager of the record department after the Americans reclaimed the operation following the end of the war in 1945. Except for these names and official job titles, there is unfortunately no information left about the duties and responsibilities of the A&R personnel in RCA-Victor, nor were their biographical details recorded.

Contracts & royalties

Artists signed recording contracts with EMI, which stated the numbers of recordings to be made in a specified period of time. Whether a singer was given only a fixed amount of revenue after a recording session or would receive royalties in the future depended either on her reputation in the field or the sales of her previous work. The company would usually sign a new contract with a new artist when the sales reached a certain level. As Wu Yingyin remembered,

In the office, there were column charts on the wall showing sales of albums.

When the column representing my album went surprisingly beyond Zhou Xuan's and Yao Li's, which no one had ever did, they asked me immediately signed a new contract.⁹

In the 1930s, while singers, according to their rank in the company, would receive 3.5%, 2.5% or 1.5% of the wholesale price of records as royalties, composers were paid at a fixed rate of 2.5% and lyricists at 1.5% of the price. The rate applicable to singers rose to between 4% and 6% in the 1940s. Singers could choose to receive either an advance, against future sales of 2,000 records, after recording sessions and collected more when the sales figures exceeded 2,000, or receive only a one-off payment based on sales of 2,000 records. When the former option was chosen, royalties were generally paid to artists on a monthly basis.¹⁰ The mechanism dealing with copyright of songs, lyrics and recordings has continued to operate surprisingly well, because, as mentioned in the pilot study, even EMI (Hong Kong) still today pays royalties to the living elderly singers of the Shanghai era, or their descendants, when old recordings are reissued.

Terms and conditions of a contract with EMI might vary from artist to artist, but once it was signed, it was strictly forbidden to make recordings for other record companies. While no case has been found, so far, in any available documents and archives where a singer violated a contract, there was a case in which a breach of an agreement led to a composer's resignation. In April 1934, Nie Er, a young leftist composer and communist, approached Pathé Orient to make recording of his songs. Recommended by Ren Guang, he was able to sing five songs, which he had just composed, to Ren's accompaniment on a piano in front of foreign directing managers. The foreign managers approved Nie's proposal to release these songs, and, moreover, they engaged him to work with Ren in the company. Thus, Ren became the first Assistant Musical Director, and the only one, in EMI's history in China. Unwittingly, at the request of Cai Chusheng, the director of the famous film *Fisherman's Song* (*Yuguangqu*), Nie Er composed two songs for a new film, *Flying Flower Village*

(*Feihuacun*). As the film company, Yi Hwa Motion Picture, insisted that the recordings had to be made for RCA-Victor, the two songs were released under the RAC-Victor label. This action was a violation of the agreement between Nie and EMI, which stated that he must not compose for other record companies, and caused serious offence to the directing board.¹¹ In November the same year, Nie resigned from EMI, partly because of this incident.

Manufacturing

Only three major companies were equipped with recording and manufacturing facilities. In the 1930s, EMI owned twenty-four record-pressing machines in the factory in Shanghai, RCA-Victor eighteen and Great China a mere eight. According to Jones' estimation, by 1932 domestic production had reached 5.4 million records per annum, of which EMI accounted for a half of them, i.e. 2.7 million, RCA-Victor 1.8 million, and Great China only 900,000.¹² A negative metal-matrix was usually produced immediately after a performance was recorded on a wax plate, so that the musical director could listen to it and determined if the quality of recording and performance was up to standard. A qualified recording was then filed away and would not be touched until it was scheduled to be released.¹³

Record companies released new records in batches on a regular basis. A list of the newly released records of a company published in a newspaper or magazine would always carry a title indicating which batch it was. EMI released new records quarterly in 1941; the number of releases per year increased after 1945 and reached its peak in 1947 with twelve batches a year.

Advertising & publicity

Before 1937, a great number of advertisements were placed in the print media, including leading dailies, local tabloids, and magazines dedicated to broadcasts, films or and other entertainment. The advertisements included information of newly released recordings together with eye-catching lines of words. It was not uncommon to see words drawing attention to the company's ability to sign up artists, such as 'Pathé has recruited all film stars to make recordings' and 'All nationwide famous singers make recordings in Pathé'. There were also advertisements which showed portraits of various artists asserting 'All the recordings are made by brilliant singers', as well as those for individual artist where their photos and lists of latest albums were presented.¹⁴ Perhaps due to social and political instability, during the eight-year Sino-Japanese War and after 1945, the number of advertisements in the print media decreased sharply.

Although no specific statistics can be shown here, it is a fact that virtually no advertisements were placed in the leading *The Shun Pao Daily (Shenpao)*, and full- or half-page advertisements comparable to the size of those appearing prior to 1937 could no longer be seen in magazines. In July 1937, EMI published *Pathé Semimonthly (Baidai banyuekan)* as its official magazine and an alternative way of advertising, with a view to communicating publication information and production notes and introducing new artists to the public. However, since only the first issue of *Pathé Monthly* has been located so far and, surprisingly, no elderly fan or collector remembers this magazine, it remains to be seen how many issues were released and whether the magazine was distributed exclusively to retailers. Besides print advertising, EMI also installed neon lights or signboards for major record shops and placed advertisements on main streets in the city centre.¹⁵ The company was

concerned about how its products were arranged and exhibited in the front windows of records shops. In the first issue of *Pathé Monthly*, an article, with photos of outstanding window-dressing designs taken from some of its agents in Shanghai, emphasised the importance and benefits of proper window displays and required all retailers to arrange the merchandise in ways similar to those shown in the photos.¹⁶

Promotional events

With a view to increasing sales volumes, major record companies usually held special promotional events. These events included prize-giving and live performances. A ‘favourite star contest’ was a good method of drawing people’s attention to new recordings from those stars who played leading roles and sang songs in films. A case in point is the event held by Pathé Orient in 1934.¹⁷ A ballot paper was given out when a record was purchased and the more records one bought the more ballots one got. Consumers wrote down and ranked the names of their favourite stars and sent the ballots back to Pathé. Three lucky participants who gave the ranking that was closest to the overall result were awarded a cash prize of one hundred dollars, a portable Pathé gramophone and a set of six records respectively. Undoubtedly record companies assumed that people would not only buy records for themselves but also try to persuade their friends to buy some, in order to get more ballot papers. Therefore the star they supported would be voted the most popular and, at the same time they would have more chances to win a prize.

Record companies also took opportunities to promote their products at various events held by other organisers. In an event named ‘the election of the queen and the top ten female Chinese movie stars of 1934’ in the famous Paramount Dancehall

(*Bailemen wuting*), EMI organised another competition – voice recognising.¹⁸ Customers were invited to listen carefully to seven records played in public and decided who the singers were. They were then to write down the names on a voucher with seven blanks which could be found inside the record sleeve of every record purchased. Those who gave correct answers would be eligible to enter a prize draw and might be awarded a Columbia five-tube radio, a Pathé gramophone machine or a set of twelve records. As EMI signed contracts with many film stars to make recordings of screen songs, playing records on this occasion was meant not only to be adding entertainment to the event but also to show the company's capacity for recruiting singers to make recordings – 'all great film stars are included on its roster'.

In addition to giving away valuable prizes, live performances featuring stars also helped to bring consumers' attention to the latest recordings. In the spring of 1941, in order to promote its newly released records, EMI organised a premiere concert in a dancehall during its 'tea dance' and invited singers, all of whom were also film stars, to deliver live performances of their new songs.¹⁹ As some members from Shanghai Municipal Orchestra had long been engaged as session musicians, they were undoubtedly employed for this event. Interestingly, every song was played twice in this premiere. Guests were asked to remain seated the first time and listen to the singing, but they were free to dance with their partners when the song was repeated by the music band only. Normally, there was no additional admission fee; a customer usually purchased several dance tickets and gave away one of them each time he danced with a taxi girl. However, on this occasion EMI charged extra fees for fear that too many guests and fans would flock into the venue, not only for dancing but also to see their favourite stars.

Licensing

Radio stations had long been playing records without paying licensing fees to record companies because they were never required to pay. EMI regularly sent free samples to radio stations of its own accord which they asked them to play to help promote new releases. However, in June 1935 H. L. Wilson, one of the directors of EMI (China), sent a letter to the radio stations in Shanghai and asked them to pay licensing fees for playing records, claiming that it was the norm in Europe and America. The letter required all the stations who played records released by EMI to pay 100 US dollars every month from the 1st of July the same year on and that

The records must be those which are specifically released for broadcasting;

The records must be purchased at full retail price;

The airtime of record playing must be limited within three hours a day;

Any record cannot be played more than once a day in the first week in which it is released and once a week from the second on;

The producer, series number and title of the record should be announced before and after it is played;

The recording to be played must be intact or the record company which releases it may recall it if the sound quality is not good for broadcasting.²⁰

Other foreign record companies such as RCA-Victor, Beka and Odeon soon also put forward the same requirements. To cope with the request, the Broadcasting Industry Association called an emergency meeting and then sent a reply.

On the one hand, they claimed the request unreasonable because EMI had been aware of the situation for a long time and had once informed them by official letters that special offers were available for broadcasting. Moreover, since there was

no regulation regarding ‘gramophone records’ in the Chinese Law of Publication, even though it had been the norm in Europe and America to pay a licensing fee to record companies, these radio stations would not do so. They then appealed to the Ministry of the Interior and the Judicial Yuan for adjudication concerning the payment of licensing fees. On the other hand, the radio stations then asked EMI either to buy back all its records by the 8th of July 1935 because they would all become waste material as it was forbidden to play records on the air without paying the fees, or otherwise they would resume airplay despite the request. EMI did not respond to this warning and the radio stations decided to play records again.²¹

About a month later, the Ministry of the Interior announced that regulations regarding copyright in the Law of Publication did not apply to gramophone records because the item ‘publication’ as used in the Law did not include gramophone records. In December, a committee in the Judicial Yuan adjudicated on the dispute and gave its verdict. As gramophone records were neither publications nor works with copyright, the so-called exclusive right of public performance did not exist and the owner of a record might play it freely. Disputes between radio stations and record companies were thus settled, and these foreign companies remained silent on the licensing issue thereafter.²² Record companies never received any fees from radio stations.

2. Composers and lyricists

Shanghai popular song originated from Li Jinhui’s song-and-dance troupe, but apart from Li himself and some members in his troupe, it was songwriters from different backgrounds who joined the industry one after another throughout the whole

Shanghai era and gave impetus to the continuous creation of Shanghai popular song. They wrote songs for record companies or accepted commissions for films. While some composers such as Chen Gexin, Li Jingguang, Yao Min and Li Houxiang also wrote lyrics for their own or other composers' songs, others such as Fan Yanqiao, Li Juanqing and Chen Dieyi only dedicated themselves to writing lyrics.

With their musical talent, some composers learnt composition by themselves. Li Jinguang, Yan Zhexi and Yan Hua, members from Li's song-and-dance troupe, not only started composing in the troupe but also continued their own songwriting careers after the troupe disbanded in 1935. After Li Jinguang was employed by EMI as a full-time composer in the late 1930s, he also invited Yan Zhexi to join the company. Yan Hua worked as a freelance songwriter with connexions to both EMI and RCA-Victor. Yao Min, a self-taught songwriter who started his career composing, singing and playing instruments for the Great Unity Club on radio, also joined EMI in the late 1930s. Li Houxiang never received formal training in music either, but was employed by EMI and commissioned to compose for many film companies. Although receiving no formal music education, some of these composers continued expanding their musical knowledge along their career paths by studying with private tutors or colleagues in record companies. For example, Li Ginguang studied instrumentation with the pianist Singer, and Yao Min and Li Houxiang with Chen Gexin. Besides those self-taught composers, there are some who received proper music education in academic institutions or from private tutors. Yang Gongshang and Liang Yueyin studied composition in Japan, He Lüting and Liu Xuean studied in the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Ren Guang studied composition and piano tuning in France, and Chen Gexin took lessons on various of compositional techniques from a private tutor.

Lyricists of Shanghai popular song also came from different professional and social backgrounds. However, in comparison to composers, lyricists were seldom mentioned on newspapers and magazines in the Shanghai era and thus few of their biographical details were left. It is known that only Chen Dieyi and Li Juanqing wrote lyrics for a living and continued their careers with EMI after it moved to Hong Kong. While Chen Dieyi was actually a journalist before he turned his passion for writing popular song lyrics into a full-time job, it is not clear how Li Juanqing joined the popular music industry.²³ Other lyricists wrote occasionally on commission or because of their involvement in film production. For example, Fan Yanqiao was a novelist and scriptwriter and Hu Xinling and Wu Cun were both film directors and often wrote lyrics for songs in their films.

It is not clear how composers collaborated with lyricists on the creation of songs. However, when a song was adapted from a folk tune or foreign hit, the composer would engage a lyricist to prepare new lyrics for it. For example, He Lüting asked Tian Han to write new words for 'The Wandering Songstress' (*Tiányā genü*) and 'The Song of Four Seasons' (*Sìjì gē*). As for a film song, lyrics based on the plot were usually prepared by the film director or commissioned lyricist, and then set to music by a composer. For example, Chen Dieyi recalled that once Chen Gexin came to him and asked if he could remove one Chinese character from the lyrics of 'Paired Phoenix' (*Fēnghuāng yǔfēi*) so that the words would fit better into the melody.²⁴ In this case, the lyrics were obviously written before the music. However, tunes might also be created before lyrics. Yao Li remembered that when a composer finished a tune, he would tell a lyricist the sentiment or feeling that it was meant to deliver, such as sadness, happiness, tenderness or love, and the lyricist would then compose set words to it.²⁵

Unlike lyricists who merely worked on words, perhaps because some composers were employed full-time by record companies and in addition to create melodies they had to assume more responsibilities. They also arranged instrumental accompaniments for songs, conducted in the studio and chose singers to make recordings for specific works. For example, sometimes Li Jinguang and Chen Gexin would prepare scores for session musicians and conduct the band and singer in recording sessions. When a song was finished, the composer usually had in mind an ideal singer to perform the piece and would just choose that specific singer for the recording. As pointed out by Zhang Fan and Jin Yi, singers always had trust in the composer and would simply follow his instruction, rather than arguing why a particular song was not assigned for them.²⁶

3. Instrumentalists

Filipino bandmen had already cultivated an appreciation of jazz and acquired relevant performing techniques in their homeland due to the influence of American colonists. They came to Shanghai of their own accord to cater for the city's nightlife with their musical expertise. Unlike their Philippine counterparts, White Russian classical musicians, fleeing the October Revolution, came to this metropolis unwillingly. Some of these musicians were fortunate to continue their musical career by teaching in the Shanghai Conservatory of Music or providing private music lessons, some managed to join the Shanghai Municipal Symphony Orchestra, and others had no alternative but to play in cabarets. Those who had to play dance music and American jazz probably developed the technical skills after they switched from the concert hall to the dancehall. A Russian instrumentalist, Tino, amazed at the Shanghainese people's exceptional adoration for dance music, said to a tabloid in an

interview that he would never understand why the Chinese were so much ‘enchanted by jazz, a weird product of Western music, to such an unusual high degree’. He was personally much more fascinated by classical music but played jazz at the dancehall only to earn a living.²⁷ Although it could not be denied that there were more admirable Philippine musical bands performing in Shanghai, it was White Russian musicians from the Municipal Symphony Orchestra who were more often engaged by record companies to play in recording sessions because they were able to play both classical music and jazz to a high standard. No wonder another Russian instrumentalist, Mick Korin, maintained that even though most the Shanghainese regarded Filipino jazzmen as more competent, those who had a real taste of music would know who were better.²⁸ Obviously, from his personal view, White Russians should have been ranked higher than the Filipinos.

It is generally believed that Chinese instrumentalists were far less proficient in playing jazz and were thus never appointed to accompany singers in the studio, yet it is still not clear to what degree they were involved in recording sessions. Zhu Zhonghua, a former employee of EMI working in the recording studio from 1942 to 1945, remembers that there were Chinese playing Western instruments. Zheng Deren, a bassist who used to play in dancehalls in the 1940s, also indicates that EMI once required members of its Chinese music ensemble to learn to play Western instruments. To give an example, Huang Yijun, who used to play *huqin*, went to the Shanghai Conservatory of Music to learn the trumpet, viola and piano and Qin Pengzhang, who used to play *pipa*, learnt the clarinet.²⁹ Zhu and Zheng’s statements suggest that Chinese musicians might occasionally be hired to play Western instruments in the studio.

Although music scores were prepared before a recording session so that the instrumentalists could simply follow the arrangements, sometimes they would arrange their own instrumental parts as well. According to Zhang Fan and Wu Yingyin, foreign instrumentalists were competent to play without pre-arranged music in the studio. They usually first made themselves familiar with the tune, and then had a quick chat before the recording session to allocate parts and reach agreement on issues, such as who would play the introduction of the song and who would give a solo fill-in musical phrase or an improvisation on the tune. Those instrumentalists were so experienced and skilful that they could start recording a song immediately after only a few rehearsals with the singer. In addition to accompanying in such an extemporaneous way, some of them probably were also involved beforehand in the work of instrumentation and arrangement.³⁰ Since White Russian classical musicians and Filipino jazzmen were capable of arranging instrumental accompaniments on the spur of the moment, it is reasonable to assume that some of these foreign instrumentalists also participated in arrangements for recordings. However, few details about their actual involvement were documented. According to Li Jinguang, Aaron Avshalomov, a classical musician who composed much orchestral, opera and ballet music featuring Chinese themes, was once engaged by EMI to prepare music arrangements and supervise recording sessions. Aleksandr Slutskii, a professor of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, took on the job after Avshalomov resigned in 1936. EMI also once employed the pianist Singer as a conductor in the recording studio.³¹

While record companies would sign up singers and employed songwriters, no record company actually maintained an in-house jazz band or Western orchestra for its recording sessions. EMI maintained a close relationship with members of the Shanghai Municipal Symphony Orchestra as well as with some other Filipino

instrumentalists active in cabarets, and engaged them to play in recording sessions. As for RCA-Victor, in order to save the cost of hiring foreign bands, the company once organised a Victor Wind Band composed of Chinese students who had just graduated from senior high school. However, due to its poor performance in recording sessions, this wind band was later relegated to play at a dancehall and no longer played in the studio.³² As for Chinese music bands, Nie Er once set up a Pathé Chinese Ensemble, also known as Sensen Chinese Music Band (*Sunsun guoyuedui*), in EMI for the purpose of recording Chinese instrumental works as well as accompanying popular songs arranged in the traditional style. Ren Guang continued to lead the ensemble after Nie resigned from EMI, but the ensemble disbanded in 1937 when Ren left the company. After that, as the famous lyricist Chen Dieyi remembers, no other in-house traditional Chinese musical band was organised, and anyone who played *huqin* might be hired to form a pickup band. Even the prolific songwriter Yao Min once played *huqin* for a recording session.³³

4. Singers

Shanghai pop singers entered the industry from various musical backgrounds. As with songwriters, some singers received training and started their singing careers in Li Jinhui's song-and-dance troupe. Even before Li's troupe dissolved, some of them, for example, Li Lili, Wang Renmei, Bai Hong and Zhou Xuan, had already performed on radio or acted on the screen from the early 1930s onwards. Gong Qiuxia, previously a member of the Peach Blossom song-and-dance troupe (*Meihua gewutuan*), became a record singer and film actress after she left the troupe. Yao Li entered on her singing career as a radio singer and began making recordings on Yan Hua and Zhou Xuan's recommendation. Wu Yingyin was scouted by Li Jinguang

after she accepted the offer to perform regularly at Ciro's Nightclub & Ballroom (*Xianlesi*). Jin Yin was discovered by Chen Gexin at the age of twelve when she sang along outside a glass studio in a department store, and then formally engaged to make records for EMI when she was sixteen. Bai Guang once studied with Miura Tamaki in Tokyo in the early 1940s. Although she was originally a soprano, she developed a lower and thicker voice and became an alto during her singing career.³⁴ Li Xianglan, a Japanese, who learnt singing with a Russian coloratura soprano, Podolev, began her career as an actress in Manchuria and then came Shanghai to join the pop industry. Some singers, such as Li Lihua, Chen Yumei and Hu Die, were indeed actresses, but since they were required to sing in films and make recordings for record companies, and so were equally adored by the audience, they were also participants in the Shanghai pop industry.

Strictly speaking, the audience differentiated between singing stars (*gexing*), such as Yao Lli and Wu Yingying, who only made records and gave live performances, and film stars (*yingxin*), such as Hu Die and Li Lihua, who were professional actresses. However, as some were both great singers and actresses, such as Zhou Xuan, Bai Guang and Li Xianglan, the line between *gexing* and *mingxing* became blurred, and they were just perceived as 'stars' (*mingxing*, literally 'bright stars').

Although singers contracted to a record company usually followed the instruction given by composers to make recordings of whatever songs were assigned to them, there was no guidance on singing, nor was there any training provided to enhance musicality and technical proficiency. They had to rely on their own talent and experience.³⁵ Those singers who only received basic training in song-and-dance troupes, as well as those who were self-taught and never attended any singing course,

usually took private lessons to advance their singing skills after they became well known. For example, after signing for EMI, Wu Yingyin and Jin Yin started learning vocal techniques with Chinese tutors from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. Both Ouyang Feiyang and Qu Yunyun studied European classical music and art songs with an American singer, Mrs Ford, and a Russian soprano, Mrs Levi. Even most celebrated Zhou Xuan also engaged a Russian vocalist to teach her proper Western singing skills nine years after the release of her debut record.

Record companies in the 1930s and 1940s did not launch promotions for individual record singers, nor were there any known talent agencies that organised publicity for artists. Therefore, in addition to improving singing skills to produce more outstanding works, it was essential for singers to make the most of every occasion where they met the audience. While those who sang on the screen might make frequent public appearances in promotional events organised by film companies, record singers had less opportunities to contact their fans. Yan Fei remembered that some devoted fans would come to the radio station when she performed live on radio, and watch through the glass partition of the studio while listening to the programme delivered from the speakers. She would then be glad to meet and talk to them afterwards. Zhang Fan remarked that she never had any schedule for meeting fans like pop idols do today, and she did not have much contact with the audience except when attending ribbon-cutting ceremonies for various venues or performing on special occasions, such as festivities, charity concerts or other one-off guest performances. She was always in a good mood to see supportive fans. Zhang maintained that film stars and record singers were not keen on performing regularly at dancehalls or other entertainment venues. Nevertheless, Yao Li and Wu Yingying continued to perform at dancehalls regularly even after signed

up by EMI. Although film companies, record companies and magazine publishers would give away autographed photos on request, singers who did not appear regularly at specific venues often replied to fan letters personally and gave autographs when approached by their fans in streets. For instance, once when strolling down a street, Zhou Xuan and Bai Hong were suddenly surrounded by a crowd of fervent fans. They then both spent plenty of time signing autographs for the crowd. Bai Guang also sent autographed photos as often as possible to her fans when requested, although she complained that it did cost a lot to prepare those photos.³⁶

II. The selling process

The selling process basically covers all the major channels through which music moved on to the consuming process. While some institutions, such as film companies, maintained closer relations with record companies, others such as publishers or dancehalls primarily distributed music in their own right. Whereas retailers sold physical records, radio stations delivered sounds over the airwaves. In whatever form the musical products were distributed, it was through various participants that Shanghai popular songs reached the audience. This section explores the activities of publishers, retailers, film companies, radio stations and dancehalls, and regulatory institutions which might influence the distribution of musical products.

1. Agents and promoters

As shown in the hypothetical flowchart of Shanghai popular music industry, there should have been agents who facilitated distribution of records and cooperation between record and film companies, as well as promoters who organised live

performances in radio stations and many other entertainment establishments. However, neither existing documents nor information gathered from fieldwork interviews reveal those individuals who were responsible for this work. It remains to be discovered who they were and how they played the role.

2. Publishers

From the outset most popular songs reached the audience through sound films, gramophone records or broadcasts in the 1930s and 1940s. A songbook compiler would decide whether or not to publish them later according to their popularity among the audience. Although some film companies released sheet music of film songs in newspapers or magazines before the screening of films, it was just part of their advertising and promotion activities. Only few of the Shanghai popular songwriters in the 1930s had written songs at the request of publishers or released their works in the form of sheet music or songbooks. Li Jinhui and Xu Ruhui are the only two prolific pop composers in the Shanghai era who had once used printed music scores as a primary approach to present their compositions to the public without recording them before.³⁷

Apart from his musical dramas for children published by the China Book Bureau (*Zhonghua shuju*), Li Jinhui had written popular songs for publishers twice during his musical career. The first was at the beginning of 1929 when he found himself stranded in Singapore, as described in the introductory chapter. The second time was in the autumn of 1935 when the Bright Moon Song-and-Dance Operatic Society (*Mingyue gewujushe*), which he reorganised in 1932, fell into desperate financial straits. In order to cover the basic cost of living for members in the society,

Li approached the Uni-Sound Bookshop (*Tongsheng shudian*) to publish some ‘new songs’, which were in fact compositional exercises written by some of the members and several pieces of Li’s earlier works. As he remembered, anyone could imagine how ridiculous these publications were, because the number ‘80’, which was in fact the score he marked on a sheet of a member’s compositional exercise, was surprisingly mistaken for music notation and printed in a songbook.³⁸ When the proceeds from the publication of one songbook had been spent, he collected more ‘new songs’ and compiled another. In this way, twenty volumes were published in succession, each of which contained between twenty and thirty-five songs.

Unlike Li Jinhui who submitted his pop works to eke a living, Xu Ruhui published his songs with great ambition at his own cost. Xu founded the Midnight Music Society (*Ziye yuehui*) in 1929 with the intention of promoting popular songs to a wider audience in society. During the development stage of the society, he wrote twelve songs and commissioned the North New Bookshop (*Beixin shudian*) in Shanghai to publish a songbook. This collection of songs won great popularity and sold very well, so he began to compose more and wrote one song per week, publishing the sheet music in a title *Midnight Weekly Song* (*Ziye zhouge*).³⁹

With the exception of those songbooks and sheets published by or for Li Jinhui and Xu Ruhui, there appeared to be no further close cooperation between pop songwriters and publishing houses. Composers tended to establish solid relationship with film and record companies through which their works could reach the audience, in the form of real sound rather than words and music on sheets. Publishers did not deal with individual composers, but rather compiled songbooks from a variety of films or recordings. They functioned more as conveyors of pop songs than as purveyors in the industry. Most pop songbooks published in this period became

supplementary information which provided lyrics and tunes of latest songs for listeners who had no access to original copies of sheet music which were found in record sleeves, and for members of singing clubs who delivered live performances on radio. An editor once indicated in the preface of a songbook that composers' works were no longer submitted straight for publication and therefore 'anyone who was fond of singing felt that there were no songs to sing'.⁴⁰ Aware of this situation, he collected some Chinese and foreign popular songs and published them so that those who enjoyed singing could obtain the material.

Unlike music specialists in the American Tin Pan Alley on the eastern shore of the Pacific, those who published popular songbooks in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai were normal publishing houses who operated their own bookshops and printing plants and whose main business was non-music publishing. Although it is difficult to track down how these publishers came to set up this line of musical products in addition to ordinary publications, it is believed that composers must have been on good terms with some executives in bookshops. Li Jinhui could not have had his works published when he was in financial difficulties, had it not been for his former affiliation with publishers and people in the publishing circle whom he worked with when engaged to edit Mandarin Chinese textbooks for primary school pupils in Shanghai. On the other hand, publishers must have seen the potential profits pop songbooks could bring in and so invested in individual composers' works and other compilations to create additional revenue streams. While a publisher would be interested in releasing a collection of the latest or most popular songs, a radio station, a radio singing club or individual enthusiast could also print a selection of club specialities or an audience's favourites. They either released a songbook in their own right or under the

sponsorship of various advertisers, or requested a publisher to print and deliver it to the market.

To give several examples, the Settled Villa Radio Station (*Anding bieshu guangbo diantai*) published songbooks at intervals in its own name in 1934. The editor stated that it was for the audience's benefit that the station compiled this collection of songs so that 'having an issue in hand, every listener listens to and reads music in a carefree and joyous way and learns to sing at the same time.'⁴¹ Also a group called the Starlight Song and Dance Research Society (*Xingguang gewu yanjiushe*) compiled and published *1000 Famous Film Songs (Dianying mingge yiqian qu)* in 1934 and *500 Famous Film Songs (Dianying mingge wubai qu)* the following year. Interestingly, songs collected in these two volumes are not all from the screen but also included several works from song-and-dance programmes, arias of Beijing operas and, surprisingly, political songs such as 'Song of the Chinese National Party' (*Zhongguo guomindang dangge*) and 'In Memory of the Prime Minister' (*Zongli jinian ge*). Moreover, they did not include as many songs, 1000 and 500, as the titles of these two songbooks revealed, but rather only 218 and 170 respectively. These overstatements were just embellishment which was intended to make the songbooks look more encyclopaedic. Rather than publishing songbooks in its own right, like the Settled Villa Radio Station or the Starlight Song and Dance Research Society, the Star Club (*Mingxing she*) released a compilation of popular songs through a publishing house, the Generous Bookshop (*Dafang shuju*), as shown on its back cover.⁴²

There is often publication data, together with words such as 'copyrighted, reproduction forbidden', inside or on the back cover of some songbooks which were released through a publisher. However, those collections compiled by a radio station

or club seem to be ‘not copyrighted’, because most of them did not carry proper information about publication. In most cases, only the group or radio station’s title and the compiler’s name were given but no clear statement regarding copyright was made. Although song recordings were not regarded as copyrighted publications in this period, songbooks were definitely of a ‘documentary matter and illustrations printed by machinery or technical processes and intended for sale or distribution’ under Article 1 of the Law of Publication.⁴³ Even so, since the statutory rights of the composer and lyricist were not explicitly stated in the Chinese Law of Publication, publishing houses and other groups might not contact songwriters for royalty issues nor take into account any potential legal obligation. As a result, not only was there a lack of publication detail in most songbooks but also the names of composers and lyricists were even sometimes omitted from the top of a page where the information could have conventionally been given. Songbook editors probably did not even know who the writers were. While a publisher paid Li Jinhui royalties on the publication of his compositions in the early years, other songwriters did not receive any financial reward when their works were put together and published.

3. Retailers

Although both EMI and RCA-Victor had their own showrooms in Shanghai, records were mostly sold by four types of retailers – music shops, gramophone shops, bookshops and department stores. Gramophone shops also sometimes functioned as wholesalers.

Music shops

When introduced to China in the early twentieth century, gramophones and records were mainly sold in foreign music shops which specialised in Western musical instruments, particularly pianos, and printed music. Among these music shops the long-established British Moutrie & Co. and Robinson Piano Co. opened in the 1870s while the well-known Sam Lázaro Brothers was founded later by a Goa-born Portuguese pianist Sam Lázaro in 1924.⁴⁴ Before the emergence of professional gramophone shops in the late 1920s, music shops were the primary distribution channels for gramophone records and most recordings available there were mainly Western music and some Chinese operas. These shops either imported records of Euro-American music direct from abroad or made purchases through the local agents of record companies.⁴⁵ However, in relation to other existing merchandise, records were just extra items offered in a music shop and it seems that the major music shops never regarded records as important stock items, particularly after record shops came to the fore. It was inevitable that in due course music shops would give way to gramophone shops in the record trade. Among the music shops listed in yellow pages published in the late 1930's when a few record shops had opened in Shanghai, only the Grand Music Store, run by a Czech, Alois Suchochleb, clearly stated that it provided gramophones and records.⁴⁶

Gramophone shops

Although being important distributors of records in the early years, music shops did not play an important part in the dissemination of Shanghai popular songs. The creation of Chinese popular music in modern times started in the late 1920s when

music shops were no longer the main channels of gramophone records in the marketplace. After a series of acquisitions and mergers between record companies in Europe and America in the early 1930s, the time when the production of Shanghai popular songs was about to take off, surviving recording conglomerates overseas became larger and stronger and thus their subsidiaries in China could move in to establish local sales networks. With a stable supply of a wide range of records from major record companies and the growing popularity of record playing among Chinese people came a strong demand for a professional supply service. Therefore a number of gramophone shops opened up to provide all kinds of music recordings and various models of gramophones and radio receivers. Among these were the Shanghai Talking Machine Company (*Dasheng wuxiandian changji hang*), the Sing Sung Phonograph Company (*Xinsheng changji gongsi*), the Golden Sound Phonograph (*Jinsheng changji gongsi*) and the Pao Fang Company (*Baofang gongsi*), whose shop windows were all pictured and taken as models of good window-dressing designs in the first issue of *Pathé Monthly*. These shops maintained close connections with record companies and most of them could place purchase orders straight to the major companies where their order departments were responsible for order processing. Those shops which had a bank's endorsement and an adequate amount of business capital were also allowed credit to purchase records in large quantities, and therefore some were able to provide a mail order service or, functioning as wholesalers, supply records nationwide to other shops in smaller cities.⁴⁷

Bookshops

Bookshops had been selling records from probably about the time that records of Li Jinhui's children's musical drama, recorded by the local Great China Records,

were attached to the scripts, published by the China Book Bureau and sold in bookshops. For example, the Civilisation Book Bureau (*Wenming shuju*), one of those bookshops which published sheet music of Li's love songs, sold records of all major labels in the 1930s, in a similar way to those professional gramophone shops. Unlike music shops, some bookshops maintained a business in record retailing throughout the whole Shanghai era of Chinese popular music even though not all bookshops offered records, and in the late 1940s, the Central Book Store (*Zhongyang shuju*), for instance, was still exclusively offering all kinds of the latest pop records released by EMI.⁴⁸

Department stores

Another notable outlet was the department store, and there were four premier department stores in Shanghai. The first among them, the Sincere Company (*Xianshi gongsi*), came into existence in 1917, and the other three, Wing On (*Yongan*), Sun Sun (*Xinxin*) and Dah Sun (*Daxin*) opened respectively in 1918, 1926 and 1936. The way in which these department stores operated, by displaying a wide range of consumer products tastefully in a well-organised order and selling at a fixed price, was quite different to the traditional Chinese retail practices in which prices were always negotiable and access to goods of high value and quality was only given to a limited number of wealthier customers who had been properly introduced.⁴⁹ In these department stores, with the requirement that all commodities be presented attractively, records together with gramophones and radios were usually sold in a specific area in a way that resembled a small gramophone shop. The vast number of prospective customers attracted by the novelty and the collection of goods, together with the spacious shopping area, also made a department store an ideal place for promotional

events. For example, in 1934 Win On held a three-day live performance in association with RCA-Victor, in which recording stars were invited to sing their latest numbers in the ‘music section’ of the store, which was then also broadcast live by a local radio station. The store also offered singers’ photos in a buy-one-get-one-free promotion to those who purchased records during the event.⁵⁰

4. Film companies

The use of songs in films did not, of course, begin until the introduction of sound into films in China. The years 1930 to 1936 saw a period of transition when production turned gradually from silent films to sound films and both silent and sound films became available in the marketplace. In the early 1930s, after the introduction of sound on the screen, its use was simply to fill up the soundtrack of a film with songs or accompanying music but dialogue and other audio content were usually not recorded. Not until 1935 did sound films become dominant.⁵¹

Major film companies in Shanghai had different attitudes towards the production of sound films and never shared common ground on whether or not to invest in this new technology. In 1930 the Star Motion Picture (*Mingxing yingpian gongsi*) made the first sound film in China – *Sing-song Girl Red Peony* (*Genü hongmudan*) featuring four arias from Beijing opera. With the technical support of Pathé Orient, this film used the earlier sound-on-disc format to record the dialogue and music. Acquiring the assistance of three American engineers, the Unique Films (*Tianyi yingpian gongsi*) also produced its first sound film *The Romance of the Sing-song House* (*Gechang chunse*) in 1931. This film utilised the more advanced optical recording, which photographically recorded sound directly onto the side of the strip of

motion picture film. The United Photoplay (*Lianhua yingye gongsi*), which was inclined to support leftists, opted to retain its interest in silent films, although it had also produced several tentative sound productions using the sound-on-disc format, such as *Loose Women Picked Up by Men* (*Yecao xianhua*) in 1930 and *Twin Stars of the Silver Screen* (*Yinhan shuangxing*) in 1931.⁵²

However, Lianhua's *Loose Woman Picked Up By Men* did set a record with regard to the history of Chinese cinema. 'Words on Seeking Brother' (*Xunxiong ci*) in the film is the first song exclusively written for a Chinese film. It is also the first time that the leading actors had sung on the screen. The lyrics were written by the film director Sun Yu and the music was composed by his brother Sun Chengbi. To ensure that the singing was synchronised with the actors' lips on the screen, Sun Yu took his assistant to the cinema and played the disc himself for three days. In addition to the original disc played in the cinema, this song was also recorded by the local Great China and New Moon Records, accompanied by a Chinese ensemble and a Western band respectively, and the gramophone records together with the sheet music were put up for sale on the film's release day.⁵³ Although there is no extant report or evidence as to whether this record was commercially successful, the release of film songs on records set an example for the industry and the film and recording industry have been closely linked ever since.

As the sound-on-disc format could cause synchronisation problems, there was a need for it to be supplanted by the technology of sound on film. With the steady development and increasing popularity of sound films, film companies maintained their own recording facilities, recruited music professionals, organised the production of film songs and recorded them optically on film.⁵⁴ However, these recordings could only be played through the optical projection of films in the cinema and it was

impossible to retrieve the sound by other methods. Since there was no equipment capable of converting to audio from optical signals, any song intended for release to the public in the form of a gramophone record had to be re-recorded. Actors who performed in the film, or other designated singers of the song, were thus required to sing again in the recording studio of a record company.

Film songs could be released either before or after screenings or might never even be made into records. It all depended on how a film company decided to promote a film and whether a record company saw financial benefit in making a recording of a film song. For example, it was part of the filmmaker's marketing plan to issue 'Words on Seeking Brother' as a record before the film was shown on the assumption that the audience would buy the record immediately after seeing the film. Film advertisements in newspapers in the 1930s usually stressed that songs in a film had been recorded and released. For example, three days before the premiere of *Street Angel* (*Malu tienshi*), the Star Motion Picture announced that two film songs, the famous 'The Wandering Songstress' and 'The Song of Four Seasons' both performed by Zhou Xuan, had been recorded by EMI. Because EMI had made its name known to the Chinese people in the 1930s, placing an advertisement with the information that film songs were issued by an established record company would impress on the audience that the production of songs had met a high enough standard to be released.⁵⁵ Similarly, to demonstrate its close connection to RCA-Victor, Yi Hwa Motion Picture (*Yihua yingye gongsi*) ran an advertisement for the film *Exile* (*Taowang*) one day before its release to declare that two of the songs in the film, 'Song of Exile' (*Taowang qu*) and 'Girl from the Village in the North' (*Saibei cunni*), had been made into a record by RAC-Victor.⁵⁶

Sometimes a film company could even publicise extra information about film songs. For example, for its new film *A Red Chamber in the Deep Spring* (*Honglou chunshen*) together with the screen song ‘Song of Picking Lotus’ (*Cailian ge*), in 1934 the Unique Films ran a full-page advertisement in *The Shun Pao Daily* on the release which proclaimed that

All dancehalls from today onwards play the music ‘Song of Picking Lotus’
from *A Red Chamber in the Deep Spring*

All radio stations from today onwards play the record ‘Song of Picking
Lotus’ sung by Chen Yumei

Pathé from today onwards is releasing the record, Chen Yumei singing ‘Song
of Picking Lotus’, No. 34671.⁵⁷

Obviously the song was a major selling point for the film company.

While the film companies promoted films by highlighting film songs and demonstrating the support from major record companies for these songs, the record companies found that both film stars and the films themselves were also an endorsement for records. EMI, for example, placed a half-page advertisement for its newly released record compilations of songs from six films produced by different film companies in *Young Companion* (*Liangyou*) in 1934, with distinctive catch lines:

An unprecedented contribution [in which] Pathé has sought and collected
songs from sound films of all major companies

Grand exhibition of contemporary Chinese songs; general mobilisation of
stars from the screen⁵⁸

The advertisement gave details of the composer, lyricist and singer of each song, the title of the film from which each song came, the catalogue number of each record and

pointed out that all six films had been screened around 10 October, a month before the publication of the advertisement. The text of the advertisement, particularly the catch line, was apparently intended to show off the record company's matchless capacity to recruit film stars to in order to make recordings.

As a matter of commercial interest, record companies reacted to the market and took the initiative by recording any film song which they considered potentially profitable. They usually requested film stars to make recordings of film songs, yet sometimes other celebrated singers would also be invited to reinterpret the songs. After the screening of the legendary film *The Wandering Songstress* in the Golden Castle Theatre (*Jindu da xi yuan*) over the Chinese New Year in 1941, EMI immediately recognised the potential of the film songs to be great hits, so the stars in the film were asked to re-record the songs. There were originally ten songs in the film, eight of which were sung by the leading lady Zhou Xuan and the other two by guest performers Yao Li and Du Jie. Zhou Xuan was still selected to make the eight songs into gramophone records and Yao Li was appointed to perform the other two.⁵⁹ As by then Yao was also a famous radio singer and had made her name known to the public in several recordings, the reason for EMI's decision was self-evident.

On the one hand, a record company would seize any opportunity to make records of songs from successful films, yet on the other, it might ignore songs which it considered less appealing to the audience. A case in point is the musical film *Orioles Flying on Earth* (*Ying fei renjian*), which was produced by the famous director Fang Peilin in 1946. The film featured extravagant scenic settings and twelve exquisite songs, composers of which included the reputable pop songwriters Li Jinguang, Chen Gexing and Yao Min, and a musician from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Huang Yijun. The classically trained soprano Ouyang

Feiyang was the leading actor and singer and the eminent tenor Huang Feiran was also invited to sing a duet with her in this film. EMI only selected ten songs in *Orioles Flying on Earth* to make recordings, supposing that the rest of them were too unattractive to be popular with the general public. Lee Leng-kok indicates that since ‘The Theme Song of Orioles Flying on Earth’ (*Yingfei renjian zhutiqu*), one of the two unreleased songs, was not a solo piece for Ouyang but a mixed chorus performed by students from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, and that its lyrics were full of satirical attacks on profiteers at that time, it was not surprising that EMI chose not made a record of it.⁶⁰

No matter how the recording industry made the decision whether to record a film song or how filmmakers promoted their films by using songs, they were now tied to each other in taking advantage of the channels that they dominated and shared. Composers of Shanghai popular songs were a bridge between the two industries. Although the terms of RCA-Victor’s relationship with film companies are not clear, the critical roles of the Chinese musical director and composers working in EMI illustrate this point.

On paper, the foreign manager’s decision was final, but in fact the Chinese musical director also had a pivotal role in the assessment of prospective new releases. Ren Guang was a composer who had a close connection with many leftists, including musicians, writers and filmmakers. On the one hand, as a head of the recording studio he had to discover musical works of commercial potential, ranging from traditional operas to newly composed popular songs, and keep foreign managing directors satisfied with sales figures. It cannot be denied that many of Li Jinhui’s love songs and other songwriters’ works which were harshly condemned by leftists were indeed released by Pathé Oriental, or later by EMI, during Ren’s term as Musical Director.⁶¹

On the other hand, as a member of several left wing societies which maintained covert links with the Chinese Communist Party, he assumed the responsibility of introducing more leftist musicians' compositions and songs in leftist films to a wider audience. Although song lyrics were usually translated into English to be approved by foreign managers before a recording session, the example of the song 'Huangpu River' (*Huangpu jiang*) from the film *New Women* (*Xin nüxing*) shows that this was not always the case. This film featured two songs, 'Song of New Women' (*Xin nüxing ge*) and 'Huangpu River' both of which were made into records by EMI. While the former was successful and gained popularity, the later was not only censored before the film was screened but also officially banned. 'Huangpu River' was in fact adapted from Li Jinhui's romantic 'The River of Peach Blossom' (*Taohua jiang*) with rewritten lyrics for the film. Because the lyrics described the Huangpu River, which the Bund was adjacent to and most foreign banks and companies were located by, as 'the den of enemies' and cursed that 'those who occupy the land are all devils', the song was considered to be a message of anti-imperialism which could lead to chaos. As a result, EMI could only leave all copies of the record in the stockroom.⁶² Obviously, if foreign managers had read the lyrics carefully and appreciated the innuendo, Ren Guang would have not been able to produce the record in the first place.

In the years of Fu Xiangxun's term as dramatic director, those composers who were employed full-time in EMI also wrote songs at the request of film companies and kept on good terms with other musicians in the industry. They would therefore have participated in the decision-making with regard to whether or not to record a song, particularly their own compositions. After one of these prolific songwriters, Li Ginguang, was promoted to take the position of musical director in EMI in 1945, the

production and release of film songs was completely undertaken by Chinese personnel.

5. Radio stations

The number of stations varied from time to time in the 1930s and 1940s due to the change in the political and social situation, but there were always approximately twenty radio stations broadcasting in Shanghai.⁶³ Although state radio stations may have allocated timeslots for pop programmes, it was primarily through two dominant forms of entertainment programmes, record playing and live performances by singing clubs, which were broadcast by commercial stations that popular songs were heard across the whole of Shanghai.

Record playing

Playing records on the air was probably the simplest and most economical way to produce a programme, particularly for those small stations equipped with nothing more than a low-powered radio transmitter and operated by amateur radio clubs.⁶⁴ It seemed that to most of the audience in the 1930s and 1940s the songs being broadcast were more important than those who chose and played them. Since there was neither any feature article or column concerning programme hosts in the print media, nor was there any programme with a particular host known to the public, there seemed no specific personnel in the radio stations functioning as professional disc jockeys, playing records and giving introductions to or comments on songs. The names of programme sponsors and some introductions to their products or services were also delivered live to the public by the staff of a station because there was no pre-recorded

radio advertising at that time. Typically a record-playing programme appearing in a schedule was usually only titled 'Records' rather than the name of a DJ or programme host, sometimes with supplementary words merely to describe the music content, 'Chinese' or 'Latest', for example.

The length of a record-playing programme might generally range from fifteen minutes to an hour. A shorter one was usually meant to introduce new releases or to fill in the time gap between longer programmes, while an hour-long programme was better organised and would play listeners' requests. Some of the audience preferred listening to records rather than songs performed live by singing clubs because they thought that every record was a masterpiece made with meticulous care by a famous artist and an ordinary radio singer's technique was simply not as good as that of a trained recording star.⁶⁵ They would try their best to get a request played by writing to the radio station or by telephoning when a programme was being broadcast. To meet the various needs of the audience, radio stations did their utmost to seek out and collect all kinds of records and borrowed from record companies when a specific record was not available on the market.

However, the audience were seldom satisfied. As it took almost seven minutes to play a two-side gramophone record, taking into consideration time reserved for advertising, only six records at most could be played in an hour-long programme and even less in a shorter one. An infuriated listener, under the pseudonym 'a female villain' (*baixiangren saosao*), made a complaint in *The Shanghai Radio Weekly* (*Shanghai wuxiandian*):

I thought you should have received my last letter but why didn't you play my requests? Are you blind or something? From today onwards, should you fail to play my requests, your station will be shut down soon.⁶⁶

Obviously, this dissatisfied listener's requests had never been played due to the limited time available for the programme, partly because there were too many requests made by listeners and partly because advertisements took up so much time. As a reader of *The Shun Pao Daily* indicated, there was often a five-minute, sometimes even ten, commercial break after a three-minute song.⁶⁷ No wonder the 'female villain' was irritated.

Live performance

In the 1930s and 1940s people had more choice of vocal music than before. Traditional folk and operatic music was no longer the only option in Chinese people's musical life after school songs, children's musical dramas, love songs, leftist mass songs and different kinds of film songs came into existence and were delivered through gramophone records, radio broadcastings and sound films. Those who were more keen on singing than listening to songs organised other like-minded people to form the so-called 'music club' (*yinyueshe*) or 'singing club' (*geyongshe*), and gathered regularly to sing the latest songs accompanied by several members playing instruments. These clubs gradually moved from singing in private gatherings to performing on radio.

The first radio singer group is the Art Transformation Club (*Yihua she*), which was founded in 1932 and had its debut in the China-West Radio Station (*Zhongxi diantai*).⁶⁸ As the Art Transformation Club was an amateur group, the members only went to the radio station once a week on Sunday. Although there had already been on radio a wide range of live programmes of traditional story-telling ballads, folk songs and operas, the audience in the early 1930s could only listen to records playing

popular songs on the air. Despite being broadcast only once a week, the brand-new live programme of popular songs soon caught the audience's attention. Enthusiastic about the programme, the owner of the China-West Radio Station even donated several musical instruments to support the Art Transformation Club. The successful amateur live performance of popular songs on radio paved the way for future commercial programmes. Six months later, the first commercial singing club, the Wonderful Sound Group (*Miaoyin tuan*), was organised by Ma Loufen, a former member of Li Jinhui's song-and-dance troupe who left the troupe during the Southeast Asia tour.⁶⁹ By the third day of the group's trial run on radio, four shops had approached them and agreed to offer sponsorship. Seeing the group's impressive performance and the financial reward they had reaped, more and more radio music clubs mushroomed and joined the broadcasting industry.

When Ma Loufen set up the first commercial radio singing club, the rate at which they charged a sponsor for a programme broadcast on a daily basis was 320 dollars per month, out of which each member received from 20 up to 50 according to his or her capacity and status in the club. In comparison to a factory labourer whose average monthly pay rate in 1933 was approximately 15 dollars, performing in a couple of programmes a day a singing club member could be amply rewarded with a huge salary every month.⁷⁰ To those who were able to sing several tunes or play an instrument nothing could be more attractive than performing on radio and making a decent living, and therefore one after another music clubs went to radio stations. According to timetables of singing programmes, there were no more than three pop singing programmes everyday in Shanghai in March 1933, in July 1934 there were nine clubs delivering live performance on radio, and by September 1935 the number of radio singing clubs soared to twenty-three.⁷¹

The increase in the number of music clubs over the airwaves in Shanghai caused problems. All of them faced heavy competition and thus were forced to bite the bullet and cut prices to bid for advertisers resulting in a drastic decline in 1936 to 50 dollars in the revenue a programme generated each month. Additionally, the quality of the singing programmes went down due to poor organisation and a lack of proper training. Some members, who were in fact neither competent singers nor skilful instrumentalists, joined a club just because radio singing was in fashion. They could not read music, not articulate words of lyrics properly, and sometimes not even follow the beat. Moreover, some undisciplined club members invited non-singer friends to the studio and romped with female singers, which could even be heard by the audience during the broadcast.⁷² This chaotic mess ended up with a string of music clubs disbanded. In the late 1930s and early 1940s the number of singing clubs stayed at ten, whereas only four clubs were still singing regularly on radio upon the liberation of Shanghai in 1949.

A singing club could be composed of as few as three or up to ten members, usually including at least a male pianist, sometimes one more violinist or guitarist, and two or three female singers. However, the size of a club was not a factor in its success as there were also small groups which had won great popularity. The famous Great Unity Club (*Datong she*), headed by the brother and sister Yao Min and Yao Li, had only three artists and a presenter. During its heyday in the late 1930s, the club had to split their afternoons and evenings among five stations in Shanghai and the four members were obliged to do an entire forty-minute show, where Yao Li was the leading singer, Yao Min played piano and sometimes sang as well, their uncle played the violin.⁷³ Similar to record-playing programmes, live performances also carried

commercial advertising. In Great Unity Club, it was the presenter, the elder sister Yao Ying, who was responsible for advertising their sponsor's products or services.

Although singing clubs might be hired by a radio station, most of them preferred to seek their own sponsorship to earn more for themselves and just paid the studio rental fee to the owner of station. Hence, some artists formed their own club and looked for more opportunities after they had been employed by a radio station for a period.⁷⁴ While some clubs made their own lists of songs to perform in a programme, some took requests from listeners in order to encourage audience participation, to show the great number of songs in their repertoire and to convince sponsors that their programmes were recognised by a wide audience. Some shops distributed their own flyers, or placed adverts in newspapers or magazines, in which the audience could find a request form and relevant information such as programme timetables, station frequencies and the names of the clubs they supported. Any listener who was interested in making a request could send the request form by post to the music club or the radio station or to the sponsor. Some proprietors supported a music club by periodically issuing a collection of songs as a guide for tunes and lyrics, with pictures of leading singers on the cover page endorsing their products or services. Such a collection of songs provided the audience with a clearer idea of a club's repertoire so that songs they requested would be the club's specialities.⁷⁵ Curiously no record company, in its capacity as a copyright holder or on behalf of its contracted songwriters who kept the copyright, ever raised any issue of the right of reproduction of music and lyrics in those collections of songs. Above all, in addition to sending a request form by post, the easiest and perhaps most efficient way, though costly, was making a phone call to the radio station when a show was on the air.

6. Dancehalls

Western style social dancing was considered alien upon its introduction to China after the Great War, yet in the 1930s it became one of the most fashionable leisure activities in some coastal cities among Chinese people. With the boom in the popularity of dancing and its integration into Chinese people's daily life in Shanghai, dancehalls in different sizes and styles emerged in profusion, not only in the foreign concessions but also in the Chinese area. As Andrew D. Field describes, in Shanghai while the daytime economy suffered from political instability and business recession, 'the shadow-world of cabarets continued to prosper, to the chagrin of failing businessmen and patriots alike.'⁷⁶ Whatever class a dancehall was rated, there were always Chinese patrons and thus a need for variety in music. Although Euro-American music, such as big band jazz or crooners' latest hits, were undoubtedly the standard programmes in top class places favoured by foreigners and the local Chinese elite, jazzy Chinese popular songs, which were coming to people's ears in the early 1930s, and other familiar folk tunes seemed more attractive to ordinary local customers. Tunes from Hollywood films and Broadway musicals were never superseded by Chinese pops in dancehalls, except during the Japanese occupation of the entire city. However, those numbers were no longer the only choice after Li Jinhui's love songs and other Chinese songwriters' works marched into dancehalls.

Although the exact timing of the adoption of Chinese pop at dancehalls in Shanghai is unclear, extant documentation shows that the Wind Dance Band (*Qingfeng wuyuedui*), which was trained by Li Jinhui himself, was the first group that brought Li's musical works to the dance floor.⁷⁷ In 1934, the gangster Du Yuesheng commissioned Li Jinhui to organise a jazz band for the newly opened dancehall in the Yangzi Hotel (*Yangzi fandian*), and required that the band be composed exclusively

of Chinese members, especially the tall and strong Northern Chinese so that they would not be mistaken for Filipinos. Instructed by Li, the band had a repertoire consisting of foreign music, like that played in first class cabarets, and Chinese tunes, together with some vocal works which sing-song girls could sing to the band's accompaniment. Working in a room of the hotel with the assistance of two members of his song-and-dance troupe, Zhang Huang and Zhang Xian, Li rearranged his own works together with other folk tunes and turned them into dances. The whole idea was a great success, which filled the dancehall to capacity every night. As Chinese melodies were certainly welcome and it was much cheaper to hire a Chinese band, in comparison to the Filipinos and White Russians who had long dominated the cabarets in Shanghai, other dancehalls followed Yangzi's new path. Li also gave much assistance to some of them, including recruiting instrumentalists and providing music for free.⁷⁸ In this way, besides the silver screen and the airwaves, another stage had been set up for Chinese popular music.

Along with the trend of employing Chinese jazz bands, some dancehalls started to hire Cantonese bands, which were amateur ensembles organised by Cantonese people in Shanghai and devoted to Cantonese opera and folk music. In 1936, several members of the established Three Surplus Cantonese Music Club (*Sanyu yueyue she*) were invited to deliver a live performance in the Lunar Palace Dancehall (*Yuegong wuting*). As their music made a favourable impression on the customers, they were engaged to perform regularly. Although it is perhaps beyond one's imagination today how traditional Cantonese music fitted into Western style ballroom dance, Lunar Palace set a new fashion and led some establishments to follow it. While in the beginning all programmes came from the traditional repertoire, the latest popular tunes were later added on to meet patrons' various

requests. In 1942 a Cantonese band leader, Chen He, tried to integrate Western instruments, including the accordion, violin, piano, guitar, bass and drummer's kit, into the band and, with an audacious step, discarded the most important *huqin* and substituted popular songs in the traditional repertory. The move was exceptionally successful and, consequently, other dancehalls had no alternative but to require their Cantonese bands to do the same.⁷⁹

Despite the fact that Chinese jazz and Cantonese bands had been playing their part in the dissemination of Chinese popular song, they were in a minority. Moreover, they were undeniably far less skilful than their White Russian or Filipino counterparts, and thus could hardly compete for the opportunity to enter high-class cabarets. It is generally believed that it was the foreign bands that took on the work of playing Chinese pop at most dancehalls as they did in the recording studios. Nevertheless, several places still excluded Chinese music from their programmes. It was not surprisingly reported as unprecedented in 1939 when the Paramount Dancehall decided to include five film songs from *Songs and Tears* (*Gesheng leihen*) in its regular programmes.⁸⁰ The unshakable dominance of American jazz and dance music in upmarket cabarets remained firm until the Japanese military took over the whole of Shanghai in 1942. Regarded as 'the enemy's cultural products', the latest Hollywood screen songs and big band dance numbers were forced to withdraw from the dance floor and give way to Chinese songs in the entertainment world. Even top dancehalls had to modify their programmes to accommodate the political change. For example, in 1942, Paramount advertised for female singers in the long-established *The Shun Pao Daily*. In the same year, a Chinese group, Appreciation Band (*Zhiyin dayuedui*) led by the pop songwriter Yan Gefan, made their name by playing in Cathay (*Guotai*).⁸¹ Although American music reclaimed its place following the end

of the War, Chinese songs had come to the fore and were now essential in most live music venues.

The irresistible charm of cabaret dancing, apart from the swaying bodies of taxi hostesses, was the live music delivered by a competent band with singers. For this reason, most dancehalls made every effort to arrange live performances in order to compete with one another for more customers. Sometimes a good band and singers could drive male guests so excited after a dance that they dashed to the stage and, with harsh and raucous voices, gave an obviously uninvited solo recital. Perhaps getting bored with shuffling and swinging endlessly or having an ambition to become songstresses, some dancing hostesses also got on the stage and delivered the latest popular tunes.⁸² However, in order to cut cost or simply being unable to afford a band, some small-scale dancehalls or cafés just played records, including American big band jazz and Chinese popular songs. It was generally acceptable, or even welcomed, to play records in a café which had not originally been intended as a place for dancing, whereas a dancehall would be considered inferior if a gramophone was used there instead of a musical band.

The last two years of the Sino-Japanese War saw a sudden increase in the number of Chinese pop concerts in Shanghai's cinemas and theatres as well as of live performances at restaurants and cafés. Though both condemned by the Nationalists as 'decadent sounds' (*mimi zhi yin*) and regarded by the leftist critics as vulgar entertainment detrimental to national salvation, it seems that under the puppet regime controlled by the Japanese, Shanghai popular songs had broken through the ideological barrier and risen to an even higher status. Concerts held in 1944 and 1945 were unprecedented and entirely different from song-and-dance programmes in the 1930s. A song-and-dance troupe was a self-contained group consisting of its own

instrumentalists, actors and other administrators, whose typical show in an ordinary Chinese theatre included singing and dancing, most of the time based on a connected series of events that made up a story. Unlike those song-and-dance performances, these later Chinese pop concerts usually featured the most popular recording singers and film stars delivering either the latest hits or their personal specialities, with accompaniment by a full-scale orchestra conducted by pop songwriters themselves, or sometimes foreign professional orchestra conductors. Taking in several forms, such as solo or joint recitals, charity concerts and non-stop performances by various artists, these concerts were mainly held in upmarket venues such as the deluxe Grand Theatre which used to screen first-run Hollywood films until 1942 and the Lyceum Theatre which had long been a stage exclusively for Western dramas, ballets and classical music. Sometimes, Western classical orchestral works, art songs or arias from operas might even be woven into a pop concert.

A case in point is Bai Guang's solo recital held in the Lyceum Theatre in May 1945. The whole concert was divided into four sections. The first quarter featured the overture from Jacques Offenbach's operetta *Orphée aux Enfers* (*Orpheus in the Underworld*), performed by the orchestra, and two arias from a French opera by Bai Guang. The second included selections from Franz Lehar's operetta *Die Lustige Witwe* (*The Merry Widow*) and two Chinese songs. With the songwriter Chen Gexin as orchestra conductor, after three popular songs performed by herself and two violin solos given by a guest violinist in the third quarter, in the fourth Bai sang another three songs and gave an encore piece to end the concert. In a similar fashion, other singers, including Bai Hong, Li Xianglan, Ouyan Feiying and Qu Yunyun, also had their solo or joint concerts, in which they performed not only the most favourite Chinese pops but also some Western classical works. Although the celebrated singer

Zhou Xuan was not as proficient as others in Western classical works, in March 1945 she gave a most successful concert of film songs, titled the Silver Screen Trilogy (*Yinhai sanbuqu*), in which she sang many songs from three of her smash hit films with an orchestra conducted by the writers of those songs Chen Gexin and Li Jinguang. Above all, a concert of Chen Gexin's works in the Lyceum Theatre on 30 June 1945 was unprecedented and unrepeatabe. The announcement for the concert was placed in *The Shun Pao Daily* for six consecutive days, with a ringing endorsement given by four other well-known songwriters. Supported both by EMI and by RCA-Victor with an orchestra conducted by Chen himself, over fifty singers and film stars gathered in Lyceum to perform Chen's works.⁸³

With regard to live performance at restaurants and cafés, although it is believed that programmes of Chinese popular songs had been introduced in the 1930s, it was not until 1944 and 1945 that a great number of these establishments, either renowned hotel-restaurants or ordinary cafés, began to promote shows featuring female singers and musical bands delivering the latest Chinese songs. Some of them also provided a dance floor so that guests could bop and jig the night away after having a good meal. Unlike pop concerts, which were no longer held on the same scale as previously mentioned after 1945, live performances in dining venues continued to thrive until 1949. Restaurants competed with one another, as well as with dancehalls, to employ celebrated singers and placed a mass of advertisements both in leading daily newspapers and in tabloids.

An interesting case of a music café illustrates how an owner strove to gain the initiative in this competitive environment. In 1942, the Japanese-organised Chinese United Production (*Zhonghua lianhe zhipian gongsi*) released *Four Sisters* (*Si jiemei*), starring four established film and singing stars, Gong Qiuxia, Chen Qi, Zhang Fan and

Chen Juanjuan. They played the four sisters in the film and had been identified by the audience as the elder, second, third and younger sisters ever since. Seeing the strong impression *Four Sisters* had made, someone opened a 'Four Sister Music Café' (*Si jiemei kafei yinyueting*) and invited these four sisters and other singers to give a live performance.⁸⁴ Another advertisement in *The Shun Pao Daily* run by the Golden Gate Hotel (*Jinmen da jiudian*) for its attached restaurant sheds more light on this kind of promotional stunt:

Would you care to see the band from the Pathé Records? Right here in our place

Would you care to meet stars on the records? Right here in our place

Regal Orchestra led by Gingang playing with excitement⁸⁵

As Jingang is in fact one of the several pseudonyms of Li Jinguang, the musical director of EMI at the time, and EMI never maintained any in-house band, it is possible that through Li the operator of the restaurant could arrange performances by recording stars and a group of instrumentalists frequently hired in recording sessions by the record company.

7. Regulatory institutions

As there were only three record companies equipped with manufacturing facilities in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai, piracy of copyrighted recordings was never a problem in the recording industry. The dispute over whether radio stations had to pay licence fees to play records on the air in 1935 appears to be the only case in this period in which issues concerning copyright had been brought up and finally settled by the judicial department. There had been no further arguments ever since, and no governmental institution or trade association had dealt with matters of copyright. There was no specific institution responsible for the regulation of the production and

distribution of popular music, but instead censorship over popular songs was generally exercised under the film censorship and broadcasting regulations by different governing bodies. Before 1937, all three distinct municipal entities had their own organisations in charge of film censorship and the administration of broadcasting.

The Ministry of Transport and Communication of the National Government set a national policy on the operation of radio stations in 1929 and began its nationwide control over all private stations, including those owned by Chinese in the concessions. The Ministry also laid down guidelines for radio programming in the mid 1930s, which stipulated that a broadcast must

- have a clear and righteous purpose;
- not be detrimental to public security;
- conform to the principles of the party [KMT];
- not be obscene;
- not contain superstition, spirits and ghosts;
- not defy scientific principles;
- not defy the ethic spirit;
- not contain low-class vulgarity;
- not promote feudal ideology.⁸⁶

To establish its control over broadcasting organisations, the Shanghai Municipal Council proposed in 1932 to call for a taxpayers' meeting to discuss issues regarding the regulation of radio stations in the settlement. However, due to the intervention of the Chinese Telecommunication Bureau of the Ministry of Transport and Communication, the Council never really implemented whatever resolution the

meeting had passed. In the Frenchtown, the French Municipal Council promulgated a code in 1933, which stated that political propaganda, news liable to disturb public order, programmes against morality and private letters must be excluded on the radio. In 1938 the Council ordained that all radio stations within the French jurisdiction submit programmes to the Service of Police Force before broadcast to the public and the Council then set up an organisation to monitor radio broadcasts in the same year.⁸⁷ The ordinance was in fact redundant. As a result of the Japanese military entering Shanghai, a supervision department of radio broadcasting was set up to take over the position of the Ministry of Transport and Communication as a telecommunications regulator, and the Shanghai Municipal Council and French Municipal Council soon recognised the Japanese military's supervision over broadcasting in Shanghai. In late 1941, following the outbreak of the war in the Pacific Ocean, the Japanese military police and information department started to take part in the administration of radio stations in the foreign concessions and shortly thereafter closed down all the radio stations in Shanghai that were not associated with the Japanese by the end of that year.⁸⁸ From April 1942 onwards, the propaganda department of the Japanese-controlled puppet regime assumed authority over radio stations in Shanghai, until the end of the war.

Although the Chinese authorities had long condemned Shanghai popular songs as decadent sounds, as institutions involved in the production and distribution were primarily based in the foreign concessions, no actions could be taken before 1945. Nevertheless, even when the Chinese government regained control over the mass media after the war, there were still no effective measures carried out to discourage the general public from listening to popular songs, because 'popular songs were hummed by civil servants, sung by the academic staff, heard in the governmental

propaganda unit, and even taken as materials for music courses at school.’⁸⁹ Despite an ordinance that restricted ‘decadent sounds’ being delivered over the airwaves, the state-owned Shanghai Radio Station still did not withdraw popular songs from its programmes. In response to a written reprimand issued by the Central Department of Broadcasting Administration in 1946, the station claimed that as popular and film songs were the audience’s favourites, for the sake of advertising revenue it was simply out of the question to stop playing these songs.⁹⁰

As for the film censorship, in the International Settlement, the Police Department of the Municipal Council had been granted the authority to examine and approve the screening of films since 1930, which was previously exercised by the Film Censorship Commission. Films containing obscenity or indecency or liable to cause a breach of the peace or affect the good order were not allowed to be shown in the settlement and had to be removed. Likewise, in 1932 the Service of Police Force began to take charge of the censorship in the French Concession and adopted similar criteria that contents considered to be immoral or injurious to public order were strictly forbidden.⁹¹

In Chinese territories, the censorship was performed by the Central Board of Censors (*Zhongyang dianying jiancha weiyuanhui*) established in 1933, under the Law of Film Censorship promulgated by the Ministry of Education in association with the Ministry of the Interior in 1930. The Board developed criteria against which films were examined. These were whether the contents affronted the dignity of the Chinese people, defied the principles of the party, breached traditional morality or threatened public order and advocated superstition or heretical ideas. Although the Japanese in Shanghai had long intervened in film censorship, it was not until the Japanese military invaded and occupied Chinese territory in 1937 that the Shanghai Japanese Consulate

General began to exercise their power both within the Chinese authorities and in those of foreign concessions. After the war, the Chinese National Government promulgated provisional regulations to control all sorts of mass media, and hence for the first time the Chinese government got control of film censorship in the whole city.

However, it appeared that the authorities would concentrate more on the plots and images of a film rather than on screen songs, whoever conducted the censorship. When part of a film was cut out or simply the entire film was banned because of its story line, songs it carried would certainly be removed and the recordings not released, but few films had been partially deleted or banned because songs they contained were regarded as politically inappropriate. The Japanese-controlled puppet Shanghai City Government once publicised a list of officially banned songs in 1943, announcing that:

As lyrics and tunes have an immense impact on the moral of a country and the morale of its people, in order to eradicate the evil and heterodox belief, every effort should certainly be made to ban all those which are opposed to national policies and incompatible to the value of the times.⁹²

Needless to say, the policy and value of a puppet government was to keep on good terms with the nation which had control over it. Thus, anti-Japanese songs and songs with connotations of the fight against Japan were all on the list, including two of Nie Er's film songs, 'Graduation Song' (*Biye ge*) and 'March of the Volunteers' (*Yiyongjun jinxingqu*), which had been released by EMI in 1935.

III. The consuming process

Although the most active participants in the consuming process would appear to be the audience, the critics and the press are also discussed in the consuming process. From the viewpoint of the product flow, what the press reported and critics commented on were basically musical products, other participants in different processes and events occurring around the products. However, due to the lack of sufficient information about how the press operated in the pop industry and no strong evidence for the existence of critics, this section focuses on the audience's listening habits and the coverage of popular music in the press.

1. Audience

Phrases such as 'hot in main streets and narrow alleys' (*hongpian dajie xiaoxiang*) and 'taking the whole country by storm' (*fengmi quanguo*) were usually used to describe the great popularity of Shanghai popular song, this raising the question of who were listening to these songs. In fact, producers of Chinese popular song in the early years did not target a specific audience, or rather they probably had no idea who the audience would be. Li Jinhui created children's musical dramas only for primary education. However, he would neither expect that later on these works could reach more age groups through song-and-dance performances, nor would he anticipate that his love songs, an unplanned by-product, could draw a mass audience. Before approaching him to record his love songs, while record companies were sure that the records would sell well, they were never certain what group of consumers would buy them. It is generally accepted that the audience of Shanghai popular songs in the 1930s and 1940s was the so-called 'petty urbanites' (*xiao shimin*).⁹³

This term was actually coined by Chinese film critics in the early 1930s in attempt to identify the community of people to whom leftist films appealed.⁹⁴ Film songs in the leftist cinema, which featured progressive and patriotic lyrics written by leftist intellectuals, were often distinguished from popular songs, and referred to as mass songs, as a result of the different message they were meant to deliver. However, these songs also played a part in the development of the newly rising popular music culture in the 1930s. As Laikwan Pang indicates, ‘the committed [leftist] filmmakers were highly aware that the popular taste could not be sacrificed in the name of artistic and ideological excellency.’ Therefore, while politically these film songs were used as a propaganda tool to express social criticisms by the filmmakers, commercially they helped to attract those who were fascinated by the audio-visual effects of motion pictures.⁹⁵ However, while leftist filmmakers intended to employ songs which took the same format as ‘popular song’ to convey their political messages and to denounce bitterly the Western popular music for its association with imperialism and corruption, they could not locate their audience. As a result, the made-up term ‘petty urbanites’ was adopted by the filmmakers.

Like most conventional labels for social classes, ‘petty urbanites’ was never precisely defined. Film critics never really explained the composition of ‘petty urbanites’, but only described them as those who were irritated by the socio-economic reality and were powerless to strive for a change. The term was nevertheless believed by most people to include small merchants, various kinds of clerks and secretaries, high school students, housewives and others of the so-called ‘petit bourgeoisie’, and also referred to by the leftist intellectuals as a new middle urban class active in consumption. It seems that the term only denotes those who were more financially secure, but covers neither those who earned a humble living, such as factory labours,

rickshaw pullers and dock workers, nor those who were economically better-off, such as factory owners or managers. However, besides ‘petty urbanites’, ‘non-petty urbanites’ also listened to popular songs, enthusiastically or passively, and all of them would be captivated by these songs, sooner or later.

Although the economically underprivileged could not afford a radio, not to mention a gramophone, they could listen to popular songs whenever they passed by those loudspeakers in streets or whenever a gramophone record was played next door. As there were no noise regulations in the 1930s and 1940s, in order to draw people’s attention shops owners could equip themselves with radios or gramophones and often turned up the volume as much as possible.⁹⁶ As a Westerner commented,

Somebody was playing records, all the time, and the tunes were amplified through loudspeakers of super strength. The Chinese loved noise, went crazy about it, and Shanghai offered its noises, as it offered everything else a Chinaman could ask for. It produced a great, grotesquely cacophonous rhapsody. It was in the department stores and in the open shops, in the factories and in the workshops.⁹⁷

Wang Weishang remembers that he went to a shop to listen to popular songs everyday after school and learned all of them in front of big loudspeakers on street corners. Wang Tingfu also recalls that his sister had a radio, and therefore he could listen to the latest songs all the time. There was also a gramophone in the duvet shop beneath his father’s flat and all the residents in the same building could hear it whenever a record was played. Even those passive listeners, neighbours who used to pay little attention to the ‘decadent sounds’, would get used to the tunes and later became true fans.⁹⁸

To most Chinese people in the 1930s, Chinese popular songs were modern as opposed to traditional operas or story-telling ballads, yet to some well-off Chinese, newly released Hollywood screen songs or American crooners' works were more fashionable. Before the Japanese military took over the whole Shanghai city in 1942, the latest American films and music were accessible to those who were able to afford the entertainment in first-class cinemas and top cabarets. American musical products were usually the focal point in the daily lives of those who made a decent living, kept up with the fashion and had a penchant for Western innovations. They did not pay particular attention to Chinese popular songs but came to learn of Chinese songs through gramophone records played by others or radio programmes delivered from loudspeakers.⁹⁹ They did not turn to Chinese songs until the Japanese authorities imposed a ban on American culture products and thus cut off the supply of American popular music. Partly because Chinese songs were their only choice, and partly because more musical elements which they had been used to, such as Western instrumentation and jazzy-styled arrangements, could be heard in Chinese songs now, they started taking pleasure in these songs. After the war, although the ban had been lifted, they found that they enjoyed the jazzy Chinese popular songs as much as American music. These passive listeners had turned into enthusiastic fans.

Shanghai popular song could be the music for the petty urbanites, but in the event it embraced a wider range of audience, as described by the phrases 'hot in main streets and narrow alleys' and 'taking the whole country by storm'. Regardless of their individual social and economic backgrounds, there are some typical listening habits shared by most of the audience.

Fan gatherings

It appears that listeners of popular songs in Shanghai in the 1930s and 1940s neither organised fan clubs nor held regular fan gatherings as we have today. So far, no announcements of such activities or reports on related events have been found in newspapers or magazines. Additionally, no interviewed elderly fans can recall or have ever heard of any such occasions. Rather than call public meetings, fans usually spent their leisure time with families or friends to listen to and sing along with the tunes on radio or gramophone records and talked about updates of pop stars. Homes of those who owned listening facilities were undoubtedly ideal places for these occasions. It is noteworthy that in such small gatherings, song lyrics were one of the most important types of information to share. To most fans, the pleasure of songs came not only from listening to them but also from singing them. With the help of those loudspeakers in streets, it was all too easy to become acquainted with the tune, but due to poor radio reception or limited personal listening comprehension, it was difficult to understand all the words in lyrics. Therefore, to be able to sing along with the voice of favourite singers instead of humming the tune, it was always important to obtain printed lyrics.

There were several approaches to collecting song lyrics. While lyrics of selected hits and film songs might be found in the press and magazines, for lyrics of the others one had to look up in the latest songbooks or the song collections published by radio singing groups. Some fans might buy a newly released songbook for the sake of the lyrics of only one song which they did not have, despite its other unnecessary contents.¹⁰⁰ There were also copies of sheet music, or sometimes only lyrics sheets, enclosed in record sleeves. In the late 1930s it was sometimes possible to ask for a free copy of sheet music of a film song by writing to the film company,

yet filmgoers in the 1940s had to buy it in the box offices of major cinemas or newsstands. For example, in 1937 free copies of the sheet music of songs from the film *Singing in the Midnight* (*Yeban gesheng*) and *New Year's Money* (*Yasuiqian*) were available on request. However, those from *Laughter Marriage* (*Sanxiao*) in 1940 and *Orioles in Willow Waves* (*Liulang wenyin*) in 1948 were sold in cinemas, and those from *Song of the Songstress* (*Genü zhi ge*) in 1948 had to be purchased in newsstands.¹⁰¹

At dancehalls

It goes without saying that people went to dancehalls to dance, but some pop fans went there solely to hear live performances. Yao Li believed that the audience paid more attention to the voice of a singer than her appearance, remembering from her experience in the Yangzi Dancehall (*Yangzi wuting*),

I didn't dress myself up – plaiting my hair into two braids and putting on a *qipao*. I didn't wear make-up at all. [I'm] a simple girl... In those days, all [of the audience] came to listen to you, with their eyes closed. They would not look at you.¹⁰²

Yao Li's remarks reflect an age-old habit from the Beijing opera theatre. As a Westerner observed in a theatre, the Chinese audience rarely watched the players but most of the time listened to dialogue and singing.¹⁰³ The less they looked at the stage, the more experienced and knowledgeable with the play they were considered. The audience did not have to close their eyes all the time to show how well they knew about a song at a dancehall but they certainly immersed themselves in the singing, so much so that a live performance could change their impression on a particular song.

Perhaps because of the feeling of participation and the intimacy and immediacy conveyed by live performance, which were not available elsewhere, some fans would buy a record or pay more attention to a song only after they had listened to it in a live performance, even though the song had been played on radio for a while. Ms Li remembers that sometimes her family and friends often bought records because they had watched the performance of songs at the dancehall.¹⁰⁴

However, not all songs were equally appreciated by the audience at the dancehall. Jin Yi indicates that there are two major factors contributing to the popularity of a song. Firstly, it required no advanced singing skills so that it can be performed by singers of all levels and secondly, it must be a danceable piece regardless of tempo or at least easily turned into a piece in dance rhythm. The famous 'How Could I Forget Her' (*Jiao wo ruhe buxiang ta*), which had originally been an art song but later became a popular tune was once rearranged and sung to a waltz rhythm at dancehalls. However, it was poorly received by the audience.¹⁰⁵ Perhaps dancehall singers were not competent enough to reinterpret it successfully or perhaps it was not regarded as danceable despite the waltz rhythm. Obviously, although 'How Could I Forget Her' had long been perceived as a popular song by pop fans, those who went to dancehalls for live performance still deemed it not suitable for such a location.

In addition to enjoying songs performed live by singers, some of the audience might attempt to take part in the programme. To those who were fascinated by popular songs, it was definitely a privilege to sing to a band accompaniment at that time, which was undoubtedly a wonderfully different experience from singing along with records or radio programmes. Wang Yixian recalled that at a dancehall in the early 1940s he once 'bribed' a bandleader with a beer to be allowed to sing on the stage.¹⁰⁶

Going to the cinema

No matter what kind of tone quality the audience could hear through radio and records, either syrupy, sonorous or husky, all the songs they heard were disembodied sounds rather than a face-to-face musical experience. People went to dancehalls or cabarets for this experience, yet even in those establishments, they could not always see their favourite stars as not all pop stars gave performances in such places. Some singers would not perform regularly because while, making recordings and singing on radio were a pleasure to them, singing before an audience in a cabaret could be associated with 'selling songs to earn a living' (*maichang*) and considered a disgrace.¹⁰⁷ As many popular songs were actually screen songs and originally sung by the actors in films, going to the cinema was a popular way of accessing popular songs and singer. Through high-quality speakers, and sometimes comfortably with air-conditioning, fans were able to listen to the latest songs and watch their favourite artists at the same time. Some frenetic fans even carried a torch to the cinema, and then one held the light so that another could write down the lyrics shown on the screen when the song was played.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, going to the cinema was also an economical way to collect lyrics.

Although some obligatory songs were not relevant to the scenes in films, but just added as a publicity stunt in order to promote the films, for those who enjoyed listening to songs and watching the singer on the screen simultaneously, it did not matter how these songs fitted into the story, but rather how many songs there were in a film. With the increasing attractiveness of film songs to cinemagoers, directors were required by producers or distributors to incorporate as many as possible into the films. For example, there were ten and twelve songs in *The Wandering Songstress* (1941) and *Orioles Flying on Earth* (1946) respectively. It became an irrational fad in

the late 1940s with fifteen and eighteen obligatory songs especially written for *Celestial Music Sounding Everywhere* (*Xianyue piaopiao chuchu wen*) (1948) and *Orioles in Willow Waves* (1948) respectively. Songs produced for *Celestial Music Sounding Everywhere* were particularly criticised as bearing nonsensical content merely to add more musical scenes in the film.¹⁰⁹ Nevertheless, the audience kept flocking to the cinema no matter how unfit those obligatory songs appeared to be for the films. Some people even went to watch the same film several times just because they wanted to listen to the songs.

Attending concerts

The audience behaved quite differently at early song-and-dance performances and at pop concerts in the 1940s because of the form and venue in which performances were given. In Beijing opera and other regional operatic genres, the first one or two vocal phrases of an aria were usually followed by a strain of instrumental fill-ins and conventionally, the audience clapped their hands and roared 'bravo' (*hao*) immediately after the first several phrases when the instrumental fill-ins started despite the performance still being in progress. In a traditional Chinese theatre, one would be considered ignorant for failing to give well-timed applause. This practice was still seen during a song-and-dance performance in the first half of 1930s. As a song-and-dance troupe usually gave their performances either in cinemas where only Chinese films were screened, or in theatres where Chinese modern stage plays and traditional operas were presented, the audience were liable to follow the conventional method of showing their approval of a programme and admiration for performers. Moreover, since a song-and-dance programme was delivered by a group of actors and could consist of a connected series of songs and dances, the audience

were inclined to cheer whenever they felt that one of the performers had completed a section without making a mistake.

However, the audience in pop concerts in the 1940s preferred to enjoy the entire song without interruption rather than clapping their hands at every opportune moment. On the one hand, limited to the available playing time on each side of a 78-rpm SP record, composers were supposed to write songs not exceeding a time frame of three minutes. The audience did not find it difficult to concentrate their attention and energy on listening for those three minutes and therefore to control their emotions before bursting into heavy applause. On the other hand, perhaps the good manners at Western concerts had gradually become known to Chinese people, and thus the audience were aware of the importance of keeping the performance going smoothly. In fact, going to Western concerts was once a mark of urban superiority and part of the native elites' life. Recalling her childhood experience of attending a Western orchestral concert, the famous writer Eileen Chang wrote in an essay:

When my mother took me to a concert, she would admonish me repeatedly before we arrived, 'You must not make a sound or say a word during the concert. Don't let them [Westerners] say that Chinese people are undisciplined.'¹¹⁰

As Chang revealed, keeping silent during the performance was the absolute priority in a concert, not only because it was good manners but also because it was a matter of honour. Although Chinese pop concerts were not regarded as serious classical concerts, when taking place in first-class cinemas where there were usually not only screens but also huge stages for live performances, an atmosphere of formality and seriousness could be created. Since Shanghai Municipal Symphony Orchestra used to give concerts in first-class cinemas, such as Grand Theatre (*Daguangming xi yuan*),

Nanking Theatre (*Nanjing da xiyuan*), Carlton Theatre (*Kaerdeng da xiyuan*) and Lyceum Theatre (*Lanxin xiyuan*), the Chinese audience would also regard pop concerts in these establishments as formal and observe ‘good manners’.

Instead of whistling, screaming or waving hands excitedly like the way young fans today revere their pop idols in live concerts, most audiences in Shanghai in the 1940s showed much gentleness and politeness. Undoubtedly, they might stand up and give a singer thunderous applause and shout out ‘bravo!’ or ‘encore!’ at the end of the performance of a song, yet they would never jostle one another to the front of the stage, cry out words such as ‘I love you’ and try to grasp a singer’s hand. Some elderly fans indicate that whistling and screaming during the performance in a concert was considered bad manners at that time and they would remain seated and silent until the end of a song.¹¹¹

2. The press

There were always pages or supplements devoted to entertainment in major newspapers, for example, a page called ‘The Annals’ (*Chunqiu*) and a weekend *Special Film Supplement* (*Dianying zhuankan*) in *The Shun Pao Daily* (*Shenbao*), a daily column called ‘Art Sea’ (*Yihai*) in *The News* (*Xinwenbao*) and a film page in *The China Evening News* (*Dawanbao*). However, most of these pages were taken up with Chinese opera and cinema, and there was no space for regular reports on popular music. What pop fans could expect was only information about titles and singers of new film songs. For more coverage of popular music, a pop fan had to turn to tabloids. While some of these tabloids were fully dedicated to specific areas as their titles reveal, for example, *Movie Daily News* (*Dianying ribao*) and *Daily Dance*

Review (Tiaowu ribao), others covered both entertainment news and reports on political and domestic events, such as *The Crystal Daily (Jingbao)* and *The Wind Daily News (Dafengbao)*. Unlike major newspapers in which entertainment news was just embellishment among other hard news, tabloids offered more details about new released songs and singers, together with interviews and their personal revelation.¹¹²

Apart from newspapers, reports on popular music and related issues were also covered in a range of entertainment magazines. Among these magazines, *Pop Star Pictorial (Gexing huabao)*, launched in 1935, is perhaps the first and only one published during the 1930s and 1940s that was exclusively for popular music. However, in this magazine ‘stars’ referred mainly to those radio singers, and all the articles and reports solely concerned these singers. There were articles regarding singers’ performances in programmes and discussion on singing skills. For example, there was a short note in the maiden issue emphasising the importance of articulation in singing and instrumental introductions to songs. The pop songwriter Xu Ruhui also once contributed a commentary on radio singers’ and instrumentalists’ musical capacity.¹¹³ However, no record review or comments on specific songwriters’ works were available. Therefore, this pictorial was indeed more a periodical for broadcasters and listeners rather than a popular music magazine.

In addition to *Pop Stars Pictorial*, information about popular songs, such as up-to-date record singers’ movements, gossip about singers’ private affairs and comments on new releases, was scattered in those periodicals dedicated to radio, films and other types of entertainment. In other words, the audience in 1930s and 1940s had to obtain news about popular music from other fields of entertainment to which popular music was closely tied. With the rapid growth of the broadcasting industry came various magazines for radio listeners, such as *China Radio (Zhongguo*

wuxiandian), Shanghai Radio Weekly (*Shanghai wuxiandian*), Broadcasting Monthly (*Guangbo yuekan*) and Broadcasting and Radio (*Guangbo wuxiandian*). These provided listeners with a range of information, including timetables and guide to programmes, knowledge of assembling and repairing radio receivers, comments on the productions, gossips and anecdotes about singers and their colleagues in music clubs, and lyrics and song scores. However, the contents often varied from issue to issue and there was no regular item for popular music. For example, a reader who found a section devoted to news of singing clubs and their song repertoires in one issue might find nothing on a similar subject in the next one.

As Shanghai in the first half of the twentieth century saw a wide variety of entertainment imported from the West, there were also magazines containing all kinds of updates on urban leisure activities, such as *Ciro's Pictorial* (*Xianle huabao*), *Variety Weekly* (*Yule zhoubao*) and *Movietone* (*Diansheng*). These magazines usually covered cabaret dancing, dog or horseracing, betting on jai alai games, together with articles on films, broadcasts and traditional Chinese performances. However, as with radio magazines, there was no regular coverage of popular music.

With the potential of sound film moving away from marginal experimentation into mainstream in the mid-1930s, more and more members from song-and-dance troupes who had trained as singers turned to the screen for more opportunities to further their careers in the entertainment industry. Producers in film companies also required actors to sing in films regardless of their singing abilities. To the audience, both former troupe members and newborn film actors were now 'stars' who sang on the screen. To accommodate a fast-growing demand for information about sound films, not only did ordinary magazine publishers launch a range of film magazines, but also film companies released their official periodicals, such as *Movie Star*

(*Mingxing*) published by Star Motion Picture, *United Pictorials* (*Lianhua huabao*) by United Photoplay (*Lianhua yingye gongsi*), *Denton Gazette* (*Diantong zazhi*) by Denton Sound Product (*Diantong gongsi*) and *Hsinhua in Pictures* (*Xinhua huabao*) by Hsin Hwa Motion Picture (*Xinhua yingye gongsi*).¹¹⁴ Although the coverage of ‘songs’ was limited in film magazines, information about ‘stars’ could always satisfy fans’ curiosity. Nevertheless, sometimes ‘serious articles’ could be found in these magazines, particularly those circulating in the second half of 1930s. Discussions on composition of screen songs, comments on newly released songs and harsh words on the poor quality of music in Chinese films all had their place there.¹¹⁵ However, from 1942 when the Japanese took over the whole city of Shanghai up to the end of the 1940s, articles of this kind somehow no longer appeared in film magazines.

EMI’s *Pathé Semimonthly* is the only magazine that was published by a record company that has so far been located, but unfortunately only the maiden issue survives. Unlike magazines issued by film companies which would occasionally touch on songs and singers in films, there was curiously no coverage of popular music, either film songs or other popular songs, in *Pathé Semimonthly*. The first issue basically focused on Chinese opera and story-telling ballads. Since it is unclear if more issues were released, it remains unknown whether any pages would be reserved in the future for popular music, one of the most important product lines of EMI.

Apart from gathering information about musical products and related activities in the Shanghai pop industry, newspapers and periodicals had organised activities to gauge the popularity of singers by readers’ response. As there were no sales charts, airplay charts or request charts produced by any institution in the Shanghai era, these should have been held frequently and pop fans would have been keen to show their support to favourite singers. However, only two were held in the mid-1930s. One of

them had been reported in other printed media and is still remembered by elderly fans today, the other proved to be a failure and no similar activities were organised thereafter. Moreover, both events were basically for radio singers, and therefore those ‘singing’ film stars and record singers who did not perform on radio were not considered.

The China Evening News organised a ‘top three radio singers contest’ in 1934 in which the audience were invited to send in ballots during the two weeks from 26 May to 8 June to vote for their favourite radio singers. The promoter of the contest made a full-page announcement in the newspaper to encourage the audience to pass judgement on singers’ natural talents from voice and on singer’s personalities and upbringing through the contents of songs. The contest was meant to be a survey on how singers in Shanghai were perceived by the audience. In order to offer the audience a general picture of the singing circle, brief biographies of some singers, whom the promoter considered brilliant, together with information about music clubs to which these singers belonged, were also given on the same page where the contest announcement was issued and a ballot printed. Readers had to make their decisions within those two weeks on who was the best radio singer. The newspaper also kept count of the ballots being received so that the number of votes cast for each singer could be disclosed on a daily basis during the contest. The contest result was announced on 14 June and Bai Hong, Zhou Xuan and Wang Manjie won the first three titles.¹¹⁶

Although the contest was held for radio singers rather than for all pop stars, which broadly speaking should have included those who had made recordings but had never sung on radio, this unprecedented and unrepeated contest was unique and the only successful one for popular music that had been organised by the press. More

than a year later in September 1935, *Pop Star Pictorial* announced another ‘ten best pop stars in Shanghai contest’, in which readers were also requested to send in ballots ranking their ten pop stars. In order to promote the contest, the publisher had free copies of the magazine to give away to the first 10,000 voters. A reader commented in the next issue following the announcement that it was essential to select distinguished singers in order to save the ‘depraved industry’. The radio singing circle had previously been a place where high-class entertainment had been promoted and art for the masses developed, yet due to a plethora of music clubs in Shanghai composed of incompetent members delivering performances of poor quality, an unpleasant atmosphere began to fill the circle. Outstanding singers should have been role models for those who wanted to participate in a radio singing club.¹¹⁷ However, it seems that this second contest was not successful because *Pop Star Pictorial* never announced the result and this event was not reported in any other newspaper or periodicals.

3. Critics

It is difficult to locate in Shanghai during the 1930s to 1940s popular music critics who wrote record reviews and commentaries on musical works regularly, as happens in the press today. On the one hand, since there was no real popular music press during that period, it is impossible to identify any well-known or authoritative critic from a respectable popular music magazine. On the other hand, a lack of regular coverage of popular music in the press also makes it hard to look into how critics, if there were any, responded to new releases and what they contributed in the industry. However, skimming through the pages of major newspapers and periodicals, one can still read comments on singers’ voices, singing techniques and

specific musical works. Most of these articles were usually published under pseudonyms which seldom re-appeared in the same magazine or newspaper, or sometimes anonymously. These comments could either be prepared by editors or journalists, or contributed by readers in forms of short chatty articles or letters to the editor.

For instance, in the tabloid *The Wind*, an anonymous journalist made a comparison of Yao Li's 'Unrequited Love' (*Debudao de aiqin*) and Wu Yingyin's 'I Wanna Forget You' (*Wo xiang wangle ni*) in a short report, surprisingly without a headline, and argued that the former did not show as much sorrowfulness as the later.¹¹⁸ Words delivered in such way occasionally appeared in almost all magazines and tabloids. In another short article headlined 'Rambling on new Chinese film songs', published under the pseudonym of Siji in *The Shun Pao Daily*, the author examined seven songs and argued that compositional techniques of film song in China had been considerably improved after the outbreak of Sino-Japanese War. Judging from the melodies and rhythms of these songs, he indicated that their form and style was very close to similar works in Euro-American films.¹¹⁹ As neither the name Siji nor any more articles on related subjects appeared again in this newspaper in the ensuing months, it is impossible to track whether Siji worked as a critic who contributed regularly.

To take another example in a magazine, there was a paragraph under a pseudonym in *Cinema Weekly News* (*Dianying zhoubao*) giving a remark on Bai Guang's new record. It commented that the grief of a deserted woman could be felt through Bai Guang's husky voice in the new song 'Waiting for You' (*Dengzhe ni huilai*), which indeed surpassed the previous 'Never Too Late to Come to Know You' (*Xianjian bu hen wan*).¹²⁰ This short piece appears to be a 'guide to new releases' in a

music magazine written by a member of the editorial board, but actually it is not. It is just a one-off comment made by an ordinary reader in a film magazine. ‘Waiting for You’ was not a film song and it is because Bai Guang was a famous actress that the comment was placed in the magazine. Similar to the article in *The Shun Bao Daily*, there is no way to evaluate the author’s connection to the industry in this weekly.

Apart from those comments made by unknown readers or short reviews written by nameless editors, sharp criticisms of popular songs, like those levelled at Li Jinhui in the first half of 1930s, were never absent during the whole Shanghai era. Popular songs were denigrated as, for instance, ‘voice of a conquered nation’, ‘part of urban vice’, and ‘love songs poisoning the minds of youths and juveniles’.¹²¹ As these derogatory criticisms and negative opinion are not specific to individual works or persons, but rather to a wider range of the whole popular music circle, they should be regarded more as social commentaries than music reviews. Therefore, those who expressed their deep aversion to popular songs in articles should not be considered music critics.

Endnotes

¹ *The Comacrib Industrial and Commercial Manual* (Shanghai: The Commercial & Credit Information Bureau, 1935), p. 152.

² *Shenbao*, 5 July 1930.

³ Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi Shanghai shiweihui wenshiziliao gongzuo weiyuanhui (ed), *Jiu Shanghai de waishang yu maiban* (Foreign companies and compradors in old Shanghai) (Shanghai: Remin chubanshe, 1987), p. 284-5.

⁴ To give several examples, North Sea (*Beihai*) produced Beijing operas and other traditional music of the North China for audiences in Hebei. Emei recorded Sichuan operas (*chuanju*), traditional art songs (*qingyin*) and folk songs in Shanghai and shipped them back to Sichuan. Hundreds Songs (*Baige*) specialised in Shanghai opera (*huju*) and Yue opera (*yueju*) which served mainly the audience in Shanghai and neighbouring area. Unistar (*Lianxing*) and Conscience (*Liangxin*) recorded regional operas and traditional music of Fujian and both had their market in Fuzhou and Xiamen. Great Wall (*Changcheng*) made its name by signing up prominent performers of Beijing opera. Other companies, such as Asia (*Yazhou*), Harmony (*Hesheng*), Enlightenment (*Kaiming*), Pacific (*Taiping*), National Music (*Guoyue*), Wakening Lion (*Xingshi*) and Kunlun, also operated in a similar way. Among all these pocketbook companies, New Moon Records (*Xinyue liushengji changpian gongsi*), a Hong Kong-based company, is worthy of special notice. It released primarily Cantonese opera and traditional Chinese operatic arias, together with a hybrid genre that incorporated Cantonese folk melodies with Western instruments such as the saxophone and guitar. For a detailed discussion on New Moon's role in the promotion of indigenous Chinese record industry, refer to Jones, *Yellow Music*, pp. 65-68.

⁵ *North-China Hong List* (Shanghai: North-China Daily News & Herald Ltd., 1930), p.227.

⁶ See Qin Qiming (ed.), *Yinyuejia Ren Guang* (The musician Ren Guang) (Anhui, China: Anhui wenyi chubanshe, 1988), p. 44.

⁷ For example, Xu Ruhui, one of Li Jinhui's contemporaries, was engaged as a contracted composer in Star Motion Pictures (*Mingxing yingpian gongsi*) in 1931 and became a full-time employee the following year.

⁸ Zhu Zhonghua remembered that during 1942-45 when she worked in Pathé, composers Li Jinguang, Li Houxiang and Yan Zhexi usually came to their office in the morning and then worked there all day. Yao Li, who made her recording debut in 1937 for EMI, also remembered that composers went to the office everyday, like nine-to-fivers, and wrote songs there. Personal interview with Zhu Zhonghua, former employee of EMI (China), Shanghai, 10 February 2004; Wong Kee-Chee, *The Age of Shanghainese Pops: 1930-1970* (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing, 2001), p. 42.

⁹ Personal interview with Wu Yingyin, Shanghai pop singer, Shanghai, 31 December 2003.

¹⁰ 'Baidai gongsi banshui Zhou Xuan gaoju diyiwei' (Zhou Xuan in the first place of royalties income in Pathé), *Yihai huabao*, 5 (October 1948), p. 3. All figures above are cited from Dangdai Zhongguo de guangbo Dianshi Bianjibu (ed.), *Zhongguo de changpian chubanshiye* (The record industry of China) (Beijing: Beijing guangbo xueyuan chubanshe, 1989), p. 14, except those of the 1940s from a personal interview with Zhang Fan, Shanghai pop singer, Beijing, 31 January 2004.

¹¹ Saito Kyouharu, *Nie Er: shanliang de shengya* (Nie Er: a splendid life), trans. Zhuang Li (Shanghai: Shanghai yinyue chubanshe, 2003), pp. 185, 197.

¹² Dangdai Zhongguo de guangbo dianshi bianjibu (ed.), *Zhongguo de changpian chubanshiye*, pp. 2-4; Jones, *Yellow Music*, p. 165.

¹³ Personal interview with Zhu Zhonghua.

¹⁴ See *Mingxing banyuekan*, 1:3 (May 1935), n.p.; *Yisheng*, 1:4 (September 1935), n.p.; *Diansheng*, 3:22 (June 1934), n.p.; *Liangyou huabao*, 88 (May 1934), p. 38.

¹⁵ Dangdai Zhongguo de guangbo dianshi bianjibu (ed.), *Zhongguo De Changpian Chubanshiye*, p. 15.

¹⁶ Tan Yi , ‘Chuchuang chenlie: zui wei youxiao zhi guanggao’ (Window exhibition: the most effective advertising), *Baidai banyuekan*, 1:1 (July 1937), 19-20

¹⁷ *Shenbao*, 1 June 1934.

¹⁸ *Shenbao*, 29 December 1934.

¹⁹ ‘Baidai gongsi jiang juxing mingxing gechang dahui (Pathé to hold a star concert)’, *Dianying ribao*, 13 and 14 March 1941.

²⁰ Shanghaishi dangan guan, Beijing guangbo xueyuan and Shanghaishi guangbo dianshi ju (eds), *Jiu zhongguo de Shanghai guangbo shiye* (The broadcasting industry of Shanghai in old China) (Beijing: Guangbo dianshi chubanshe, 1985), p. 211.

²¹ See ‘Xiren changpianshang xianzhi bosong changpian: guangbo diantai dashou daji’ (Western record companies place restrictions on airplay: radio stations under vehement attacks), *Diansheng*, 4:27 (July 1935), 563; ‘Ge diantai xubo waishang changpian’ (Radio stations resume the broadcasting of records of foreign companies), *Diansheng*, 4:30 (July 1935), p. 628.

²² ‘Chanpianshang yu diantai jiufen guangbo diantai zhangao shengli’ (Radio stations take the upper hand on the argument between record companies and radio stations for the time being), *Diansheng* , 4:31 (August 1935), p. 648; *Shenbao*, 21 December 1935.

²³ Chen Dieyin indicated in an interview that he was so moved and inspired by Li Juanqing's lyrics for 'Steadfast Affection' (*Bubian de xin*), composed by Chen Gexin and sung by Zhou Xuan in 1944, that he decided to give up his journalism career and started writing lyrics for popular songs. For more details of the interview, see Shuijing, *Liuxing gequ cangsang ji*, pp. 132-156.

²⁴ 'Paired Phoenix' is a song sung by Zhouxuan in the same-name film *Paired Phoenix*. For more of Chen Dieyi's comments on Chen Gexing, see Chen Gang (ed.), *Meigui meigui wo ai ni: gexian Chen Gexin zhi ge* (Rose, rose I love you: songs of the immortal Chen Gexin) (Taipei: Vista Publishing, 2003), pp. 15-8.

²⁵ Interview clip shown in *Yibai nian de gesheng* (official English title: *The Last Century Pop Music of China*), a four-series documentary first broadcast on Channel 10, China Central Television, 22~25 January 2004.

²⁶ Personal interview with Jin Yi, Shanghai pop singer, Shanghai, 7 January 2004; Zhang Fan.

²⁷ 'Yangqingui koushu: Tino' (Foreigner instrumentalists' own words: Tino), *Tiaowu ribao*, 11 March 1941.

²⁸ 'Yangqingui koushu: Mick Korin' (Foreigner instrumentalists' own words: Mick Korin), *Tiaowu ribao*, 10 March 1941.

²⁹ Personal interview with Zheng Deren, former dancehall instrumentalist and currently bassist in Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, Shanghai, 29 December 2003; personal interview with Zhu Zhonghua.

³⁰ Personal interview with Wu Yingyin, Jin Yi and Zhang Fan.

³¹ Interview with Li Jinguang by Shuijing. See Shuijing, 'Li Jinguang tan liuxing laoge' (Li Jinguang on old popular song), *Lianhebao*, 22-23 December 1988. Avshalomov had spent thirty years in China before he moved and settled down in America in 1947. Nevertheless, he actually earned his living as a bookseller, and later a librarian, during his years in China, first in Beijing and Tianjin, and finally in Shanghai where for fifteen years he was the head librarian in the Shanghai Municipal Library. For more biographical details and musical works of Avshalomov, see Jacob & Aaron Avshalomov, *Avshalomov's Winding Way: Composers Out of China – A Chronical* (Philadelphia: Xlibris Corporation, 2001). However, interestingly, nothing about his arrangements for popular songs was mentioned in this book.

³² Personal interview with Zhao Jiying, former leader of Great China New Music Band (*Dahua xin yinyuedui*) in Cosmo Dancehall (*Gaoshiman wuting*), Shanghai, 29 December 2003.

³³ Shuijing, *Liuxing gequ cangsang ji* (A record of the vicissitudes of popular song) (Taipei: Dadi chubanshe, 1985), pp. 166-7.

³⁴ Personal interview with Wu Yingyin and Jin Yi; Ji, 'Fang bielai wuyang de Bai Guang' (Interview: Bai Guang back and well), *Xin yingtian* 3:2 (1944), 28. Bai Guang learnt singing from Miura Tamaki (1884-1946), the first Japanese-born vocalist to have a successful international career, whom the Italian composer Puccini praised as the most ideal person in the world for the prima donna in his *Madam Butterfly*.

³⁵ Personal interview with Wu Yingyin, Zhang Fan and Jin Yi.

³⁶ Personal interview with Zhang Fan; Yan Fei, Tianjin, 5 February 2004; Shuhua, 'Mingxing lu nanxing baowei Zhou Xuan Bai Hong' (Difficult pass – Zhou Xuan and

Bai Hong surrounded), *Dianying ribao*, 15 May 1941; Bai Guang, 'Bai Guang riji' (The diary of Bai Guang), *Yingmi julebu*, 2 (October 1948), p. 15.

³⁷ There were also at this time musical periodicals and other publications in which academic musicians, serious composers or those who felt disdain for 'love songs' in Li's style had published vocal works. However, those songs were mainly patriotic songs, revolutionary songs, experimental compositions and art songs with accompaniments for piano. As most of them were usually circulated within a limited circle or had no connexion to the entertainment industry, they are beyond the scope of the study of the Shanghai popular music industry and thus not included in the category of printed popular music discussed here.

³⁸ Zhengxie Hunansheng Xiangtanshi weiyuanhui wenshi ziliao yanjiu weiyuanhui and Hunan Xiangtan Li Jinhui yishuguan, *Li Jinhui* (Li Jinhui) (Hunan, China, 1994), pp. 242-3. A system of music notation known as the simplified notation, which was adapted from a French system of teaching sight-singing, the Galin-Paris-Chev  method, and was introduced to China in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. Despite considerable opposition from professional musicians and musical educators, the simplified notation, which features a notation of numerals from 1 to 7 representing the seven sol-fa syllables respectively, had been taught in schools and widely employed in various songbooks. A rest is shown as 0 in this system, yet 8 is not used. For details about the usage, see Stanley Sadie (ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Vol. 4 (London : Macmillan, 1980), pp. 99-100.

³⁹ Xu Wenxia, 'Wode fuqin Xu Ruhui yu Zhongguo zaoqi liuxing gequ' (My father Xu Ruhui and Chinese early popular songs), *Musicology in China*, 1 (2001), pp. 66-7.

⁴⁰ See the preface in Chen Yike (ed), *Dianying mingge ji* (A collection of famous film songs) (Shanghai: Xiandai yinyue yanjiushe, 1943), n.p.

⁴¹ See the postscript in Hu Zhimei (ed.), *Gepu di er ji* (Songbook, issue 2) (Shanghai: Anding bieshu guangbo diantai, 1934), n.p. Since only the second issue has so far been found among the collection in the Shanghai Municipal Library, it is not clear how many issues the radio station had released and if those songbooks were available on request or had to be purchased.

⁴² Yin Mengxing (ed), *Dianying mingge yiqian qu* (1000 famous film songs) (Shanghai: Xingguang gewu yanjiushe, 1934); Madame Yingying (ed), *Dianying mingge wubai qu* (500 famous film songs) (Shanghai: Xingguang gewu yanjiushe, 1935); Mingxing she (eds), *Dianying mingge ji* (A collection of famous film songs) (Shanghai: Dongfang shuju, 1939).

⁴³ For more details about the Law of Publication in the Republican China, see *The Nanking Government's Laws and Regulations Vol. VI* (Shanghai: British Chamber of Commerce, 1931).

⁴⁴ These music shops played an important part in the trade of Western instruments not only in Shanghai but also in the whole of China in the first half of the Twentieth century. See Shanghai wenhua yishu zhi biazuan weiwenhui Shanghai yiyue zhi bianjibu (eds), *Shanghai yinyue zhi* (Shanghai music chronicle) (Shanghai, 2001), pp. 317-9.

⁴⁵ Before major record companies built factories and studios in Shanghai in the 1920s master recordings of Chinese music were transferred abroad to their headquarters overseas, made into records there, and finally shipped back to China.

⁴⁶ *Shanghai Hong List* (Shanghai: The Investigation Bureau of Commerce and Industry, 1939 and 1940). Nevertheless, it is not clear if this shop sold both Chinese and Western popular music, or only specialised in Western recordings.

⁴⁷ The organisation structure differed from company to company. While there was a specific order department within EMI (China) responsible for wholesale business of all their products, as opposed to its retail branch which was in charge of the showroom, in RCA-Victor record sales was subordinate specifically to the record department which dealt with both recording and selling activities. See *Shanghai Directory* (Shanghai: North-China Daily News & Herald Ltd., 1941), pp. 123, 320; Dangdai Zhongguo de guangbo dianshi bianjibu (ed.), *Zhongguo de changpian chubanshiye* (The record industry of China) (Beijing: Beijing guangbo xueyuan chubanshe, 1989), p. 14.

⁴⁸ Advertisements of the Civilisation Book Bureau in *Shenbao*, 10 August 1932 and the Central Book Store on the back cover of *Dianying gushi*, 1 (September 1948).

⁴⁹ For more details about how the four department stores developed and thus established a new commercial culture, see Wellington K. K. Chan, 'Selling goods and promoting a new commercial culture: the four premier department stores on Nanjing Road, 1917-1937', in Sherman Cochran (ed.), *Inventing Nanjing Road: Commercial Culture in Shanghai, 1900-1945* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell East Asia Series, 1999), pp. 19-36.

⁵⁰ As advertised in *Shenbao*, 19 October 1934.

⁵¹ There were 256 films produced in China during 1932 to 1934, yet only thirty percent of them were sound films. See Li Suyuan and Hu Jubin, *Zhongguo wusheng*

dianying shi (A history of Chinese silent films) (Beijing: Zhongguo dianying chubanshe, 1981), p. 300.

⁵² For example, Lianhua's three classic films produced in 1934, *The Fisherman's Song*, *Great Road (Dalu)* and *New Women (Xin nüxing)*, are all 'sound films' with songs but without dialogue or other miscellaneous sounds. See Cheng Jihua, Li Shaobai and Xing Zuwen, *Zhongguo dianying fazhan shi, diyijuan* (A history of the development of Chinese film, vol. 1) (Beijing: Zhongguo dianying chubanshe, 1981), pp. 604-14.

⁵³ Chen Yiping, *Zhongguo zaoqi dianying gequ jingxuan* (Selections of songs from Chinese early films) (Beijing: Zhongguo dianying chubanshe, 2000), p. 6; Wang Wenho, *Zhongguo dianying yiyue xunzong* (Tracing Chinese film music) (Beijing: Zhongguo guangbo dianshi chubanshe, 1985), p. 90.

⁵⁴ For example, upon its reorganisation in 1936 the Star Motion Picture set up a music division responsible not only for the arrangement of film music but also for voice training. To cater for the potential need of song-and-dance performers in future productions, Hsin Hwa Motion Picture (*Xinhua yingye gongsi*) also founded a song-and-dance training unit and recruited twenty girls from nearly a thousands applicants. See 'Mingxing yingpian gongsi gexin xuanyan' (Declaration of the reformation of Star Motion Picture), *Jingbao*, 20 July 1936; 'Xinhua gongsi sheli gewu zu' (Hsin Hwa Motion Picture set up song-and-dance unit) *Xinhua huabao*, 4:1 (April 1939), n.p.

⁵⁵ The film was released on 24 July 1937. The film company started a series of advertisements in *The Shun Pao Daily* on 18 July and announced the release of the record on 21 July. See *Shenbao*, 18-24 July 1937.

⁵⁶ *Shenbao*, 22 March 1935.

⁵⁷ *Shenbao*, 5 October 1934. The song was composed by the leftist Ren Guang and its lyrics written by An E.

⁵⁸ In addition to relevant information about the songs, a line of words ‘Musical Director: Ren Guang’ was printed in the bottom centre of the whole column. See *Liangyou*, 98 (November 1934), back cover.

⁵⁹ Du Jie’s piece in the film was ‘The Cherished Memory of Autumn’ (*Qiu de huainian*). It was reinterpreted by Yao Li on the gramophone record, and the other side of that record was Yao Li’s own ‘Rose, rose, I Love You’ (*Meigui meigui wo ai ni*). See ‘Tianya genü jingcai’ (The brilliant Wandering Songstress), *Dianying ribao*, 18 October 1940; ‘Zhou Xuan zhi Tianya genü chaqu Baidai gongsi guanwei changpian’ (Pathé Records made recordings for Zhou Xuan’s film songs in *The Wandering Songstress*), *Dazhong yingxun*, 30 (February 1941). The film *The Wandering Songstress* has nothing to do with the song ‘The Wandering Songstress’ from the film *Street Angel*.

⁶⁰ Liner notes to *Zhongguo Shanghai sansishi niandai jueban mingqu si* (Deleted 30-40s hits of Shanghai China, vol. 4), 2002, Lee Leng Kok, LLK-11042002. The other unreleased song of this film is ‘Ideal Lover’ (Lixiang de qingren). The reason why it was not released remains unclear.

⁶¹ For example, Li Jinhui's 'Drizzles', composed in 1927, was later recorded by Pathé Orient around 1932 by when Ren Guang had become the musical director in the company.

⁶² Shen'ao, 'Xin nüxing haile baidai' (*New Women harmed Pathé*), *Jingbao*, 15 May 1935.

⁶³ According to listening guides in radio magazines, there were 27 stations in November 1938, more than a year after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War and there were 28 in April 1941, eight months before the Japanese took over the whole city. In May 1946, nearly a year after the end of war, the number decreased sharply to 19. However, in April 1949, before the advent of Communist regime, 33 stations were operating again in Shanghai. See supplemented listening guides in *Zhongguo wuxian dian*, 6:11 (November 1938) and 9:4 (April 1941); *Guangbo yuekan*, 1 (May 1946), *Boyin tiandi*, 5 (April 1949).

⁶⁴ In a listening guide, it was not unusual to see the schedule of a station composed of only record-playing programmes.

⁶⁵ See Pu Canxiu, 'Qiwén gongshang' (Marvellous writings to be read), *Shanghai wuxiandian*, 13 (July 1938), n.p.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ 'Zhenggao boyin diantai' (Admonishment to radio stations), *Shenbao*, 5 June 1940.

⁶⁸ Pu, 'Shouyin zayi' (Miscellaneous memories of radio), *Shanghai wuxiandian*, 12, (June 1938), n.p.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ ‘Meikuangyuxia de boyin tuanti’ (Broadcasting groups get worse every time), *Yule zhoubao*, 2:20 (May 1936), p. 389; *Labor Statistics in Shanghai, 1930-1937* (Shanghai: International Labor Office, China Branch, 1938), p. 16.

⁷¹ As the number of music clubs on radio was calculated based on broadcasting timetables in magazines, the actual figures can be slightly higher due to the incompleteness of programme information at the time of going to print. See *Zhongguo wuxiandian*, 1:5 (March 1933) and 2:13 (July 1934); ‘Quanshi geyongjie boyin jiemubiao’ (A timetable of singing clubs in the city), *Gexing huabao*, 2 (September 1935), p. 16.

⁷² See ‘Meikuangyuxia de boyin tuanti’, *Yule zhoubao*, 2:20 (May 1936), p. 389; Hongcao, ‘Sui shi xia oshiqing ye shi da wenti’ (A trifle can be an issue), *Gexing huabao*, 4 (March 1935), p. 9.

⁷³ According to a supplementary listening guide in *China Radio* in 1938, the Great Unity Club had five programmes a day in five different stations at 1:45-2:30, 3:30-4:10, 5:20-6:00, 7:20-8:00 and 8:40-9:20, which showed their typically tight daily schedule as well as popularity among the audience. See *Zhongguo wuxian dian*, 6:11 (November 1938).

⁷⁴ Personal interview with Wei Jun, former pianist of a radio singing club, Shanghai, 20 February 2004.

⁷⁵ Along with singers’ pictures in these periodical songbooks usually came details about photographers who took the pictures and studios they belonged to as a sort of advertising for them. For example, in an issue of *Collection of New Song of the Great Unity Club* (*Datong xinge xuan*) published by the Great Unity Club, Yao Li’s portrait

was placed in an advert run by Great Central Plains Shoe Shop (*Dazhongyuan pixie*) with her endorsement – ‘I love wearing Dazhongyuan shoes’. See *Datong xing xuan* (Collection of New Song of the Great Unity Club), 2 (no date).

⁷⁶ Andrew D. Field, ‘Selling souls in sin city: Shanghai singing and dancing hostess in prints, films, and politics, 1920-49,’ in Yingjin Zhang (ed.), *Cinema and Urban Culture in Shanghai, 1922-1943* (Stanford, Cali.: Stanford University Press, 1999), p. 107. By 1936, there were over three hundred cabarets and dancehalls of various sizes and styles operating in this metropolis. The guidebook *All About Shanghai*, published in 1934/1935, classifies cabarets in Shanghai into three groups – high class, low class and no class, and indicates that customers brought their own partners to the first one or danced with hostesses by paying moderate fees in the second. See Frederic E Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai, 1927-1937* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1995), p. 108; *All About Shanghai and Environs: A Standard Guide Book* (Shanghai: University Press, 1934/1935; repr. with an introduction by H. J. Lethbridge, Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 75.

⁷⁷ Zheng Deren maintains that the first genuine Chinese jazz band was organised by Yu Yuezhang in 1935. Yu graduated from the Tokyo College of Music in 1926 and was then appointed as music professor in the Xiamen University and later became Head of the Department of Music at the Shanghai School of Fine Arts. Turning to the entertainment industry in the hope of earning a decent salary, he managed to lead a band of nine instrumentalists to perform in a ‘third-class’ Old Great China Dancehall (*Laodahua wuting*) owned by a Japanese in Hongkew, the Japanese residential area in Shanghai. However, as Zheng is not certain about the band’s repertoire and what kind of customers they mainly catered for, it remains to be seen whether Yu was one of

those pioneers who helped in the dissemination of Chinese pops at dancehalls.

Personal interview with Zheng Deren.

⁷⁸ Zhengxie Hunansheng Xiangtanshi weiyuanhui wenshi ziliao yanjiu weiyuanhui, *Li Jinhui*, pp. 239-40.

⁷⁹ Personal interview with Zheng Deren.

⁸⁰ Advertisement, *Shenbao*, 5 April 1939.

⁸¹ There is no literature about how the Japanese military dealt with American jazz and swept it from Shanghai during their control of the city. However, for more details about the Japanese authorities' attitude toward jazz during the Pacific Ocean War, see E. Taylor Atkins, 'The war on jazz, or jazz goes to war: toward a new cultural order in wartime Japan', *Positions*, 6:2 (1998), 345-92. For Paramount's advertisement, refer to 3 January 1942; Yan Gefan's band to 'Zhiyi dayuedui fengtou jian' (The Appreciation Band makes a showy display), *Tiaowu ribao*, 19 March 1942.

⁸² 'Zai tiaowuting: shenghuo huaxiang' (At a dancehall: a portrayal of daily life), *Dawanbao*, 13 December 1940.

⁸³ For Bai Guang's concert, refer to the advertisement in *Shenbao*, 5 and 7 May 1945; Zhou Xuan's to *Shenbao*, 28 March 1945; Chen Gexin's to *Shenbao*, 25-30 June 1945.

⁸⁴ Although advertisements for the four sisters' live performance could be seen in newspapers on and off from 1944 to 1946, Zhang Fan indicated that they had neither connexion to the business nor were they contracted singers at the café, but were occasionally invited to give live performances. Personal interview with Zhang Fan.

⁸⁵ *Shenbao*, 2 March 1946. Unfortunately, except the presumed connexion between its name and the Regal (*Lige*), Pathé's sub-label which released mainly recordings of new or less popular singers, no trace of this orchestra has been left.

⁸⁶ 'Zhengli guangbo jiemu zhi banfa' (Procedures for regulating broadcast programmes), *Yule zhoubao* 2:27 (July 1935), p. 531.

⁸⁷ Shanghai zujie zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (eds), *Shanghai zujie zhi* (A chronicle of Concessions in Shanghai) (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexue yuan chubanshe, 2001), pp. 544-5.

⁸⁸ Shanghaishi dang'anguan (eds.), *Riwei Shanghai shizhengfu* (Japanese puppet Shanghai city government) (Beijing: Dangan chubanshe, 1986), p. 1083.

⁸⁹ Yuan Jian, 'Cong Lipai yinyue shuo dao shidaiqu' (From Li's music to songs of the time), *Xinyinyue yuekan*, 1:4 (August 1946), p. 23; Jin Shan, 'Tantan gechang' (A few words on singing), *Dawanbao*, 22 April 1948.

⁹⁰ Shanghaishi dangan guan, Beijing guangbo xueyuan and Shanghaishi guangbo dianshi ju (eds), *Jiu Zhongguo de Shanghai guangbo shiye* (The broadcasting industry of Shanghai in old China) (Beijing: Guangbo dianshi chubanshe, 1985), p. 634.

⁹¹ Shanghai zujie zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (eds), *Shanghai zujie zhi* (A chronicle of concessions in Shanghai) (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexue yuan chubanshe, 2001), pp. 521-2.

⁹² Shanghai shi danganguan (eds), *Riwei Shanghai shizhengfu* (Japanese puppet Shanghai city government) (Beijing: Dangan chubanshe, 1986), pp. 994-1002.

⁹³ As Shuijing maintained, 'popular songs belong to the class of petty urbanites.' Chen Gang also suggests that these Shanghai popular songs are the music for petty

urbanites. See Shuijing, *Liuxing gequ cangsang ji* (A record of the vicissitudes of popular song) (Taipei: Dadi chubanshe, 1985), p. 7; Chen Gang (ed.), *Shanghai laoge mingdian* (A compilation of the legendary Shanghai old songs) (Taipei: Yuanjing chubanshe, 2003), p. 3.

⁹⁴ See Mau-Sang Ng, 'Popular fiction and the culture of everyday life: a cultural analysis of Qin Shouou's Qiuhaitang', *Modern China*, 20:2 (1994), p. 154.

⁹⁵ Laikwan Pang, *Building Up a New China in Cinema: the Chinese Left-Wing Cinema Movement, 1932-1937* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002), pp. 142, 214-16.

⁹⁶ An article in *The Crystal* proposed that the authorities should restrict broadcasting after midnight so that the citizens might sleep well. Coincidentally, later on, the police in the French Concession did enact a rule that any owner of a Chinese shop who switched on a radio after half past ten in the evening and disturbed the neighbourhood would be fined two dollars. However, this regulation did not last long. See Fangfei, 'Shier dianzhong yihou buzhun boyin' (No broadcasting after 12 o'clock), *Jingbao*, 6 July 1933; 'Fazujie kaiting shouyinji zhe zhuyi' (Beware, radio listeners in the French Concession), *Diansheng ribao*, 16 August 1933.

⁹⁷ Ernest O. Hauser, *Shanghai: City For Sale* (Shanghai: The Chinese-American Publishing Company, 1940), p.242.

⁹⁸ Personal interview with Wang Weishan, elderly fan, Shanghai, 13 March 2004; Wang Tingfu, Shanghai, 15 March 2004.

⁹⁹ Personal interview with Zhang Yunsong, elderly fan, Shanghai, 15 March 2004.

¹⁰⁰ Personal interview with Shen Fugen, elderly fan, Shanghai 11 February 2004.

¹⁰¹ *Shenbao*, 7 and 28 February 1937; 8 June 1940; 28 September and 12 Dec 1948;

¹⁰² Excerpt from an interview conducted by Sjuijing, 8 September 1983. See Shuijing, *Liuxing Gequ Cangsang Ji* (A record of the vicissitudes of popular song) (Taipei: Dadi chubanshe, 1985), p. 205. Yao Li performed regularly in Yangzi Dancehall from 1942 to 1946.

¹⁰³ L. Z. Yuan, *Sidelights on Shanghai* (Shanghai: The Mercury Press, 1934), p. 31

¹⁰⁴ Personal interview with Ms Li, elderly fan, Shanghai, 21 February 2004.

¹⁰⁵ Personal interview with Jin Yi. The art song here refers to one that was originally written for vocal and piano in the format similar to the so-called *Kunstlied* by conservatoire-trained composers. This song was composed by Chao Yuen-ren in 1926, and Jin Yin learnt of the rearranged dancehall version in the mid-1940s.

¹⁰⁶ Personal interview with Wang Yixian, elderly fan, Shanghai, 1 March 2004.

¹⁰⁷ Personal interview with Zhang Fan.

¹⁰⁸ Interview clip shown in *Yibai nian de gesheng*.

¹⁰⁹ See 'Dianying gequ ci nanxie' (It's difficult to write lyrics for film song), *Dianying zhoubao*, 16 (October 1948), n.p.; 'Liulang wenyong kao qu qu nanyang' (*Orioles in Willow Waves* exported to Southeast Asia for its songs), *Dianying huaju*, 11 (August 1948), n.p.

¹¹⁰ Eileen Chang, 'Tan yinyue' (On music) in Eileen Chang, *Liuyan* (Written on water) (Taipei: Huangguan chubanshe, 1991), p. 215.

¹¹¹ Personal interview with Peng Guokuan, elderly fan, Shanghai, 13 March 2004.

¹¹² For detailed study on tabloids in old Shanghai, refer to Yang Jiayou, ‘Bange shiji de Shanghai xiaobao’ (Shanghai tabloids during the half century), *Dang’an chunqiu*, 3 (2002), 41-7; Zhu Junzhou, ‘Shanghai xiaobao de lishi yange’ (A history of Shanghai tabloids), *Xinwen janjiu ziliao*, 42 (1988), pp. 137-53.

¹¹³ See Dapangzi, ‘Xiangei geyongjie’ (For the singing circle), *Gexing huabao*, 1 (August 1935), p. 17; Xu Ruhui, ‘Ge xiandai yuejia ji gechangjia’ (For contemporary musicians and vocalists), *Gexing huabao*, 4 (December 1935), p. 8.

¹¹⁴ The first film magazine published in China was ‘*Film Magazine*’ (*Yingsi zazhi*), which was launched as early as April 1921 with a special announcement in the two leading Chinese newspaper in Shanghai, *The Shun Pao Daily* (*Shenbao*) and *The News* (*Xinwenbao*) on 1 April 1921.

¹¹⁵ For example, Liu Xue’an, ‘You “Chuzheng ge” shoudao yingqu de gailiang’ (From “The Song of Campaign”: words on making better film songs), *Dianying wenhua*, 1 (October 1935), n.p.; He Luting, ‘Zuo gequ de jijian chubu zhishi’ (Several facts of songwriting at the primary stage), *Diantong*, 10 (October 1935), n.p.; Bai Jian, ‘Dianying zhong de duibai, gechang yu yinyue’ (Dialogue, singing and music in films), *Lianhua huabao* 6:10 (November 1935), n.p.

¹¹⁶ ‘Sanda boyin gexing jingxuan de yiyi’ (The significance of top three radio singers contest), *Dawanbao*, 26 May 1934; ‘Sanda boying gesing jingxuan da jiexiao’ (The result of three radio singers contest), *Dawanbao*, 14 June 1934.

¹¹⁷ See ‘Haishang shida gexing xuanju’ (Ten best pop stars in Shanghai contest), *Gexing huabao*, 2 (September 1935), n.p.; Xu Weigong, ‘Xiezai haishang shida gexing xuanju shi: yong shemo biao zhun lai xuanju women weilai de gexing?’ (At the

time of ten best pop stars in Shanghai contest: what is the criteria for selecting our future singers?), *Gexing huabao*, 3 (October 1935), p. 11.

¹¹⁸ *The Wind*, 8 April 1949.

¹¹⁹ Siji, 'Zhongguo dianying xing zatan' (Rambling on new Chinese film songs), *Shengbao*, 22 December 1938. Interestingly, 'Siji' is the last two characters in the Chinese transliteration of the name of Russian musician Tchaikovsky.

¹²⁰ Yapo, 'Bai Guang shi zheyang yiuyu de' (So melancholic is Bai Guang), *Dianying zhoubao* 3 (31 July 1948), n.p.

¹²¹ For examples see 'Duiyu gequ ciju de yijian' (Opinions about lyrics of songs), *Shenbao*, 4 April 1940; Yupian, 'Yongsu de dushi yiyue' (The vulgar urban music), *Xinyiyue yuekan (Huananban)*, 1:2 (May 1946), p. 30; Chenshu, 'Xiugai liuxing gequ geci de jianyi' (Suggestions concerning the revision of lyrics in popular songs), *Shenbao*, 16 February 1940.

Chapter Five

The Products

The analysis based on Franco Fabbri's 'formal and technical rules' and 'semiotic rules' in the introductory chapter has given a general view of the components of Shanghai popular song. It clearly reveals that both Chinese and Western musical elements were direct materials used in the Shanghai pop industry. The unique social and political background of Shanghai made available a diversity of raw materials for production, which in turn contributed to the coexistence of Chinese and Western characteristics in the finished goods. How does a piece of music convey an impression of certain nationality or strike its audience with certain generic flavour? In the case of Shanghai popular song, while one of the most recognisable features that makes a song non-Chinese would probably be the jazzy instrumental accompaniment, the Chinese language in lyrics would noticeably make it Chinese. Nevertheless, apart from the phonetic sounds of Chinese, what else in those songs could be regarded Chinese? This chapter first considers how people sense national or ethnic characteristics in music, then introduces several key ethnic features of Chinese traditional music, and lastly examines the products of the Shanghai pop industry. Finally it will be revealed that the Shanghai pop repertoire reflected a collective style, in which while Western musical factors played an important part, there was always room for Chinese elements.

I. Ethnicity in music

Studies have shown that music can be used to construct national identity and can help to maintain ethnic identity. John Baily demonstrates that music has served as an agent for creating a national identity in modern Afghanistan, a country constituted by a complex mix of ethnic groups.¹ Zdzislaw Mach indicates that even though the piano composer Chopin's compositions have few direct references to real Polish folk music but are usually considered cosmopolitan, international and self-emotive by many foreigners, his piano works are still revered as part of Polish national identity.² Ray Allen and Nancy Groce suggest that immigration groups in New York usually hold on firmly to traditional music from their motherlands in order to maintain group identity in a multiethnic society.³ Although there are certainly socio-political factors involved in the construction of national identity or the maintenance of ethnic identity, there must also be some distinctive music features which can be perceived as the mark of nationality or ethnicity by Afghans, Poles or immigrants in New York. Rather than approaching the issue from a social-political viewpoint, this section is intended to discuss ethnicity in music by exploring how musical characteristics can be recognised and associated with a nation or an ethnic group by listeners.

On the assumption that the repertoire of certain geographical or cultural origins always bears its specific musical characteristics, how would listeners of the same origin, or from other backgrounds, notice them? In other words, how would a person associate music with a nation, a culture or an ethnic group? It is human nature to make comparisons among things and then assign things to a specific class or group. By observing and learning, people develop rules of categorising things throughout life. These rules can either be as complicated, systematic and well accepted as the science

of taxonomy, or as subjective, arbitrary and illogical as, for instance, the classification of personal record collections. Whatever rules are applied, whether objective or subjective, when assigning one thing to a specific category, we try to match one or several identifiable features of that thing with those of the category into which it is to fall according to our own judgment. The activity of labelling something as a particular thing raises two issues: one is how the criteria are developed and the other how its quality is perceived. When it comes to music, the former involves how a listener gets to know that certain musical features are unique to or can be found in the music created by a specific group of people, and in the latter whether a listener, with the established rules in mind, can feel and recognise a musical feature.

The knowledge of formal, stylistic features of music may be acquired in many different ways, such as attending courses, carrying out scientific analyses, listening to commentaries on radio, growing up in an environment with the music or learning from a personal listening experience. While some people may be able to give a vivid description of the musical features they have learnt about with the use of technical terms, some may find it difficult to explain as they only recognise those features when they hear the music. Whether national or ethnic features can be extracted and explained in words or can only be felt through listening, they are the fundamentals of the established rules in people's minds, based on what a piece of music is labelled. Although it is possible to discover some common features of the music representative of a cultural or geographic area with an exhaustive and systematic study into a considerable number of works, not every listener has access to various works from different areas which share same characteristics and not everyone has the opportunity to hear all the pieces from a large enough repertoire to generate a definitive view of the music of one area. Scholars can spend time collecting a corpus of works,

analysing the basic structures in a scientific way from a ‘musical’ perspective, such as scales, rhythmic patterns, melodic contours, harmonies and instrumentation, as well as from other viewpoints, such as the function of the music, the context of the performance, and the making and listening processes of the music. If they have already come across other corpora from different cultures, they can also make comparisons and will probably find correlation among those different music traditions. However, the general public might not be able to carry out such large-scale research. Most people associate certain music with a specific culture, area or social group according to, if not the findings of those scholars, their own listening experience. It is not uncommon that what one considers the general musical features of an area are far different from what is actually the case. Listeners’ upbringing, daily lives and the context in which they encounter a new sound, can decide how music is imprinted in their minds and thus form a commonsensical notion of musical identity, which they simply take for granted.

For example, one-off events often leave lasting and incorrect impressions. People from the Far East may regard all bagpipe music as Scottish, because they have only heard it in the world-famous Edinburgh Military Tattoo, but do not know that the instrument is actually used in other European countries such as France or Spain. Similarly, although Flamenco, which features scales in the Phrygian mode, is just one music tradition from Andalusia, those who attended only Flamenco performances during a package holidays in Spain would always remember the Phrygian flavour as a Spanish marker and think of Spanish music as Flamenco. In fact, the Phrygian mode is also heard in Latin American guitar music, and there are other different types of music in northern Spain. Moreover, a particular environment can create a specific musical image in people’s mind too. For example, an elderly Englishman might

believe that the melodic pattern of some Japanese folk songs is Chinese because the Chinese cover versions were popular when he spent his youth in the Japanese controlled International Settlement in Shanghai in the early 1940s. In addition to their personal listening experience, people are also influenced by other external factors, such as the media, peer groups or their social affiliation. For example, the frequent use of a resounding gong as a cue of the appearance of a Chinese kung fu master in films has made the tone of the instrument an unquestionable musical image of China. Members of a philharmonic society or social club may regularly be introduced by a guest speaker or musicians to certain works which they then believe representative of an ethnic group. Although Mozart's piano piece 'Turkish March' may not sound Turkish to us today at all, concertgoers or socialites at Mozart's time would accept the idea because they were told so.⁴ Thus, the various circumstances in which people acquire their musical knowledge may give different and partial impressions of nationality or ethnic identity in music, which will be saved in a person's musical knowledge base and become a reference for music labelling in the future.

Since individual perception of musical quality differs from person to person, as well as from the culture in which a person is brought up, one may not be able to differentiate two features which others judge to be distinctive. For example, some people can sense the stylistic subtleties between Argentine and ballroom tango music, pointing out that the former varies in speed and mood but the latter generally maintains a solitary beat and lacks of emotions. However, others may not recognise such differences but only notice the variation in instrumentation. On the assumption that the changes of tempo and mood in a tango piece are the most striking features which makes an Argentine tango distinct from a ballroom tango, those who are perceptually incapable to take in the distinctions will fail to recognise the Argentine

characteristic in the music, even if they have already gained the knowledge. In his book *How Musical Is Man*, John Blacking argues that as sensory discrimination is developed in culture, people may not be able to describe the differences between musical intervals they can hear if those intervals have no significance in their musical system. He indicates that although the Venda people in South Africa are regarded as very musical by white settlers, an outstanding Venda musician might fail to make a distinction between two obviously different melodic patterns and might consider the intervals of fourth and fifth the same, because their perception of sound is basically harmonic.⁵ As can be imagined, the Venda musician might find it difficult to join a conversation where two graduate students in musicology are discussing the bulk use of several types of intervals as a characteristic of folk songs in a certain area. Therefore, the perception determined by one's musicality or cultural background has an impact on how national, ethnic or geographical musical features can be detected.

Apart from the culture background and musicality, individual listening habits or preferences also decide how the musical elements, which give nationality, ethnicity or other geographical identities, are observed and recognised. When coming across a new song, most people would always try to find the main melody so that there is a thread to follow throughout the song, dismissing the strong pulsation of the bass or the piercing riff delivered by a treble instrument. Nevertheless, some people would take the sounds of all instruments and the singers' voices as a whole, paying attention to each musical part in order to identify how different parts are bound together to generate musical pleasure. Others might only be attracted by some particular feature, such as a specific instrumental part or the pattern of chord progression, even though they can actually hear every sound in the song. Because each person lays emphasis on different aspects of music, while some listeners would unconsciously neglect in a

repertoire some musical elements which give a specific flavour, others might be able to see a colourful ethnic image or notice a unique feature created by the musical elements they have selectively observed. This can be especially problematic when ethnic musical elements from more than one origin are integrated into a single piece, for example, if a Chinese musician plays Vittorio Monti's Hungarian-styled *Csárdás* on the *huqin* fiddle.⁶ To what extent it still sounds Hungarian, or how Chinese it can be, depends on whether a listener is struck more by the tune, the timbre of the instrument or the new arrangement.

Therefore, it seems that musical knowledge has to be developed before listeners can match what is heard with the criteria in their minds, yet it should be noted that an individual's perception of musical quality also has impacts on the process of knowledge development. The learning process or discovery of the stylistic components of a repertoire may well be influenced by an individual listener's musicality, cultural background and listening habit. For example, when hearing some foreign folk songs, a native folk guitarist may be able to work out precisely the unusual chord progression of the accompanying guitar in those songs and thus learn the exotic features. However, a less musical person might gain an impression that those foreign folk songs are similar to native songs because the guitar accompaniment does not sound exotic. Therefore, rules in mind and perception are not merely two independent factors that shape how people perceive musical characteristics but two factors that are also inseparably intertwined.

In summary, for example, taking the world-famous Scottish tune 'Auld Lang Syne', it is questionable how Scottish it would still be, or how Chinese it could be, if the penultimate bar of the tune was modified into a Chinese melismatic fragment, as shown in Ex.1, and sung in a nasal voice.



Ex.1 Modified Scottish 'Auld Lang Syne'

II. Chineseness in music

It may be difficult to give an unqualified answer to the above question regarding a modified 'Auld Lang Syne', yet to Western ears the nasal melismatic melody does bear a Chinese mark.⁷ Westerners in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had made some observations from the perspective of their understandings of music. With the introduction of recording technology at the turn of the twentieth century, music from the Orient could be recorded and played to Westerners. Those who were dispatched to the Far Eastern frontline to collect those sounds appeared to be the privileged, as they could not only hear the music before it reached consumers but also witness the performances. However, undertaking recording sessions, particularly in an enclosed space, might have been torture to those Western recording engineers or business representatives who had no knowledge of, let alone appreciation for, Oriental music, but were simply sent by their companies to the Orient to open up a new market and at the same time to make recordings of 'exotic' music. As Fred Gaisberg, a business representative of the Gramophone Company, who started his Asian tour in 1902, wrote in a field report, in Shanghai they had to stop the session after making ten records because, as he pointedly complained, the din had so paralysed his wits that he could not think.⁸ From his point of view, the differences between the tunes of any two records were so insignificant that he could hardly detect

them. Obviously, whatever form of Chinese music Gaisberg had heard in Shanghai, it was no more than an unpleasant and prolonged noise, and thus to him and other recordists, listening to Chinese music in person did not seem to be a privilege.

However, in those years of the nineteenth century before the advent of sound retrieving devices, a few Westerners had already recorded Chinese music via written words and transcriptions. Their accounts in publications of Chinese musical sounds reflect the response anyone might have given when encountering a form of ‘music’ which is extremely different from one’s own experience of music. For example, after viewing an operatic performance in Canton, Henry Ellis, the Third Commissioner of Lord Amherst’s British diplomatic mission to China in 1816 to 1817, believed Chinese opera to be inferior to its Western counterpart and described the performance as ‘annoyance of a sing-song’ and a ‘mass of suffering’. Ellis stated that he never again wanted to endure ‘the noise of actors and instruments’ which he would not even call musical.⁹ In a similar vein, the French Romantic composer Hector Berlioz contended that to call what Chinese people produced by their vocal and instrumental noise as music was ‘a strange abuse of the term’.¹⁰ In addition to ‘noise’ and ‘non-music’, it seems that to some Westerners in the nineteenth century, Chinese music, especially those singing voices in theatrical productions, was so extremely disagreeable that they would use any harsh words and analogies to describe what they had experienced. For example, William Tyrone Power, the Commissary General-in-Chief of the British army commented, in a book about his term of service in China, that Chinese singers employed ‘an unnatural falsetto key’ ‘pitched as high as possible’, and the vocal timbre was ‘hideous and ludicrous’ which could be compared to ‘a tom cat caterwauling on the pantiles’.¹¹ Criticising that nothing so strange had ever struck his ear as a ‘Chinaman’s voice’, Berlioz depicted Chinese singing as ‘a

series of nasal, guttural hideous tones' and equated it with 'the sounds a dog makes when after a long sleep it stretches its limbs and yawns', and even more derogatorily, 'wildcat howls', 'death-rattles' and 'turkey cluckings'.¹²

Nevertheless, despite those contemptuous opinions, the two British officers mentioned above also presented some slightly more favourable views. Once in a small village Ellis saw a performance of the *yangqin*, whose sound he described as the European harpsichord, and found it 'superior in harmony to any' Chinese music he and other colleagues had heard.¹³ Power also had a more enjoyable Chinese musical experience where he heard Chinese Buddhist monks chanting and playing bells and drums. To Power, this was apparently far better than the dreadful impression the Chinese theatrical singing had made on him, as he remarked in his book that the chanting, together with bells and drums, was 'awe-inspiring'.¹⁴ Unfortunately, Gaisberg did not encounter these during his fieldwork in Shanghai, otherwise he would not have called what he recorded 'din' if he shared a similar musical aesthetic with Ellis and Power.

There were already some personal impressions of Chinese music briefly mentioned in books written by previous residents of China. However, a few missionaries, scholars and informed amateurs, who had closer contact with the natives or had resided in China over a longer time span, made an effort to collect and study Chinese music and finally published their works back in their homelands. Some Jesuit Missionaries in the early eighteenth century and Protestant missionaries from Britain and America in the nineteenth century had examined Chinese musical practices, instruments and theories in an attempt to gain deeper understanding and, from the viewpoint of their Western musical traditions, to explain how Chinese music was inferior to theirs.¹⁵ Among Western works, an important and perhaps the most

quoted one in the West before the 1950s is *Chinese Music* written by J. A. van Aalst, a Belgian who started his career with the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs in Guangdong Province in 1881 and then transferred to Beijing in 1883. This book was published in 1884 and probably based on an intensive study into the subject using Aalst's musical expertise acquired in the Royal Conservatory of Ghent in Belgium. Although recognising a small number of acceptable qualities in theatrical songs and religious and ritual music, Aalst summed up his analysis at the end of his book by listing four major shortcomings of Chinese music. In his opinion, firstly, some intervals of the scale were not properly tuned. Secondly, due to a lack of precision in manufacture, there was no exact accuracy of pitch on Chinese musical instruments. Thirdly, the melodies were always in unison, in the same key and devoid of variation in sound volume and movement and lastly, as Chinese tunes were not clearly set in a major or minor key, but fluctuated between the two, the distinct happy and sad emotions or the charming effects produced by the alteration between them were absent.¹⁶

Besides describing Chinese music in written works, Westerners also had their own views of China from musical compositions. The growing awareness of and fascination with Chinese art and architecture in Europe from the mid seventeenth century led to the formation of an artistic style, *chinoiserie*, which was the imagination or evocation of Chinese motifs and techniques in art, furniture and architecture. In the world of music, classical composers also started to include elements they considered Oriental to evoke the flavour of such an exotic country.¹⁷ American songwriters of sheet music in Tin Pan Alley or composers hired by theatre producers had employed some musical devices in their works since the late nineteenth century to convey Chinese or Oriental images. According to Krystyn R. Moon, their

compositions usually featured syncopated rhythms and dissonant intervals, which were heard in African American music and in Orientalist operas, together with sounds from the properly tuned Western twelve-note scale. Moreover, recurring and droning rhythms, genuine Chinese musical instruments and pentatonic materials drawn from transcriptions of Chinese music, which were brought to the West by missionaries or those who had stayed in China, could also be found in their repertoire.¹⁸ These musical characteristics, combined with Westerners' general impression of Chinese music at that time, even served as a standard for judging whether a piece of work with a Chinese theme was musically authentic. Songs or music in theatrical productions would receive comments from critics, who recognised the 'Chineseness' from the use of grace notes, parallel fourths and fifths, a minor key, repeated semiquavers and pentatonicism, and by the noise which was typically Chinese, such as 'the clash and crash of huge cymbals' and 'the squeak and squeal of Chinese instruments'.¹⁹

Interestingly, the Western-produced musical Chineseness was appropriated by Japanese songwriters in the 1930s and 1940s when the Japanese record industry started making popular songs with themes of China and other Asian countries. Edgar W. Pope singles out a distinct melodic pattern featuring a descending pentatonic sequence of notes set against a repeated rhythmic figure, which he traces back to a song titled 'Shanghai March' (*Shanghai kôshinkyoku*) released by Japan Victor in 1931, where melodic fragments of this pattern appeared in the instrumental introduction and interlude between the verses (Ex.2, I). Pope compares this melodic passage to the commonly used Chinese theme in Hollywood film music during the same period, such as an example from MGM's 1937 production *The Good Earth* (Ex.2, II). He suggests that the association with China evoked by melodies of this type was possibly instilled in the Japanese through American films, as Hollywood

productions had been very popular in Japan as early as the 1920s. Moreover, not only in film scores but also in Tin Pan Alley songs one can find a similar melodic design. An example is a passage from the piano introduction to ‘Chinatown, My Chinatown’ (Ex.2, III), published far earlier in 1910, which bears comparable pentatonic and rhythmic characteristics, though the melody is harmonised with a Western tone colour. This passage also serves as a substantial sample of the musical devices, as indicated by Moon, used as a signifier of China or the Orient by American songwriters.²⁰



(I) Shanghai March

(II) *The Good Earth*

(III) Chinatown, My Chinatown

Ex.2 Melodic patterns signifying China

It is questionable whether those comments on Chinese music and images of China in Western compositions are justifiable. Chinese people may want to argue that the derogatory comments on Chinese musical performance given by Westerners such as Ellis, Power and Berlioz, the four specific defects in Chinese music as judged by van Aalst, and the musical devices associated with China in film music and popular songs are all drawn from culturally biased views, full of one-sidedness and partiality. However, considering the way in which people gain their impressions of nationality in music, as discussed earlier, those views are understandable. Those Westerners simply

applied the musical knowledge they had learnt in their culture to what they heard in China. Some of them could only equate Chinese music with noise based on their definition of ‘music’, whereas others, from their technical point of view, deemed Chinese music backward. Moreover, as there was no need, and perhaps nowhere, to develop a musical capacity to appreciate Chinese singing or the acoustic effect of instrumental performances in their society at that time, a person like Gaisberg would certainly not be ‘musical’ enough to tell the difference between ‘din’ and Chinese music nor the variation among those pieces he recorded. In fact, it is not merely a Western practice to criticise a specific type of music from the perspective of an existing standard or dominant aesthetic. About 2,500 years ago in China, Confucius condemned the folk songs of Zheng as being over-rampant (*yin*, literally ‘licentious’), and compared them to ‘those who overthrow states with their sharpened tongues’. He abhorred the music of Zheng being confused with *yayue* (literally ‘elegant music’), a form of music performed in the Imperial Court, but considered the ancient music from the period of Emperor Shun perfect and held it in high esteem.²¹ Zixia, one of Confucius’ disciples, also contended

The airs of Kang [Zheng] go to a wild excess, and debauch the mind; those of Sung [Song] tell of slothful indulgence and women, and drown the mind; those of Wei are vehement and rapid, and perplex the mind; and those of Khî [Qi] are violent and depraved, and make the mind arrogant. The airs of those four states all stimulate libidinous desire, and are injurious to virtue.²²

Unlike those Westerners in the nineteenth century who laid more emphasis on musical techniques and compositional theories, Confucius and Zixia in the fifth century BC were concerned about the impact of music on minds and morality rather than aspects of musical techniques and compositional theories. Nevertheless, they

judged whether the music of a specific area was decent by using only their own principles that music was meant to cleanse one's spirit rather than serving primarily as a source of personal sensual pleasure.²³ Therefore, in a sense, Confucius and his followers are no less culturally egocentric, disapproving of the hedonistic nature they saw in the music of Zheng and other areas, than those Westerners who failed to perceive the charm of Chinese singing voice, nor is the tone of their language less strident than that of the Westerners'.

However culturally biased Western criticism of Chinese music may seem, these negative comments may serve as a positive basis for understanding Chinese musical features. The remainder of this section will address two issues which Westerners mentioned all the time, Chinese musical texture and scales, and an important third issue which Westerners did not observe in early years, which was the relationship between lexical tones and musical tunes in Chinese vocal works. Owing to the immense geographical size and population of China, there is definitely diversity within Chinese musical traditions, and therefore there is a risk when one attempts to generalise Chinese music of oversimplifying this diversity and overlooking minorities.²⁴ Therefore, this discussion is not meant to be exhaustive and will merely focus on the features commonly heard in most forms of Chinese music.

1. Musical texture

One important feature of Chinese traditional music is its heterophonic texture. Except for the music of some minorities in southwestern and southern China where there are polyphonic vocal traditions, Chinese music lays more emphasis on melodic design.²⁵ Since the harmonic and contrapuntal structures that are widely seen in

Western works are not employed, when more than one part of voices play simultaneously the vertical alignment of intervals between parts is coincidental and not important. For example, in instrumental music, such as *sizhu* ('silk-and-bamboo'), the chamber music tradition of the Jiangnan area (central eastern China), all members of an ensemble play a single melodic outline from memory, but each of them interprets and embellishes the same melody according to the idiomatic practices of the instrument and personal aesthetic preferences. In this way, individual melodic lines delivered by various instruments most of the time sound in unison. Although there may be concurrence of different pitches when musicians interpret the same melody in different ways, such as adding ornamental notes or an interlude, the combination of these different pitches does not follow the Western system of patterned chord progressions at all (Ex.3).²⁶

The musical score for Ex.3 is written in 4/4 time and G major. It features five staves, each representing a different instrument:

- Di (flute):** Melodic line with various ornaments (trills and grace notes).
- Sheng (mouth organ):** Accompaniment consisting of block chords.
- Pipa (lute):** Melodic line following the main melody, including grace notes.
- Sanxian (lute):** Rhythmic accompaniment with a steady eighth-note pattern.
- Erhu (fiddle):** Melodic line following the main melody, ending with a trill (*tr*).

Ex.3 The heterophonic texture in instrumental music

Besides pure instrumental works, the heterophonic texture is also found in vocal performances when they are accompanied by instruments. For example, the singing in traditional opera is accompanied by an ensemble, usually led by the high-pitched *huqin*, playing in much the same way as *sizhu*. All instrumentalists, except the percussionists, follow the same melody as that sung by the actor, taking certain tonal and rhythmic liberty to add ornamental phrases. Likewise, in story-telling ballads, such as Suzhou *tanci*, the accompanying *pipa*, sometimes together with a *sanxian*, produces a melodic line similar to the vocal line with inserted idiomatic decorative passages. The excerpt from an aria of *yueju* (the regional opera from the Zhejiang province) in Ex.4 offers an example where the fiddle plays ornamental notes and interludes, against the vocal line, to accompany the singing.²⁷

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It consists of four staves. The first two staves are labeled 'Voice' and 'Fiddle'. The voice part is a simple melody with a final rest. The fiddle part is highly ornamental, featuring many sixteenth-note runs and grace notes. The last two staves continue the fiddle's ornamental accompaniment.

Ex.4 Instrumental accompaniment in vocal music

It was probable that clashes between pitches (according to the Western understanding of consonance and dissonance) and repetition between voices, together with the timbre of high-pitched singing voice and instrumentation which lacked a powerful bass section, that made Westerners associate Chinese music with noise.

Nevertheless, these are musical features with which Chinese people have lived for centuries.

2. Musical scale

To Western ears, the pentatonic marker is one of the conspicuous characteristics of Chinese music, yet pentatonicism is not unique to Chinese music. It also occurs outside the territories of China and is usually regarded to a wider range as Oriental. In fact, pentatonic melodies can often be heard in music from other continents. Tunes constructed on the pentatonic scale appear, for instance, in the Celtic traditions in Scotland, Ireland and Wales, in the music of the Native Americans in the Andes, in melodies passed on generation by generation on Polynesian islands and in xylophone music and Sudanese songs in Africa. Despite the omnipresence of pentatonicism in many traditional or aboriginal repertoires around the world, there are variances among five-tone scales in different geographical or cultural regions. According to the pattern of whole tones and semitones, pentatonicism falls into three types (Ex.5). The most frequently heard type is characterised by its lack of semitone, containing only major seconds and minor thirds, and is thus called the anhemitonic (without semitone) pentatonic scale. This is the most familiar and is usually referred to as the pentatonic scale. The second type, containing semitones and other intervals, is termed the hemitonic pentatonic scale. Melodies set on this type can be found in Japanese and New Guinean music, and the example given is the Japanese *hirajoshi* ('level tuning') scale, on which the famous folk song 'Cherry blossom' (*Sakura*) is constructed. The third type of pentatonic scale, radically unfamiliar to most people due to its intervals falling outside most musical traditions, is the equipentatonic scale,

which divides the octave into five roughly equal intervals. The equipentatonic scale is used in Javanese, Balinese and some African instrumental music.

Anhemitonic

M2nd M2nd m3rd M2nd m3rd

Hemitonic

semi m3rd M2nd semi M3rd

Equipentatonic

Ex.5 Three types of pentatonicism

Gong mode

Chinese name *gong shang jue zhi yu*

Sol-fa syllable *do re mi sol la*

Zhi mode

zhi yu gong shang jue

sol la do re mi

Yu mode

yu gong shang jue zhi

la do re mi sol

Ex.6 Three mostly used Chinese pentatonic modes

The pentatonicism used in Chinese music belongs to the first type, anhemitonic, which is widely seen in most Chinese folk songs, story-telling ballads, the arias of various regional operas and instrumental music. In line with the relative order of intervals on the scale, the five notes are named *gong*, *shang*, *jue*, *zhi* and *yu*, and using the sol-fa syllables employed in Western European music, can be sung as

do, *re*, *mi*, *sol* and *la* respectively. All of these five notes can function as the tonic and thus form five different modes, each with a distinct series of intervals. The *gong* (*do*), *zhi* (*sol*) and *yu* (*la*) modes are the three common modes, and the *gong* mode can be compared to the major mode in Western music and the *yu* the minor (Ex.6). The *shang* (*re*) and *jue* (*mi*) modes are less common compared with the other three.

While theoretically it is on the base of these five primary notes (*zhengyin*, or literally ‘orthodox tone’), that the skeleton of Chinese traditional music is formed, Chinese music is not always strictly pentatonic. Although there are folk songs or instrumental pieces composed of only these five notes, in many works the so-called ‘altered tone’ (*pianyin*), that is *qingjue* (*fa*), *bianzhi* (*fa-sharp*), *run* (*ti-flat*) and *biangong* (*ti*), are also used. These altered tones in practice can be viewed as extensions of the pentatonic scale. Starting from C, taking five consecutive pitches from the circle of fifths and transposing them to fit into one octave, one can produce a series of pitches, C-G-D-A-E, which can be rearranged to form a pentatonic scale. Picking up more pitches from the circle of fifths in the same fashion at both ends of the series, F and B-flat at one end, and B and F-sharp the other, the pentatonic scale can then be expanded to two hexatonic and three heptatonic scales (Ex.7).

ti-flat (te) fa do sol re la mi ti fa-sharp (fi)

Pentatonic

Hexatonic (with ti)

Hexatonic (with fa)

Heptatonic (with fa, ti)

Heptatonic (with fi, ti)

Heptatonic (with fa, te)

Ex.7 Expansion of the pentatonic scale

Though employed in Chinese music, these altered tones are subsidiary in importance to the five notes, usually either serving as a passing, auxiliary note, an arbitrary ornamental note or resulting from modulation. A few examples are given in Ex.8.²⁸ In a manner similar to the way non-chord tones function in Western musical theories, in Chinese music a passing note links two primary pentatonic notes a third apart to allow smooth, scale-wise motion, whereas an auxiliary moves a second away below or above a primary note and returns to it (Ex.8, I & II). When an altered tone appears as an arbitrary ornamental note, it moves away from the preceding note by skip or leap and then step to another primary note (Ex.8, III). The last example (Ex.8, IV) illustrates two altered notes resulting from modulation, featuring a strict sequence of the note group in the second half of the phrase.



(II) Auxiliary note



(III) Arbitrary ornamental note



(IV) Modulation

Ex.8 Uses of altered tones in Chinese traditional music

There is a need to identify how those ‘extra’ notes are added to Chinese music if the first five of the series are the ‘basic’ or the most important notes. Going through the evolution of melody in music history from a musicological viewpoint, Bence Szabolcsi traces in his book *A History of Melody* the formation of diatonicism back to

pentatonicism.²⁹ Based upon melodic material from East European and West Asian folk tunes, Szabolcsi finds that in some areas the pentatonic melody has a characteristic tendency to expansion, repeating at a lower register to form a cascade. In order to keep the pentatonic scheme intact the transposed melody in some cases changes using adjacent pentatonic notes to supply any altered tones needed, while in others the sense of maintaining a pure tonal system gives way to the desire to stick to the same melodic shape resulting in a strict transposition and adoption of altered tones. Szabolcsi argues that as the feeling of diatonicism became stronger, the traditions of pentatonic discipline were weakened, first by occasionally using altered tones as passing notes and later by integrating these elements, which were alien to pentatonic schemes, to permanently fill gaps in the pentatonic melody. The unaccented passing notes gradually turned to be essential notes on accented beats, which made the five-note system expand and evolve into diatonicism.

To sum up, although based on pentatonicism, altered tones are definitely heard in Chinese music, and it is not only the pentatonic scale but also the way these non-pentatonic notes are used that characterises Chinese music.

3. Tones and tunes

English poets make use of metre to ensure that their poetry fits a particular rhythm, and when setting poems to music, most of the time if not always, English composers match the textual rhythm to musical stresses. There is the counterpart in Chinese songwriting. English is a stress language, in which there is a fixed pattern of strong and weak syllables within a word, and a change in the stress point can change the meaning of a word. Thus, when writing a tune for words, a basic rule is to make

the accented syllables of words align with musical accents so that the singer can articulate appropriately and the audience appreciate each word in the lyrics. The melody should not force a normally unaccented syllable to be stressed, or a wrenched accent will be produced. However, due to distinctive linguistic differences between Chinese and English, the placement of word stresses in music is not a Chinese songwriter's concern. Instead, the lexical tone is the prime issue to be dealt with. Theoretically, writing Chinese lyrics for an existing tune, or composing a melody for a Chinese verse, would demand an effort of coordinating lexical tones and musical contours so that the words in a song can flow as smoothly as in natural speech and to be intelligible to the audience. Before looking into how the tone may be taken into consideration in setting Chinese words to music, it is necessary to address the fundamental characteristics of the Chinese language as these have a crucial impact on this issue.

As opposed to English and some major European languages, there are two auditory features of the Chinese language, the monosyllabic nature of the characters and the tonal quality of the syllables.³⁰ A 'word' can be generally defined as a unit of language or its representation in writing, and it may consist of one or more syllables. In English and some other writing systems spaces are used to separate words in the text but word boundaries are not clearly marked out in Chinese. Chinese words are written in a string of characters without interword separations. A Chinese character is a written symbol, which corresponds to only one syllable articulated in a specific tone and may be a word in itself or be part of a word. To put it another way, though a Chinese word can be mono- or polysyllabic, as is in other languages, these fixed-toned syllables are recorded in the text with characters, each of which stands for only one syllable.

In a stress language, such as English, tone is mainly used to express emphasis, to communicate a subtle nuance, or to turn a statement into a question, yet tone alone does not alter the meaning of individual words. In contrast, Chinese is a tone language, in which tone is an integral part of a word and variations in pitch are used to distinguish lexical meanings. Based on the Ancient Chinese tonal system, there are four major tone categories in Chinese, which are the ‘level’ (*ping*), ‘rising’ (*shang*), ‘departing’ (*qu*) and ‘entering’ (*ru*) tones. Each tone category may be further split into two registers, *yin* and *yang*, yielding eight tone types.³¹ However, because the tonal system has developed many regional variations through time, the exact tone contour, or pitch movement, of each type changes regionally. Although Chinese people share a standard set of characters and a common standard in writing, there are many regional variants in modern spoken language. How a character is read can differ from dialect to dialect, in terms of both pronunciation and tone.

The phonology of the official spoken language, Standard Mandarin, formally known as ‘common language’ (*putonghua*) in China or ‘national language’ (*guoyu*) in Taiwan, basically draws on that of the Beijing dialect with some modification. Therefore, the pronunciation of characters in Standard Mandarin only represents the sound system of one of many Chinese dialect groups. One who only learns the standard spoken language at school would encounter unexpected changes in either vowel or consonant value, or both of them, of the pronunciation of a character when travelling from one place to another, which are similar to regional variations of English pronunciation in the British Isles. As for regional diversity in tone, Chinese dialects vary significantly in their individual tonal systems. Tones used in a dialect do not always fall into the eight types previously mentioned. For example, there are only four tones in Standard Mandarin: *yinping*, *yangping*, *shang* and *qu*. The *shang* and *qu*

tones do not split into *yin* and *yang* registers, and the *ru* tone has through time already been distributed among the other three tone categories. Besides, a neutral tone, which has no specific tone contour and is not included in these eight types, is also used. Cantonese has as many as nine tones, including all of the eight tone types, one of which, the *yinru* tone, divides further into two subtypes. Furthermore, in addition to the differences among the numbers of tone types used in dialects, the way the pitch moves in a specific tone type varies in individual dialects as well. For example, the *yangqu* tone in Shanghai dialect has a low rising contour while in Cantonese it is a flat tone. The *qu* tone in Standard Mandarin, which does not split into *yin* and *yang*, is a sharp falling one.³² In addition to the considerable diversity in tone contours and the numbers of tone types, there is one more phenomenon worth noting, which is tone sandhi, or alteration of a tone to a different tone contour influenced by its preceding or following tone in speech flow. For example, in Standard Mandarin, a *shang* tone becomes a *yangping* tone when followed by another *shang* tone. Rules governing tonal alterations also vary among dialects. In some dialects such as Mandarin and Cantonese there are comparatively few sandhi environments whereas others such as Shanghainese and Taiwanese can have more complicated sandhi rules for every single tone used in the language.³³

Poetry has long been associated with music. In poetry, patterns of metre are used among other poetic techniques to produce rhythmic effects, which are usually regarded as an important musical quality in this literature genre. In English poetry, metre is founded on the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables and thus the composition of an English poem involves arrangement of syllables into feet, whereas in classical Chinese verse, especially the ‘modern style verse’ (*jintishi*), ‘lyric metres’ (*ci*) and ‘dramatic verse’ (*qu*), there are fixed tone patterns prescribing not only the

number of syllables but also what tones to be used throughout verse lines.³⁴ The four major tone categories in Chinese are divided into two classes for the metrical purpose. The ‘level’ tone is regarded as ‘level’ (*ping*), and the ‘rising’, ‘entering’ and ‘departing’ tones as ‘deflected’ (*ze*). Though some liberty is allowed, the tone of each character in a poem has to be consistent with its designated value, *ping* or *ze*, according to the chosen tone pattern. Therefore, when reciting a Chinese poem, in addition to the rhythmic beat, the tonal pulsation is also produced by the alternation between the ‘level’ and ‘deflected’ tones in the uttered syllables.

Perhaps due to the tonal nature of their language, building up on overplayed syllabic tone contours, Chinese people are inclined to recite verse lines with a fluctuating intonation. Such a lilt could have easily evolved into a simple tune and finally become a generally recognised fixed melody for recitation.³⁵ Thus, a range of tunes developed through time in different regions for poetry chanting. For the ‘Tang poetry’, there were specific modes of tunes for poems written in different tone patterns. Unlike ‘modern style verse’, in which words came first, ‘lyric metres’ and ‘dramatic verse’ were actually poetic works composed to given tunes, which dictate tone patterns, rhyme schemes and the number of syllables. A writer chose an existing tune, or simply composed a new one, and then ‘fitted’ characters into the tune in accordance with the tonal requirement. However, neither the melodies for reciting ‘modern style verse’ nor the predetermined tunes to which the ‘lyric metres’ and ‘dramatic verse’ are written really correspond to the lexical tones of the characters. As a tone pattern only specifies how ‘level’ and ‘deflected’ tones are arranged through the lines in a poem, dividing all types of tones merely into two classes, the subtleties of the pitch movement in individual syllables are not differentiated. For example, any character that reads in the *shang*, *qu* or *ru* tone is qualified to fit in a

place which requires the ‘deflected’. It is not always the case that the melodic contour of the tune mirrors the rise and fall of lexical tones.

In brief, though the tonal quality of Chinese may have a definite role to give a distinctive musical effect in Chinese poetry, words sung to formulaic tunes, which differentiate only ‘level’ from ‘deflected’, cannot be fully comprehended by the audience. Theoretically, some modification ought to be made to the melodic lines of those fixed tunes to tell between individual tone types. It is not clear how and to what extent several centuries ago Chinese people would have ‘bent’ the notes to serve this purpose, nor is it known if regional variations of tone were taken into consideration. However, techniques dealing with these issues can be observed in various existing traditional vocal arts.

There is a wide range of regional forms of ballad singing and opera in China, each of which has its repertoire of basic tunes and melodic models.³⁶ When creating a new piece, an artist usually sets the text to a chosen tune from the repertoire. These tunes are not immutable, but rather they can be modified by artists from time to time to accommodate the tone of an individual character or the intonation of a sentence in the text. As an essential requirement in the performance of traditional ballad singing and opera is to ensure that the content of lyrics is clearly understood by the audience, an artist has to make some alterations to the tune, using grace notes to emphasise the tone of individual syllables or developing exquisite melismatic patterns to highlight the syllable. For example, in *kunqu* opera, an oldest extant form of Chinese opera, there are rules for setting characters in different tones to music. For instance, a melismatic sequence of notes, in which the second note moves an interval of second or third downward before the melodic line ascends, can be used over a character in the *shang* tone (Ex.9, I & II), whereas a character in the *qu* tone can be sung to a melodic

passage in which the second note goes a second or third upward and falls thereafter (Ex.9, III & IV).³⁷

Chinese character 響 苦 扣 證
Transliteration xiang ku kou zheng

Ex.9 Melismatic design for specific tones

Another example from ‘Northeast drum story-singing’ (*dongbei dagu*), a form of ballad singing popular in Northeast China, shows how inserted grace notes make the flow of the melody roughly parallel to the change in pitch over individual syllables (Ex.10).³⁸ In addition to grace notes, it is noteworthy, in the example, that the melodic shape of successive notes sung to a character, such as the first two characters in bar 2, also reflect approximately its tone contour. Although the melodic line over the second character in bar 3 moves in the direction opposite to the change of pitch in the lexical tone, the large leap of a major seventh from the grace note suggests the tone value.

Chinese text 偏 這 日 寶 玉 閒 中 來 探 病
Transliteration pian zhe ri bao yu xianzhong lai tan bing
Tone contour /55/ /51/ /51/214/ /51/ /35/ /55/ /35/51/ /51/
Traslation Accidentally today Baoyu comes to visit the sick in his spare time.

Ex.10 Use of grace notes and intervals

A short musical phrase taken from *gezaixi* opera, a Taiwanese regional operatic genre, serves as an example of how a melodic line can be bent to reflect

variations of pitch movement over a syllable. An artist may lower the first note in the phrase below for an interval of second, or add a grace note to it, so that the words denoting three different vehicles in the text, the train ('fire car', Ex.11, I), the float ('flower car', Ex.11, II) and the van ('goods car', Ex.11, III), which all sound the same (*huechia*) if the tones are ignored, can be distinguished from one another.³⁹



Chinese text 火車行到 碰孔內
 Transliteration *hue chia kiā kao* — *pong kang lai*
 Tone contour /44/ /44/

Translation The train goes into the tunnel.



花車
hue chia
 /33/ /44/

The flower float goes into the tunnel.



貨車
hue chia
 /51/ /44/

The van goes into the tunnel.

Ex.11 Bent melodic line

Unfortunately, due to their lack of knowledge of the Chinese language, in the past Westerners could not observe the devices used for dealing with tones against tunes in Chinese music, and thus failed to appreciate the art of combining words with music which were so dissimilar to their own music traditions.⁴⁰

III. Examining Shanghai popular songs

In one sense, just like the modified ‘Auld Lang Syne’, Shanghai popular song is a product of musical materials from more than one origin. How the nationality of this modified tune is recognised depends on a listener’s musical knowledge and perception, as does how the various musical components in Shanghai popular song can be separated for examination. While the analysis in this section draws on both the ‘knowledge’ of Chinese and Western music, which has been well documented in literature, it relies on my own ‘perception’ of musical qualities which may differ from that of other readers, and thus some verbal descriptions such as a certain ‘flavour’ or ‘impression’, may not be completely clearly perceived by others. Nevertheless, the analysis will provide a guideline for identifying ethnic features and explain how they are collaborated in Shanghai popular song.

1. Singing voice

Shanghai popular singers came from different backgrounds and thus acquired their ‘knowledge’ of singing through various routes. Some started their careers in song-and-dance troupes and received training there, some were in fact film stars and started singing simply because that was required, some studied singing by attending school or from private tutors and some were simply self-taught and developed their vocal skills through time. To audiences today, whether they are Chinese fans or Western onlookers, Shanghai popular singers’ voices in historical recordings may sound nasal and high-pitched in comparison to those of pop singers today, yet there are still differences among their vocal qualities. From the perspective of the singing style or vocal techniques, both ends of the spectrum of voices can be found in

recordings, the Chinese traditional style and the Western *bel canto* style. Before examining recording examples, it is essential to understand the major difference between Chinese and Western vocal techniques.

A fundamental difference is the way Western and Chinese vocal techniques deal with the resonating cavities. According to the part of the human body in which the sound mostly resonates, singing voices may be categorised into three registers, representing the changing tonal qualities within the pitch ranges and these are the chest, the middle and the head voices. The chest voice denotes a singer's lower range of voice, which generally resonates in the chest cavity and is usually described as having a deep, weighty quality. The head voice is associated with a bright, light singing voice at the upper end of a singer's vocal range, which resonates in the mouth and the head cavities. The middle voice refers to the warm, rich singing tones of a singer's middle pitch range resonating in the throat cavity, which is sometimes regarded as the crossover between the chest and head voices.

The Western classical singing style, or precisely the *bel canto*, is characterised by even vocal quality with the greatest amount of resonance through the whole of a singer's voice range where every singing note smoothly merges with the next to produce continuous lines. To achieve this, a singer has to utilise all resonating cavities properly, maintain a fine balance among various voice registers and develop seamless transitions between registers. Singing in this style, one is required to be able to place the head voice down to the notes that are normally produced as the chest voice and vice versa. In other words, a trained vocalist would adjust the amount of resonance in different cavities to gain consistent tone quality throughout the singing range. For more favourable resonance, the larynx is lowered to expand the bottom of the pharynx and sometimes there are even adjustments in the pronunciation of vowels.

In contrast, rather than seeking to produce consistent tone quality across the entire voice range by using different resonating areas, in the Chinese traditional singing style a vocalist sings principally in the head voice and develops brighter and lighter tones resonating mostly in the hard palate, the nose cavity and the head cavities. Therefore, resonance of sounds is fixed principally in the anterior part of the head. When singing, the larynx is positioned higher than it is in the *bel canto* style and there is more laryngeal muscle tension. As every syllable has to be enunciated precisely, the pronunciation of a vowel is never modified for the sake of optimum resonance. Generally speaking, due to the differences between vocal techniques when using the *bel canto* method, a singer tends to produce mellow, round and open-throated sounds, singing in the Chinese traditional fashion, a singer's tone quality is relatively nasal, bright and with more tension in the throat.⁴¹

Due to these distinctive differences in Chinese and Western vocal traditions and thus audiences' varied expectations for tonal qualities, what sounds admirable and properly trained in one tradition may be regarded as improper or hard to appreciate in the other. Nevertheless, there are fundamental requirements which are common in the two traditions. Trained singers are not only expected to sing in correct, steady pitches and to enunciate word syllables clearly but also have to develop an extensive vocal range and the ability to produce varying degrees of volume with desired resonance, to perform with dynamics and, by breathing properly, to sing long phrases with adequate volume and consistent tone quality. Although some of those who have never received vocal training can stay in tune, keep the correct rhythm and articulate words precisely throughout an entire song, there may be a lack of ideal resonance, dynamics in their voices or of enduring firmness when singing a long phrase. When exploring the singing styles and techniques in Shanghai popular songs, in addition to the stylistic

dichotomy between Chinese and Western, a type of ‘untrained’ or ‘undeveloped’ voice whose quality does not meet the requirements of either of the traditions can also be found in historical recordings. The practice of singing in this type of voice probably has its root in the song-and-dance performances in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Members in a troupe would certainly receive training to articulate properly and sing on pitch and beat, but as most of them were merely children or teenagers whose vocal organs were still developing and thus have immature voices, they could hardly produce the rich, resonant sounds of adults. However, as their live performances and records sold well, it seems that the audience enjoyed their singing style and therefore singing in an undeveloped voice became popular. Those members who entered the broadcast or film industry at a later stage of their career obviously continued this singing style. The well-known writer Eileen Chang once commented that because of the craze for the ‘little sister’ (*xiao meimei*) style among the audience, singers would squeeze their throats to produce reedy and flat sounds.⁴² This ‘strangling cat’ style, as criticised by the celebrated writer Lu Xun, can be heard in some surviving historical recordings.

As a result of the differences between Chinese traditional and Western *bel canto* singing styles and the explanation of untrained voice, four major types of singing styles can be found in Shanghai popular songs.

Chinese traditional

The Chinese-style voice which features brighter head resonance can be heard in Li Lihua’s ‘Heaven on Earth’ (*Tianshang renjian*) and Bai Hong’s ‘Burying Jade’ (*Mai yu*). In ‘Heaven on Earth’, Li Lihua sings in a thin yet bright voice, resembling

that of a songstress performing in a Chinese traditional teahouse. In ‘Burying Jade’, a tune which has a hint of Suzhou *tanci*, Bai Hong’s voice sounds soft and nasal in the lower register and becomes sharp and carries more head resonance when the melodic line moves to a higher pitch. This kind of sharp and head voice is also heard in Zhou Xuan’s ‘When Will You Come Back Again’ (*Heri jun zailai*) and ‘Full Moon and Blooming Flowers’ (*Yueyuan huahao*) and Gong Qiuxia’s ‘Roses Blooming Everywhere’ (*Qiangwei chuchu kai*).

Bel canto

Examples of songs performed in the Western *bel canto* style are Ouyang Feiying’s ‘Shangri-La’ (*Xianggelila*), Qu Yunyun’s ‘Young Lady In a Pedicab’ (*Sanlunche shang de xiaojie*) and Li Xianglan’s ‘Evening Fragrance’ (*Yelaixiang*). In these three songs we can easily observe that, with a fine balance between their vocal registers, singers use both head and chest cavities to produce a rich, round voice. There is neither a striking contrast between their lower and higher vocal registers nor does the tone of voice turn sharp as they go higher in pitches. Moreover, faster, wider vibrato can also be heard on their high notes. Bai Hong’s voice in ‘Enchanting Lipstick’ (*Zuiren de kouhong*) is another good example. Unlike the nasal and sharp voice in the above mentioned ‘Burying Jade’, Bai Hong uses a deeper, fuller voice to interpret this piece. Interestingly, in historical recordings examined in this study, while no male singer is found performing in the Chinese traditional style, there are however Western-style male singing voices. For example, Huang Feiran’s ‘Passionate Eyes’ (*Reqing de yanjing*), Sheng Jialun’s ‘Singing At Midnight’ (*Yeban gesheng*) and Si Yigui’s ‘How Could I Forget Her’ (*Jiao wo ruhe buxiang ta*) are all sung in the *bel canto* style.

Mixed style

Although in some recordings we can recognise the distinctive tone quality produced by Chinese traditional and *bel canto* vocal techniques, in others it may be difficult to categorise one song rigidly into a specific style as a singers may apply both Chinese and Western skills within one song. For example, in ‘Goodbye Shasha’ (*Shasha zaihui ba*), Bai Hong’s vocal timbre changes in different vocal registers. One can feel more throat tension and a reedy texture in her lower register, but as she reaches higher notes the muscle tension is much reduced and thus a mellow, unstrained voice is produced. Another example is Yi Min’s voice in ‘Look at Me’ (*Kan zhe wo*), where the reedy texture disappears and chest resonance is introduced in the higher register pitches. Wu Yingying also sings in an alternating style in ‘Meet by Chance’ (*Ping shui xiangfeng*), but unlike the case of Bai Hong’s ‘Goodbye Shasha’, her higher notes in this song are brighter and sharper with clear nasal resonance, while the lower notes are warmer and unstrained. This singing manner can also be observed in Zhang Fan’s ‘Red Peach Blossoms’ (*Taohua duoduo hong*).

Untrained voice

For the untrained voice, a recording of the earliest Shanghai popular song, ‘Drizzles’ (*Maomao yü*) sung by Li Minghui, serves as a good example. As Li must have been over twenty years of age when recording this song, she could have certainly sung in a richer voice with proper resonance if she had been provided with proper coaching when she was in song-and-dance groups organised by her father, Li Jinhui.⁴³ However, in this recording, her voice generally still sounds preadolescent and even rasping when striking the highest note in the song. She was therefore

obviously singing in the ‘little sister’ style. Zhou Xuan’s ‘The Express Train’ (*Tebie kuaiche*) is another case in point. Although every word is articulated accurately and sung on pitch, Zhou’s voice seems to be conveyed straight away from her vocal tract without resonating in any other cavities. What can be heard in this recorded piece is an unsophisticated, childlike yet flat, thin voice. Other examples are Jiang Manli’s ‘Parting Forever My Younger Brother’ (*Yongbie le wo de didi*), Li Lili’s ‘New Song of Fengyang’ (*Xin fengyang ge*) and Yao Li’s ‘Lovesickness for Sale’ (*Mai xiangsi*).

2. Instrumentation

Although Western instruments had a dominant position in Shanghai popular song, Chinese instruments were never ignored. Most singers made at least a few recordings with Chinese instrumental accompaniment. A songwriter worth special note when discussing Chinese instrumentation in Shanghai popular song is Xu Ruhui. Unlike Li Jinhui, who used both Chinese and Western instruments, Xu committed himself only to using Chinese instruments. Having studied Chinese music in the Great Unity Society (*Datong yuehui*) for five years, he gained extensive knowledge of Chinese music and was thus in his compositions able to employ a wide range of Chinese instruments, including some unusual ancient instruments. For example, in ‘Downstairs the Jade Tower’ (*Xia qionglou*), a song for the film *Jade Horse* (*Feicui ma*), four Chinese instruments are used, the *shuangqing* (three-string plucked instruments) and the *erhu* (a kind of *huqin*), both of which generally follow the vocal line, the *dahu* (a kind of *huqin* pitched one octave below the *erhu*) which plays the tune with some variation and adds ornamental notes at the end of every phrase, and the *ruan* (four-string plucked instrument) which provides rhythmic support throughout the whole piece. In ‘Happy Village Girl’ (*Cungu le*), a song for the film

Extremely Forceful (*Shenglong huohu*), he not only used the well known *pipa* (four-string plucked instrument) and *di* (side-blown flute) but also incorporated the less frequently seen ancient instruments, the *se* (zither) and the *xiqin* (a earlier form of *huqin*).⁴⁴

Xu left Shanghai for Chongqing after the outbreak of Sino-Japanese War in 1937 and started to focus on instrumental and operatic works. He returned to Shanghai after the war in 1945 and had never composed any popular song ever since. Although his Midnight Music Society (*Ziye yuehui*) had been active until 1937 for almost a decade in Shanghai, not only promoting his popular songs on radio but also recording film music and screen songs he composed for the Star Motion Picture (*Mingxing yingpian gongsi*), somehow his unique choice of Chinese instrumentation did not seem to have much influence on the way Chinese instruments were used in Shanghai popular song. Not all instruments he used were equally favoured by other composers or arrangers, but instead, what can be identified in most recordings are still commonly heard instruments. The following are examples of the use of Chinese instruments in Shanghai popular song.

Basic combination

Theoretically, a string instrument and percussion should be adequate to accompany a song as can be seen in the performance given by a songstress and a fiddler in a traditional Chinese teahouse. In Yao Li's 'You Are Unwanted' (*Buyao ni*), with the steady beat of the *bangzi* (slit drum) throughout the whole song, the *huqin* basically doubles the vocal line in the first verse and then plays a modified melody throughout the rest of the piece. However, other than 'You Are Unwanted', no further examples are to be found in known recordings.

Small group

This is probably the combination of Chinese instruments most heard in recordings. A typical small group consists of *huqin*, *sanxian*, *yueqin* (four-string plucked instrument) and a percussion instrument, usually a drummer's kit or *bangzi*, yet sometimes one or two more instruments such as *pipa* and *ruan* are added. Zhou Xuan's 'The Wandering Songster' (*Tianya genü*) and 'The Song of Four Seasons' (*Siji ge*) are both performed to the accompaniment of *huqin*, *sanxian*, *yueqin* and *bangzi*. The similar small group can also be heard in Wu Yingyin's 'Spring Sadness' (*Duanchang hong*) and Pei Ni's 'Good Night Doesn't Last' (*Liagye buneng liu*).

Bigger ensemble

In some recordings, songs are accompanied by a bigger group resembling a *sizhu* ensemble, which normally consists of the strings, including *huqin*, *sanxian*, *pipa* and *yangqin*, the winds, including *di* (transverse-blown flute), *xiao* (end-blown flute) and *sheng* (mouth organ), and some percussion instruments. For example, Li Lihua's 'Heaven on Earth' (*Tianshang renjian*) is accompanied by this kind of ensemble. A similar combination of instruments can also be heard in Wu Yingyin's 'Setting Moon And Crowing Raven' (*Yueluo wuti*) and Yao Li's 'On The River Bank of Qinhuai' (*Qinhuaihe pan*).

The use of Western instruments in Shanghai popular song can be traced back to Li Jinhui's Bright Moon Ensemble (*Mingyue yinyuehui*), which he founded in 1922. According to Li's memoirs, rather than playing in unison as in a traditional Chinese ensemble, he integrated Western instruments into the traditional *sizhu* music

by allowing Chinese instruments, such as the *huqin* and the *di*, and Western instruments, such as the violin and the piano, to take turns to deliver the main melody in a piece. When an instrument played the tune, others in the ensemble provided rhythmic support. Li maintained that all kinds of Western instruments could be employed in 'national music' (*guoyue*), just as the *huqin* and the *qiangdi* were adopted by Chinese people in the past.⁴⁵ Although Li's pioneering experiment in combining Western instruments with Chinese music in performance can be heard in some early recordings made in the late 1920s, such as Li Minhui's 'Peach and Plum Blooming in Spring' (*Taoli zheng chun*) and 'The Poor Qiuxiang' (*Kelian de Qiuxiang*), those were actually songs composed for his children's musical dramas which, strictly speaking, are not Shanghai popular songs. There are no recordings of his popular songs performed to the accompaniment of such combination.

It seems that Li Jinhui stopped using Chinese instruments in 1929 when he started composing his love songs, the fountainhead of Shanghai popular song. In most recordings of his love songs released in the 1930s only Western instruments can be heard. For example, Zhou Xuan's 'The Express Train', Li Minhui's 'Drizzles' and Wang Renmei and Li Lili's 'The River of Peach Blossom' (*Taohua jiang*) are all accompanied by Western instruments alone. It is unknown if any foreign musicians participated in the recordings of Li's works. However, it is true that after White Russian and Filipino instrumentalists joined the Shanghai pop industry in the early 1930s working at dancehalls or as session musicians and even being involved in song arrangements, Western instrumentation gradually gained popularity among both the audience and songwriters.

Among various combinations of Western instruments used in Shanghai popular song, the wind-based, the string-dominated and the small combo are the three

most heard ones. Apart from these three types, some individual instruments are additionally worth mentioning.

Wind-based

Wind-based refers to the combination in which wind instruments such as clarinet, saxophone, trumpet and trombone, which appear commonly in jazz, play a heavy role, not only in accompanying the vocal line but also in the stirring instrumental introduction, interlude and coda of a song, although other instruments such as piano, guitar, double bass or percussion may also be engaged to provide rhythmic support. The size of a wind-based group varies. Basically, seven or eight players would be enough to form a group resembling a Dixieland band which usually has the winds as the lead instruments and several other instruments in the rhythm section. Nevertheless, polyphonic improvisation by the lead instruments, one of the important features of Dixieland jazz, is not heard in Shanghai popular songs. In Bai Hong's 'He Is the Spring Wind' (*Lang shi chunri feng*) and Wu Yingyin's 'Pleasant Nighttime' (*Hao chunxiao*), the accompanying bands are of this kind. Sometimes, a wind-based band consists of fewer instruments. In the recording of Wu Yingying's 'I Wanna Forget You' (*Wo xiang wangle ni*), only a trumpet, a clarinet, a guitar and a double bass are clearly heard. A wind-based group may also expand to the size of a big band, or jazz orchestra, which can be divided up into four sections, the trumpet, the trombone, the saxophone and the rhythm section. There are four or more members in each of the former three sections, and players in the saxophone section may sometimes double on other woodwinds such as clarinet and flute. The rhythm section contains instruments similar to those used in a Dixieland band. Bai Hong's 'Goodbye Shasha' and Yi Min's 'Look at Me' are accompanied by this kind of

expanded band. According to Yao Li, a group consisting of just over ten members was normally hired for a recording session, yet when making 'Rose, Rose, I Love You' (*Meigui meigui wo ai ni*), EMI engaged more than thirty White Russian instrumentalists to form a band to accompany her singing.⁴⁶

String-dominated

The string-dominated format features the sound of robust backing string harmony together with the adorable solo or tutti string passages throughout a song. As with the case of the wind-based accompaniment, other instruments would usually join a string-dominated band, and a piano or woodwind instruments are probably the most commonly used. Ouyang Feiying's 'Misty Rain' (*Yu mengmeng*) is a case in point where the piano and flute can be occasionally heard against the rich, full sound of a string orchestra. In Liang Ping's 'Spring Arrives But He Doesn't' (*Chun lai ren bulai*), the flute and clarinet throughout the whole piece can be heard floating above the strings. As no existing documentation indicates the exact size of the string-dominated orchestra normally employed in the recording studio, and few historical mono recordings still are in good condition or of sufficiently high acoustic fidelity to make all tone-blended string parts discernible, it is difficult to tell whether all instruments of the violin family are used.

Small combo

This small group comprising of only three or four instruments, the sort of band that might be seen on a street corner café or restaurant, would suffice to produce a pleasant background for a song without exuberant solo passages given in turns by

several instruments. In Zhang Fan's 'Red Peach Blossoms', only a piano, a violin, a guitar and a double bass were used. While the double bass lays down a steady four-beat-to-bar bass line throughout the whole recording, the piano builds up chord voicings above the bass line and inserts short melodic or scale fragments at intervals. Besides the strummed chords which are heard all the time, the guitar gives a short solo on the tune before the last vocal verse. Unlike the other three instruments which continuously provide rhythmic and harmonic support to the singing voice after delivering a short introductory phrase, the violin plays intermittently either a glimmering melodic line in its lower register or high-pitched melodic fragments. Other examples of accompaniment in small combo settings are Yao Li's 'Lovesickness For Sale' and Wu Yingyin's 'Full Moon in Deep Autumn' (*Qiuhua yueman*).

Piano

The piano is frequently heard in historical recordings. It either gives a melodic interlude solo or provides rhythmic and harmonic support, but is rarely used alone in existing recordings. Wu Yingyin's 'Infatuation' (*Nong ben chiqing*) is the only example found so far in which the piano is the only accompanying instrument. It seems that the audience were not interested in songs accompanied by only one instrument. There are 'art songs' originally written by conservatoire-trained composers in the Shanghai era for vocal and piano in a format similar to the so-called *Kunstlied*. Several songs of this kind are well known and were favoured both by the audience at that time and by fans of 'oldies' nowadays, and so are sometimes perceived as 'Shanghai popular song'. Interestingly, the audience preferred those which were performed with a band to those which were sung with only a piano

accompaniment. For example, most fans remember Si Yigui's recording of 'How Could I Forget Her' accompanied by piano, strings and glockenspiel rather than the version by Li Rengong who sings only to a piano accompaniment. In the most frequently mentioned recording of 'Adzuki Beans' (*Hongdou ci*), Zhou Xiaoyan sings to the accompaniment of piano, strings and woodwinds.

Accordion

The accordion is heard less in historical recordings in comparison to the piano, the winds and the strings. It is not clear if other types of 'squeezeboxes' such as the concertina or bandoneón, were employed in the studio, yet the most commonly used one was the piano accordion which has a right-hand keyboard similar to a piano and several rows of buttons in the left-hand manual providing chords and bass notes.⁴⁷ Because the accordion has a wide compass and can produce both chords and a melodic line simultaneously, with various tone colours on its own, unlike winds and strings which are always played with other instruments in a band, it is not only played in a group but sometimes also used alone to accompany a song. For example, in Gong Qiuxia's 'Under the Clove Tree' (*Dingxiangshu xia*), the jaunty sound of backing chords and arpeggios on the accordion gives the song to semblance of a polka. It enriches the instrumental accompaniment by inserting another layer between the strings and winds in Bai Guang's 'If Living Without You' (*Ruguo meiyou ni*) and Gong Qiuxia's 'Spring' (*Chun*). It accompanies the performance independently by providing a rhythmic and chordal backdrop to the singing voice in Zhou Xuan's 'When Will You Come Back Again' and Yao Li's 'White Orchid' (*Bailan xiang*).

Guitar

As with the piano, the guitar is usually used as part of a group to offer harmonic and rhythmic support and sometimes solo phrases, but is rarely used on its own. Yao Li and Yao Min's 'Congratulations' (*Gongxi gongxi*) is the only work known so far which is performed solely with a guitar. Unlike the ordinary acoustic guitar which often merges into the background, the signature sound of languid floating notes and glissandi of the Hawaiian guitar is clearly conveyed to the audience. However, although this unique timbre can create a relaxed tropical atmosphere, it is not necessarily used to deliver such an image in recordings. For example, while the Hawaiian guitar is employed in Yao Li and Yao Min's 'Malayan Scenery' (*Malai fenggurang*), a song with a theme of *nanyang* (literally 'southern ocean', referring to Southeast Asia), it also appears in Zhou Xuan's 'Everlasting Lovesickness' (*Chang xiangsi*), a song of a film set in the late Ming Dynasty (early sixteenth century).

Xylophone

The xylophone and other tuned percussion instruments which work on the same struck-bar principle are occasionally heard in historical recordings. The xylophone usually provides a lively and delightful aural effect to the music, but the vibraphone may give a melancholy feeling. Due to the poor sound quality of historical recordings, it is sometimes difficult to tell the subtle difference in timbre among the xylophone, the marimba and the vibraphone. However, there are still some good examples. In Gong Qiuxia's 'Grumbling About Parents' (*Hen dieniang*), the xylophone gives a solo in the introduction and the interlude between verses, a pleasant

Marimba solo on the tune is in Liang Ping and Yao Min's 'Ding-dong Bell and Drum' (*Ding ge linggu dang*) and the vibraphone expresses a quiet and serene sorrow throughout Bai Guang's 'Don't Go' (*Ni buyao zou*).

Latin percussion

Latin percussion instruments such as maracas, clave, conga and, probably, bongo can be heard frequently in songs featuring the rhythm of rumba, such as Li Xianglan's 'Evening Fragrance', Bai Guang's 'Autumn Night' (*Qiuye*) and Ouyang Feiying's 'Shangri-La'.

Sometimes Chinese instruments, such as a single instrument or percussion, would join in a Western combo to give a Chinese flavour. For example, the Chinese gong and *bangzi* are used with the Western strings and woodwinds in Zhou Xuan's 'The Little Nuptial Chamber' (*Xiaoxiao dongfang*) and in her 'Dance of Meifei' (*Meifei wu*) a *pipa* gives solo passages in the instrumental introduction and coda and plays a slightly modified tune along the vocal line in the first verse. Interestingly, it has long been believed by most fans that two Chinese instruments, *suona* (shawm) and gong, are used in Zhou Xuan's 'Picking Beetle Nut' (*Cai binglang*) to give the regional character of the Hunan province which is where the tune originates, yet it is actually the Western double-reed instrument, the English horn, that produces the sound effect of the Chinese *suona*. Nevertheless, it was the composer's intention to use the English horn to create the impression of the *suona*.⁴⁸

3. Melodic content

In examining the melodic materials we can find that a few Shanghai popular songs were adapted from Chinese folk tunes or operatic genres. Obvious examples are some of Zhou Xuan's works. 'The Wandering Songstress' and 'Selling Groceries' (*Mai zahuo*) were actually a tune from Suzhou *tanci* and a folk song of Guangdong respectively. While 'Betel Nut Picking' was composed by Li Jinguang based on melodic patterns from the 'flower-drum drama' (*huagu xi*) of Hunan, 'The Song of Four Seasons' was adapted by He Lüting from folk tunes of Jiangsu. There are also songs, though not many, whose tunes were adapted from Western or Japanese songs which were popular in Shanghai at the time. For example, the tune of Ying Yin's 'On The Swing' (*Qiuqian jia shang*) is that of 'Man On The Flying Trapeze', whereas the melody of Ma Tingting's 'Rain Falls on Mandarin Ducks' (*Yu da yuanyang*) is identical to that of the famous 'Cheek To Cheek'. Bai Hong's 'Don't Go So Fast' (*Bie zou de namo kuai*) is almost the same as 'On the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe' except some modification in the refrain. Lang Yuxiu's 'Toast and Sing' (*Beijiu gaoge*) was a Chinese cover of 'The Maine Stein Song' and Yao Li's 'Dream of Spring' (*Chun de meng*) was adapted from the Japanese song 'China Night' (*Shina no yoru*).⁴⁹

A noteworthy case is 'Malayan Scenery' sung by Yao Li and Yao Min. This song has long been believed to be derived from an Indonesian folk song that was chosen as the national anthem of Malaysia in 1957. However, this is in fact incorrect. Although its lyrics are about the beautiful scenery of Malaysia and the atmosphere of tropical islands, created by the instrumental accompaniment in the recordings, can be associated with Malaysia, its melody is entirely different from that of the Malaysian national anthem.⁵⁰

Nevertheless, apart from those adapted tunes, most Shanghai popular songs were indeed newly composed. While there may be a range of musical elements which can give a musical work a particular ethnic character, whether subjectively or objectively, there also may be a number of factors, such as some particular intervals, rhythmic patterns or melodic contours, which can contribute to the ‘Chineseness’ or ‘Westernness’ in the melodies of those Shanghai popular songs. However, the discussion below will focus on the scales on which songs are composed with an emphasis on how non-pentatonic notes, the so-called ‘altered tones’ in Chinese terms, are used in these works.

All Shanghai popular songs are tonal music. There are songs, apparently set on the Western major and minor scales and on the Chinese pentatonic scale in different modes, which can be easily identified. Other types of scales, such as the Phrygian scale and the blues scale, though not commonly used, can also be heard in several songs. Here are some examples:

Major scale

- Liang Ping’s ‘Young As I Am’ (*Shaonian de wo*)
- Bai Hong’s ‘The Coming of Spring’ (*Chuntian de jianglin*)
- Li Xianglan’s ‘Evening Fragrance’
- Bai Guang’s ‘If Living Without You’
- Wu Yingyin’s ‘Spring Comes Back on Earth’ (*Dadi huichun*)

Major scale with use of chromatic notes

- Wu Yingyin’s ‘Full Moon in Deep Autumn’
- Zhou Xuan’s ‘Good Night’ (*Wan’an qu*)

- Yao Min's 'Such Shanghai' (*Ruci Shanghai*)

Minor scale

- Bai Guang's 'What Sort of Night Is Tonight' (*Jinxi hexi*)
- Yao Li and Yao Min's 'Congratulation'
- Zhang Fan's 'Bug Song' (*Chouchong ge*)

Gong mode

- Zhou Xuan's 'When Will You Come Back Again'
- Gong Qiuxia's 'Welcome New Year' (*Huanying xinnian*)

Shang mode

- Zhou Xuan's 'New Flower Quiz' (*Xin duihua*)
- Zhou Xuan's 'Seeing Off Elder Brother' (*Song dage*)
- Li Lili's 'New Song of Fengyang'

Jue mode

- Zhou Xuan's 'May Wind' (*Wuyue de feng*)
- Hu Die's 'Evening Fragrance' (*Yelaixiang*)

Zhi mode

- Yao Li's 'Selling Lovesickness'
- Zhou Xuan's 'Song of Four Seasons'
- Gong Qiuxia's 'Beyond the Frosty Water' (*Qiushui yiren*)

Yu mode

- Liang Ping's 'Spring Has Come, He Hasn't'

- Zhou Xuan's 'Selling Groceries'
- Yao Li's 'On the River Bank Of Qinhuai'

Phrygian mode

- Bai Hong's 'Enchanting Lipstick'⁵¹

Blues Scale

- Zhou Xuan's 'On Two Roads' (*Liang tiao lu shang*)
- Bai Guang's 'Waiting For You Coming Back' (*Dengzhe ni huilai*)⁵²

Undoubtedly, songs on the Western major scale usually contain the fourth and seventh scale degrees, and on the minor the second and sixth, i.e., *fa* and *ti*, and the Western heptatonicism in them can also be easily detected. Just like traditional Chinese music, in which *fa*, *fa-sharp*, *ti-flat* and *ti* may also occur, there are non-pentatonic notes in some Shanghai popular songs which are set on the Chinese pentatonic scale. In a similar manner, altered tones in those songs may either function as passing notes, auxiliary notes, or result from modulation as discussed earlier in this chapter. For example, in a passage from Yao Li's 'Rose, Rose, I Love You' the altered tone *fa-sharp* is obviously a passing note (Ex.12, I), but in the last six bars of Gong Qiuxia's 'Beyond the Frosty Water' (*Qiushui yiren*) *ti* functions as both auxiliary and passing notes (Ex.12, II). In Yao Li's 'No One Is Not Amorous' (*Nage bu duoqing*), *ti* is a passing tone, and *fa* is the result of modulation to the subdominant key (Ex.12, III).

(I)

(II)

(III)

Ex.12 Uses of altered tones in Shanghai popular songs

- (I) excerpt from Yao Li's 'Rose, Rose, I Love You', bars 9-16 of the vocal line
- (II) excerpt from Gong Qiuxia's 'Beyond the Frosty Water', last six bars of the vocal line
- (III) Yao Li's 'No One Is Not Amorous'

However, although we can sometimes immediately identify, in the first few lines of a song, that it is composed on the Chinese pentatonic scale, the character of pentatonicism may become blurred and thus as the melodic line moves on our

judgment turns out to have been incorrect. A possible explanation could be that even though some Chinese melodic characteristics in a song can be recognised with no problem, other melodic passages may not be understood in the framework of Chinese musical tradition. In other words, when a song simultaneously contains Chinese-flavoured pentatonic phrases, Western phrases and other phrases which have ambiguous characteristics, it can be difficult to judge whether it is Chinese pentatonic or is rather a product of Western influences. For example, Zhou Xuan and Yan Hua's 'Repeated Advice' (*Dingning*), a song written in the 32-bar AABA form, contains both pentatonic phrases and also some phrases which may be regarded as Western (Ex.12).

The image shows a musical score in 4/4 time, divided into two sections, A and B. Section A (measures 9-12) starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody consists of several notes, including a non-pentatonic note labeled 'fa' which is identified as a 'passing note'. Section B (measures 13-21) continues the melody, featuring a non-pentatonic note labeled 'ti'. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, as well as rests and a repeat sign.

Ex.12 Chinese-styled and equivocal phrases, excerpt from Zhou Xuan and Yan Hua' 'Repeated Advice', second A and B sections of the vocal line

Whereas in section A the non-pentatonic note *fa* can be easily explained as a passing note, in section B it is not satisfactory to apply the same concept to those *fa*'s

and *ti*'s. It would be easier if we assumed that there was a change in composer's musical mind when entering section B. Examined through the lens of Western theory, since this song is sung with the chordal accompaniment of an accordion, the altered tones together with several other notes in section B can be considered part of some implied chords. The sequence of chords in section B played on the only accompanying instrument in the recording may be:

$$| F - | C - | G_7 - | C - | C G^6 | G^6 - | G - | C - |$$

Unfortunately, it was impossible to interview any Shanghai pop songwriters active in the 1930s and 1940s as they had all had died before this study started and thus their compositional logic is unknown. Therefore, based on the above example, it can only be speculation that, when composing, a songwriter might either start with a melodic line on the Chinese scale or whatever seemed to them idiomatically Chinese. Yet under the influence of Western music available at that period and with an intention of incorporating new materials into Chinese tunes, he would build up a melodic passage based on a Western chord sequence in mind, just like some Western singers who picture a melody when stroking a series of chords on the guitar.

Moreover, the frequent use of altered tones in section B can also be considered a remarkable contrast to section A. According to Western music theories, as well as guidance given in books about how to write a successful hit song, the melodic line of section B in the AABA-form song should be a clear and striking contrast in character compared to that of section A. Therefore, Shanghai pop songwriters might also have employed this concept in their compositions. Looking at more songs which are comprised of two distinct sections to take the AABA or ABA form, two interesting

types of the use of altered tones are identified, the traditional way and a way to break pentatonicism.

In some songs, whereas section A is completely composed on the pentatonic scale without using any altered tone, one or two altered tones may be introduced into section B. However, the pentatonic framework remains intact and altered tones can be easily explained within the Chinese musical tradition. For example:

- Li Lihua's 'Heaven on Earth': *fa-sharp* introduced in B, used as a passing note
- Pei Ni's 'Good Night Doesn't Last': *fa* and *ti* introduced in B, resulting from modulation and used as a passing note respectively
- Lang Yuxiu's 'Wandering Fallen Petals' (*Piaoling de luohua*): *fa* and *ti* introduced in B, both used as passing notes but the later also as an auxiliary note
- Zhou Xuan's 'Cupid's Arrow' (*Aishen de jian*): *fa* introduced in B as a result of modulation into the sub-dominant key

In other songs, section A is usually written on the Chinese pentatonic scale with either no or only one altered tone that does not impair the pentatonicism, but altered tones such as *fa* and *ti* appear more frequently in section B, which drastically changes the Chinese pentatonicism established in section A into a new system which features the Western diatonic scale and major-minor tonality. For example:

- Gong Qiuxia's 'Roses Blooming Everywhere': *gong*-mode scale in A=> the relative minor scale with the use of the raised seventh scale degree in B

- Yao Li's 'Rose, Rose, I Love You': *gong*-mode scale (with *fa-sharp* as a passing note) in A => Western major in B
- Yao Li's 'Reencounter' (*Chongfeng*): *gong*-mode scale (with *ti* as a passing note) in A=> Western major in B
- Zhou Xuan's, 'Where Is My True Audience' (*Zhiyin hechu xun*): *gong*-mode scale in A => Western major in B

In a study of the Beatles' songs, Naphtali Wagner indicates that due to their inclination to write pentatonic melodies, the lack of *fa* and *ti* in the first few pentatonic phrases of a song leaves 'holes' in the Western diatonic scale, yet those holes are usually filled later in the song when pentatonicism is broken. Therefore, Wagner regards the Beatles' pentatonicism as 'diatonicism with omission' and suggests that the appearance of the missing *fa* and *ti* later in the song 'provides a refreshing sense of release, especially when other musical factors are involved in emphasising the event.'⁵³ Taking this theory further, but in a different manner, it can be argued that the diatonicism featuring the Western major-minor tonality in section B of the above examples is 'pentatonicism with expansion' which provides an exhilarating feeling to an otherwise monotonous Chinese-styled pentatonic song.

Interestingly, whatever scale a song was composed on and whatever material was incorporated, in the Shanghai pop industry once a tune was written it was always performed pristinely in terms of rhythm and pitch. When listening to old recordings made by American crooners, such as Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra during the 1930s and 1940s, no one would fail to notice the elegant style of phrasing and rubato. Equally no one would dismiss the elaborate vocal improvisation when playing old

records from the same period by great jazz singers, such as Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday,. However, none of this is heard in recordings of Shanghai popular songs, neither in Chinese-styled tunes nor in Western melodies. It seems that a Shanghai pop singer was expected to sing on the right pitch and to the correct rhythm, precisely as it was composed. Although a singer might add grace notes or apply subtle portamento or strong vibrato as stylistic ornamentation, the original melodic pitch and rhythm was never modified. It is not clear whether Shanghai pop singers were competent to bend and shape tempo to enhance the expressiveness of a song without losing track of the basic pulse, or whether they had the skill to give a tune a slight twist while still conveying the composer's original intention. Yet it is true that no one interpreted a song in an extemporaneous manner.

4. Accompanying harmony

In terms of melodic content discussed above, Shanghai popular song may fall into three groups:

- Chinese-styled song: one that is composed on the Chinese pentatonic scale, with the pentatonic framework kept intact throughout the whole song even when altered tones are frequently used.
- Western-styled song: one that is written in the Western heptatonic scale with clear major-minor tonality.
- Song in the mixed style: one that contains both Chinese-styled and Western-styled, or equivocal phrases.

These descriptions will be applied in the following discussion of accompanying harmony.

From all the historical recordings collected so far for this study, it is found that the so-called ‘chords’ of the Western triad-based harmony only exist in songs accompanied by Western instruments. Those that are accompanied only by Chinese instruments, either adapted from folk tunes, operatic genre or newly composed, are usually heterophonic in texture, with instrumental parts doubling the vocal line with freely added fill-in notes and ornamental fragments, as can be seen in traditional vocal performances. Examples are Wu Yingying’s ‘Spring Sadness’ and Pei Ni’s ‘Good Night Doesn’t Last’. Perhaps because it was just inveterate practice, or an aesthetic preference of Shanghai pop songwriters and arrangers that Chinese instruments were only meant to convey Chinese images, no Chinese instruments were combined to produce Western-styled backing chords. Only songs with Western instrumental accompaniment are underpinned by functional harmonies. Moreover, Chinese instruments are only used to accompany Chinese-styled songs and no Western-styled songs or those in the mixed style are sung to the instrumental combination of, say, *huqin*, *sanxian* and *bangzi*.

It might therefore be said that perhaps under the influence of some musicians such as Liu Tianhua, who had promoted as early as the 1920s to arrange and perform Chinese instrumental music in the form of a Western symphony orchestra (*guoyue jiaoxianghua*, literally ‘symphonising national music’), a touch of Western compositional techniques may be felt in a few songs, for instance, Li Lihua’s ‘Heaven On Earth’ and Zhou Xuan’s ‘Selling Groceries’.⁵⁴ However, although the Western musical concept is introduced into song arrangement to create a musical texture that seems to be distinct from what He Lüting described as ‘big packing of tune’ (*da baoqiang*), the result is still far from the Western harmony accompaniment.⁵⁵ The most that may be expected is only an extra instrumental line, not a chordal sequence

underlying the tune. For example, the tune in Yao Li's 'You Are Unwanted', was originally a folk song from Xinjiang, and although the *huqin* doubles the vocal line in the first verse and then plays an independent melodic line in the second and third to add some variety (Ex.13), no other instrument joins in to produce harmony accompaniment.

The image displays a musical score for the first eight bars of the second verse of 'You Are Unwanted'. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system has a 'Vocal' staff and a 'Fiddle' staff. The second system has two staves, both of which are fiddle parts. The music is written in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a 2/4 time signature. The vocal line is a simple melody, while the fiddle parts provide a more complex, rhythmic accompaniment with various melodic patterns and ornaments.

Ex.13 Independent accompanying melodic line, excerpt from Yao Li's
'You Are Unwanted', first 8 bars of verse 2

The contrapuntal design of instrumental accompaniment can also be seen in Zhou Xuan's 'The Wandering Songstress' and 'The Song of Four Seasons', both of which were adapted and arranged by He Lüting. Once, in an interview, he emphasised that his two-part counterpoint in these two songs was widely different from Chinese music traditions. However, even though this was innovative in the domain of Chinese music, the contrapuntal design does not follow the rules which were observed in the common practice period of Western classical music. For example, in the introduction of 'The Wandering Songstress', the treble and the bass lines are not coherently combined by adherence to the rules of voice-leading predicated on the distinction between 'consonance and dissonance', but are merely

two ‘independent’ lines. When the singing starts, the bass still plays an ‘independent’ line, against the treble line which doubles the vocal line in a Chinese heterophonic manner (Ex.14).⁵⁶

The image shows a musical score for three parts: Vocal, Treble, and Bass. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature is 4/4. The Vocal line is silent for the first four bars. The Treble and Bass lines play independent, rhythmic patterns. A second system of music starts at bar 5, where the Vocal line begins with a melodic line, and the Treble and Bass lines continue their accompaniment.

Ex.14 He Lüting’s contrapuntal design, excerpt from Zhou Xuan’s ‘The Wandering Songstress’, introduction and the first 4 bars of the vocal line

Unlike Chinese instruments, any combination of Western instruments is employed to accompany either Chinese- or Western-style songs and those songs in the mixed style. It seems that when, for example, piano, double bass, trumpet, clarinet and some percussion are brought together, harmony accompaniment must be produced. Even when a single instrument is arranged to double the vocal line in a song, the other instruments in the band still have to support the whole performance with backing chords. In the collection of historical recordings no songs performed to the Western instrumental accompaniment have so far been found to be heterophonic in texture.

In a Chinese-style song, while altered tones would not take essential positions in the melodic skeleton, *fa* and *ti* cannot be avoided when the dominant (or dominant

seventh) and the subdominant chords, which are two of the three primary chords in functional harmony, not to mention other secondary and related chords, are to be used in the accompaniment. A similar situation occurs when singing pentatonic Celtic songs in harmony. Malcolm Chapman argues that when arrangements for traditional Gaelic songs for several voices are to be performed *a cappella* by Gaelic choirs, ‘pentatonic tunes of great beauty are de-natured’ by Western classical harmonic structures based on the twelve-note equal-tempered scale. In Chapman’s view, as pentatonicism and functional harmony are two essentially incompatible systems, ‘much is lost in the translation from one to another.’⁵⁷ Nevertheless, the level of what he describes as ‘denaturation’ is less serious in the case of Shanghai popular song. Unlike rearranged Gaelic choral pieces performed by the interwoven voices singing the different parts, since those Chinese-styled songs are not ‘sung’ in harmony, the audience can still bask in the ‘beauty’ of pentatonicism conveyed through the one-part vocal lines, even though Western chords in the instrumental accompaniment may be a distraction.

The jazzman and bandleader Buck Clayton once had to play Chinese popular songs in the Casa Nova Ballroom (*Xinhua wuting*) after being expelled from the first-class Canidrom Ballroom (*Yiyuan wuting*) where he only played real American jazz. He commented that Chinese popular music

wasn’t too much different from our own music except the Chinese have a different scale note, but as long as it could be written in on the American scale it could be played.⁵⁸

Although Clayton did not indicate the songs and how he actually played in Casa Nova, it was obviously pentatonic tunes that he was referring to and, moreover, it is possible to gauge how he accommodated himself to Chinese songs based on some

historical recordings. When ignoring the distinctive nature of pentatonicism but treating Chinese melodies similarly to those on major or minor Western scales, Chinese-styled songs can be easily accompanied by only three primary chords. Most of the melody notes will be either part of the accompanying chords or very close by. Taking Li Minghui's 'Drizzles' as an example, the underlying chords basically alternate between the tonic and the dominant, with the subdominant used only once in bar 8 (Ex.15). The use of the first inversion of the dominant (V^6) and the second of the subdominant (IV_4^6), together with the root of the tonic (I), also offers a hint of the Alberti bass, a kind of broken chord usually found in pieces for keyboard instruments in Western classical music (Ex.16).

1

I V⁶ I I I V⁶ V⁶ I I

7

V⁶ I IV₄⁶ I V⁶ I

Ex.15 Li Minghui's 'Drizzles', accompanying chords of the first half of the vocal line

I IV₄⁶ V⁶

Ex.16 Implied Alberti bass in 'Drizzles'

Two more points in this song are worth attention. First, the first three bars of introduction, which have the same melodic phrase as that of the vocal line, are played in unison by all instruments, including clarinet, trumpet, trombone, piano and violin.

Second, the vocal line is doubled up by the clarinet throughout the whole piece, and unlike those songs accompanied by Chinese instruments, no fill-in notes or ornamental fragments are added on the duplicated melodic line. The opening three bars of ‘big packing of tune’ and the supporting clarinet line could either be a transition between the Chinese heterophonic and Western harmonic accompaniment or a device purposely designed to strengthen the overall pentatonic impression. Therefore, although Western instruments and chords are employed, a trace of Chinese musical practice can still be detected.

Apart from the primary I, IV and V chords, other chords are also used according to common chord progression patterns to add richness and variety to harmony accompaniment. For example, against the vocal line of Zhou Xuan’s ‘Full Moon and Blooming Flowers’, the familiar I-II-V-I sequence is heard in the first four bars, and the cadential progression I⁶-II⁶-V-I, which is obviously more ‘sophisticated’ than the I-V⁶-I in ‘Drizzles’, is used to conclude the phrase (Ex.17). However, unlike ‘Drizzles’, there is neither ‘big packing of tune’ nor any supporting instrument duplicating the vocal line in this song.



Ex.17 Zhou Xuan’s ‘Full Moon and Blooming Flowers’, accompanying chords of first 8 bars of the vocal line

In Yao Li’s ‘Rose, Rose, I Love You’, as opposed to the former two examples, more intricate chords are incorporated. This song takes the ABAAB form, with A composed of pentatonic phrases and B of Western-styled melodies. As shown in Ex.18, although the accompanying chords basically moves between I and V in section

A, the IV_4^6 and II chords are applied respectively in bars 22 and 24 in accordance with the melodic movement and the chords move from the dominant through the dominant of III to the III in bars 27 and 28. It appears that the fragment which contains the altered tone *fa-sharp* opens up a passage through which more colours from the Western harmonic palette can be introduced to the pentatonic canvas. In section B, although the first melodic line is almost identical to the second, except that the latter falls on the tonic at the end of the phrase while the former on the supertonic, the chord progressions of the two lines are arranged in a different manner. In the first line it goes through the III and IV and changes every beat before arriving at the dominant in bar 34 and then alternates among the primary chords every beat before coming back to the tonic in bar 38. In the second, it moves straight to the dominant but returns to the tonic in bar 46 through the II. The first line concludes on the dominant of VI whereas the second, the final note of which lasts twice as long as that of the first, lingers on the II-V chord change at the end.

17 A

I I V V I IV_4^6 I II

25

I I V_4^6 V_5^6/III III I I V I

33 B

I III IV V^7 I IV_4^6 I IV_4^6 V^7 I I V/VI

41

I V^7 IV V V^7 IV I II I I II V^7 II V^7

Ex.18 Yao Li's 'Rose, Rose, I Love You', accompanying chords of

second A and B sections

There seems to be no major difference between the ways Western chords are used to accompany Chinese pentatonic phrases and Western-styled melodies. As song arrangers or session musicians were not confined within the limitations of pentatonicism if Western chords were to be employed, it completely depended on their own aesthetic preferences or musical capabilities whether only primary chords, or more chords and sophisticated chord progressions, were to be applied. Undoubtedly, the incorporation of secondary chords (II, III and VI) and secondary dominants (for example, V/III and V/VI) enriched the harmonic language and the dynamic of tension and release in the accompaniment. However, as Wei Jun indicates, some members who played the piano or guitar in radio singing clubs in the 1930s and 1940s hardly knew anything more than the I, IV and V chords, so they would play only the primary chords to accompany almost any song.⁵⁹ For example, in Yao Li's 'Rose, Rose, I Love You', we hear a more colourful harmonic texture, while in 'Lovesickness For Sale', Yao's first recorded song, we can only hear the same use of primary chords and Chinese heterophonic texture as that in 'Drizzles'. Nevertheless, although triad and seventh chords and their inversions can be widely heard in songs accompanied by Western instruments, other extended chords, such as the ninth, eleventh and thirteenth chords, are rarely used.

5. Words

In many studies of 'song', be it folk, art or popular, verbal text is always one of the key subjects to be explored, from the sheer textual analysis of the verbal content, through the investigation of how lyrics reflect a social phenomenon, to how the sentiments embedded in the lyrics can be conveyed through the music.⁶⁰ Similarly, there are many aspects from which we can study words of Shanghai

popular songs. Following the earlier detailed explanation of ‘tones and tunes’ in Chinese traditional vocal works, the discussion here draws particular attention to the relationship between the tones of Chinese syllables in the lyrics and the melodic contours in music.

Chinese vocal artists from generation to generation had made their sung words comprehensible to the audience through carefully designed melodic contours and with techniques, such as bending the melodic line and adding grace notes. However these musical devices were simply dismissed in ‘new’ vocal works, such as school song and children’s musical drama, which came into existence before the creation of Shanghai popular song. As mentioned in Chapter One, school songs, developed by intellectual groups in the early 1900s for classroom use, were based either on Euro-American melodies introduced to China through Christian hymns and military marches, or on Japanese materials brought back by those who had studied in Japan. Since these tunes were not originally composed for singing with lyrics in the Chinese language, nor were tones taken into consideration when Chinese lyrics were written to them, it may be argued that school songs were new to Chinese people at the turn of the twentieth century, not only from the perspective of the musical style but also in view of the fact that the age-old tonal rules in songwriting were dismissed.⁶¹

Two decades later, children’s musical drama was presented to the public by Li Jinhui. It was one of Li’s intentions to teach primary school pupils Standard Mandarin through singing, yet the important tonal features of the Chinese language were surprisingly not addressed in his musical works. Li recalled in his memoir that his proposition to employ music in language education was grounded on the notion that pitch movement of the four tones in Mandarin could be represented with musical pitches.⁶² However, listening to songs in his musicals, one can hardly discover any

clear correlation between tonal and melodic contours. For example, in the well-known ‘Tiger Calling at the Door’ (*Laohu jiaomen*) from the *The Sparrow and the Child* (*Maque yu xiaohai*), the lyrics are written neither according to a classical poetic tonal pattern nor in consideration of tonal practices in traditional vocal art. Although Li maintained that students could learn proper Mandarin pronunciation by correctly articulating every syllable in a song, they must have acquired the correct tone of each syllable before singing it because there is generally no agreement between the melodic movement and the tone contours. Tones in language were still ignored when Li turned to the creation of love songs for commercial purposes in the late 1920s, and ‘atonal’ composition has become common in Shanghai popular songs ever since.

In Shanghai popular song, as lexical tones are ignored to allow more melodic freedom, the lyric intelligibility is reduced. This may explain why subtitles were always provided on the screen when songs were played in films, and why fans in the 1930s and 1940s, as described in Chapter Four, were so keen on collecting lyrics from newspapers, magazines and songbooks and even carried a torch to the cinema to jot down the lyrics. One may well argue that fans collected lyrics only to build up their own lyric library of hit songs rather than search for the correct words, yet this does not answer why they failed to learn the lyrics simply by listening to gramophone records or radio programmes, delivered through loudspeakers everywhere in ‘main streets and narrow alleys’. It is the high degree of homophony in Chinese, and its tone-dependency in distinguishing lexical meanings among homophones, that hampers the correct recognition of all the words in lyrics.

For example, in ‘Praise of Laughter’ (*Xiao de zanmei*), the first two syllables in the first line, *xiao* /51/ *shi* /51/ (‘laughter is’), may be misheard as *xiao* /55/ *shi* /55/ (‘disappear’), and the last two of the second line, *xin* /51/ *shi* /214/ (‘messenger’), as

xin /55/ *shi* /51/ ('load on mind', or literally 'mind's matter') (Ex.19). In this piece, melodic contours do not help the audience pick up the correct tones of these syllables, nor do grace notes offer any hint. Despite the fact that the grace notes in bar 3 correctly imply a falling tone contour /51/ for the syllable, those in bar 7 simply make the wrong impression, causing /214/ to be mistaken for /51/. Apparently, grace notes here do not function as those in traditional ballad singing but they are just ornamental in nature. Therefore, it is not surprising if some of the audience distorted 'Laughter is a happy prelude/ Laughter is a happy messenger' into 'A disappearing prelude/ Laughter is a sweet load on mind'. A listener must have been confused as to how the 'disappearing prelude' was connected to 'laughter' if the words were understood in this fashion and no other alternative interpretation sprang immediately to mind. Nevertheless, syllables that were not uttered in right tones were not always completely indecipherable to, or misread by, native speakers. Without written lyrics at hand, listeners could still to a degree, with the knowledge of their mother tongue, grasp the meaning of some of the words.



Original text: 笑 是 愉 快 的 前 奏,
 Transliteration: *xiao* _____ *shi* *yu* *kuai* *de* *qian* *zou* _____
 Tone contour: /51/ /51/ /35/ /51/ /3/ /35/ /51/
 Translation: Laughter is a happy prelude.

Misinterpreted: 消 失
 Tone contour: /55/ /55/



笑 是 甜 蜜 的 信 使。
xiao *shi* *tian* *mi* *de* *xin* *shi* _____
 /51/ /51/ /35/ /51/ /3/ /51/ /214/
 Laughter is a sweet messenger.

心 事
 /55/ /51/

Ex.19 Misinterpreted homophones in the lyrics, excerpt from Zhou

Xuan's 'Praise of Laughter', first 8 bars of the vocal line

Interestingly, as opposed to the mismatch between tones and tunes in Shanghai popular song, the pitch contours and relative pitch levels used in the Cantonese dialect are taken into consideration and reflected in the melodic line in modern Cantonese songwriting.⁶³ Cantonese popular song, also known as Cantopop in the Western literature, came into existence in Hong Kong in the mid 1970s, nearly half a century later than the emergence of Shanghai popular song, when there was a growing demand among the younger generation for popular song in their own dialect.⁶⁴ In Hong Kong, Shanghai popular songs and other Mandarin Chinese works of the similar style produced there after 1949 dominated the pop market until the advent of Cantonese popular song. The only vocal music performed in Cantonese was Cantonese opera, in which, much the same as in other traditional vocal forms, the convention requires that the undulating musical line echoes the pitch movement of lexical tones. This convention is preserved in Cantopop, making the carefully matched tonal and melodic contours a distinctive feature of modern Cantonese song. Although there are only four basic pitch levels in Cantonese (the earlier mentioned nine tones are results of pitch movement and sound clipping over a syllable), tunes of Cantonese popular song are written with more than four notes in a scale. Words can still be comprehensible to the audience, even when tone contours do not precisely match the melodic line or when characters of the same tone level are set on different scale degrees, as long as the relative height between pitch levels of lexical tones is maintained within a sentence or verse line.⁶⁵ Therefore, Cantopop songwriters are able to adopt an ordinal mapping between musical notes and pitch levels rather than mechanically assign each pitch level to a specific invariable scale degree, so that both the intelligibility of lexical tones in the lyrics and the melodious and tuneful quality of the song can be equally addressed.⁶⁶

This study has so far not located any study investigating how much Mandarin-speaking listeners would understand the lyrics of a Chinese song when most of the syllables are sung out of their lexical tones, some observable facts can shed some light on this subject. In a sense, the issue of understanding Chinese lyrics sung out of tone can be compared to occasions when one has to make sense of ‘atonal’ Chinese words uttered by a foreigner. When conversing with a foreigner who does not distinguish between tones, a native Chinese speaker may be able to interpret out-of-tone words according to the context of the conversation, just as a native English speaker may manage to understand a non-native speaker who stresses the wrong syllables in words. By the early 1930s Standard Mandarin had been taught in all levels of educational institutions and widely used in films, broadcasting and stage plays, so it would not be a problem for most people to comprehend this language although it might be reasonable to assume that not everyone spoke it in a ‘standard’ manner and without any regional accent. Therefore, lyrics in Shanghai popular songs could be understood by most of the audience to a certain degree even though the conventional tonal rules in songwriting were no longer observed. However, the extent to which all the words in a song could be recognised by listeners depended on how ‘plain’ those words were or how educated the listeners were. Generally speaking, the more the lyrics were in written or literary language, particularly in classical Chinese, the less the sung words could be understood. To give an extreme example, due to its exceptionally abbreviated style and frequent use of literary references and allusions, it required some considerable effort to decipher Classical Chinese texts, such as *Confucian Analects*, let alone understand them in sung form where tones of syllables were dismissed in favour of musicality. In addition to the writing style, listeners’ own literacy skill decided how well they could appreciate the content of lyrics. Those who

had neither received proper education nor developed reading proficiency would have problems in understanding words only used in formal writing, not to mention phrases originating from classical works, and thus it was not easy for them to catch every line of the lyrics on hearing a song.

Due to the tonal nature of the Chinese language, without the functional use of grace notes and proper design of melodic lines to match lexical tones no matter how elegant and flowing the words in Shanghai popular songs, there is always a possibility that the audience misunderstand what the content of songs are about. When separated, the tunes and lyrics of Shanghai popular song may be as charming as praised by elderly fans and some enthusiastic younger aficionados nowadays. However, when singing words to the tune, some of songs may appear to be incomprehensible although some can be understood with proper knowledge of the language.

Nowadays it is not uncommon to hear elderly people complain that tunes of contemporary Chinese popular music sung by young pop idols are so unmelodious and the lyrics so improperly articulated that they are utterly incomprehensible. Nevertheless, no matter how precisely a singer enunciates in a recording of Shanghai popular song, when tones do not match the tune, words may be utterly incomprehensible as well.

Endnotes

¹ John Baily, 'The role of music in the creation of an Afghan national identity', in Martin Stokes (ed.), *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: the Musical Construction of Place* (Oxford: Berg, 1994), pp. 45-60.

² Zdzislaw Mach, 'National anthems: the case of Chopin as a national composer', in Martin Stokes (ed.), *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: the Musical Construction of Place* (Oxford: Berg, 1994), pp. 61-70.

³ See Allen, Ray and Nancy Groce, 'Introduction: folk and traditional music in New York State', in *New York Folklore* 14:3-4 (1988), p. 4.

⁴ Mozart's 'Turkish March' is the third movement, titled *Rondo Alla Turca*, from his Piano Sonata in A major, K. 331, which imitates the military march music of Turkish Janissaries. The music was once very popular with the Viennese during the 17th and 18th centuries and many composers in all parts of Europe wrote *alla turca* passages or pieces. See Stanley Sadie (ed), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Vol. 19 (London: Macmillan, 1980), p. 258.

⁵ John Blacking, *How Musical Is Man* (London: University of Washington Press, 1974), p.6.

⁶ Csárdás is a traditional Hungarian folk dance, starting in a very slow and ending in a very fast tempo. This piece is originally composed for violin and piano by an Italian violinist and composer, Vittorio Monti (1868-1922), whose name seems to be much less remembered than his work. A fiddler, Wen Chin-Lung, reinterpreted this piece on his Chinese two-string *huqin* to the accompaniment of midi-synthesised music. The recording is available on Chin-Lung Wen, *Erhu chuanshuo* (The legend of erhu fiddle), 2002, BMG (Taiwan), Audio CD, 74321373922.

⁷ I have demonstrated the modified Scottish tune to a few Western colleagues on several informal occasions, and all of them indicated that the twisted melody did give them an impression of Chinese music. This observation should not be regarded as a

general view of ‘Westerners’, yet it illustrates to certain degree that Chineseness in the modified sequence of notes is identifiable.

⁸ Frederick William Gaisberg, *The Music Goes Round* (New York: Macmillan, 1942; repr. New York: Arno Press, 1977), pp. 62-3. Gaisberg came to Shanghai in 1903 and started recording Chinese music through the arrangement of local agents.

⁹ Henry Ellis, *Journal of the Proceedings of the Late Embassy to China* (London: John Murray, 1817; reprint, Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1972), p. 418.

¹⁰ Hector Berlioz, *Evenings with the Orchestra*, trans. Jacques Barzun (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956), p. 248. Although Berlioz had never been to China, when visiting London in 1851 he heard Chinese music performed in the Great Exhibition by native Chinese musicians from China.

¹¹ William Tyrone Power, *Recollections of a Three Years’ Residence in China; Including Peregrinations in Spain, Morocco, Egypt, India, Australia, and New-Zealand* (London: Richard Bentley, 1853), pp. 191-2.

¹² Berlioz, *Evenings with the Orchestra*, pp. 247, 249-50.

¹³ Ellis, *Journal of the Proceedings*, p. 130. The Chinese instrument *yangqin*, originally from Persia, is a trapezium-shaped hammered dulcimer fitted with bronze strings.

¹⁴ Power, *Recollections*, pp. 282-3.

¹⁵ For example Joseph-Marie Amiot, *Mémoire sur la musique des chinois* (Paris: Nyon l’aîné, 1779; reprint, Genève: Minkoff, 1973); G. Tradescant Lay, *The Chinese As They Are: Their Moral, Social, and Literary Character; with Succinct Views of Their Principal Arts and Sciences* (London : W. Ball and Co., 1841; reprint, Boston

Elibron Classics, 2005); Edward W. Syle, 'On the musical notation of the Chinese', *Journal of the North-China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 2 (1859), 176-179. For a succinct review of the work undertaken by these missionaries, see Krystyn R. Moon, *Yellow Face: Creating the Chinese in American Popular Music and Performances, 1850s-1920s* (London: Rutgers University Press, 2005), pp. 89-90.

¹⁶ J. A. van Aalst, *Chinese Music* (Shanghai: Statistical Department of the Inspectorate General of Customs, 1884; reprint, New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corp, 1964), p. 84. For more biographical accounts of Aalst and how such a book on Chinese music was published by 'order of Inspector General of Customs', as stated in its title page, refer to Han Kuo-huang, 'J. A. van Aalst and his *Chinese Music*', *Asian Music*, 19:2 (1988), pp. 127-30.

¹⁷ For a detailed study of the *chinoiserie* style, refer to Dawn Jacobson, *Chinoiserie* (London: Phaidon Press, 1993); for examples of piano works of Western composers' imagery from the nineteenth to twentieth centuries, such as Rossini, Arensky and Busoni, refer to an interesting Jenny Lin *Chinoiserie*, 2000, BIS, Audio CD, 1046189.

¹⁸ Moon, *Yellow Face*, pp. 94-5.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 96. These descriptions, from the column 'Music Comment' in *New York Tribune* and a press review of an unknown source, were given to a play titled *The First Born* produced by Francis Powers in 1897 and a song in this play, 'Chinese Highbinder Patrol', written by Lee Johnson.

²⁰ Edgar W. Pope, 'Signifying China: exoticism in prewar Japanese popular music', in Tôru Mitsui (ed.) *Popular Music: Intercultural Interpretations* (Kanazawa, Japan: Graduate Program in Music, Kanazawa University, 1998), p. 114. 'Shanghai March'

(*Shanghai kôshinkyoku*), composed and arranged by Matsudaira Nobuhiro, lyrics by Yamada Hiroshi, vocal by Hageromo Utako, Japan Victor 51962 (1931); *The Good Earth*, directed by Sidney Franklin, Metro-Golden-Mayer (1937). Music of Ex.2, I and II quoted as in Pope, 'Signifying China', p. 120; EX.2, III excerpted from Jean Schwarz and William Jerome, 'Chinatown, My Chinatown' (New York & Detroit: Jerome H. Remick & Co., 1910).

²¹ See 'Wei Linggong v. 10' and 'Yang Huo v. 18' in *Lunyu* (The analects of Confucius), my own translation.

²² 'Yueji' (Record of music) in *Liji* (Book of rite), translation quoted from James Legge (trans.) *The Sacred Books of China: the Texts of Confucianism, Pt. 4* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885), retrieved at Internet Sacred Text Archive <<http://www.sacred-texts.com/cfu/liki2/liki217.htm>>, accessed 5 February 2006.

²³ For an introduction to Confucian musical philosophy, see Alan R. Thrasher, 'The sociology of Chinese music: an introduction', *Asian Music*, 12:2 (1981), pp. 17-53.

²⁴ The Chinese government today officially recognises a total of fifty-six ethnic groups. According to ethnomusicological surveys, there are roughly two hundred kinds of musical instruments still in use, and two hundred types of ballad-singing and four hundred of traditional operas still performed amongst different ethnic groups in different areas. Zhongguo yishu yanjiuyuan yinyue yanjiusuo, *Minzu yinyue gailun* (An introduction to Chinese ethnic music) (Taipei: Shijie wenwu chubanshe, 1994), pp. 139, 201, 276.

²⁵ For detailed discussion on polyphonic folk songs of Chinese minorities, see Fan Zuyin, *Zhongguo duoshengbu mingge gailun* (An outline of Chinese polyphonic folk songs) (Beijing: Remin yinyue chubanshe, 1994).

²⁶ A *sizhu* ensemble primarily consists of plucked and bowed strings, wind instruments and percussion. For more details about the composition of *sizhu* music, see Thrasher, Alan R., 'The melodic structure of *Jiangnan sizhu*', *Ethnomusicology*, 29 (1985), 237-63. The music example shows the first two bars of a well known piece, 'Street Parade' (*Xingjie*), as quoted in *ibid.*, p. 242.

²⁷ The aria is titled 'The Ninth Sister in My Family' (Wojia yiu ge xiaojiumei), as quoted in Yang Ruiqing, *Zhongguo mingge xuanliu xingtai* (The melodic patterns of Chinese folk songs) (Shanghai: Shanghai yinyue chubanshe, 2002), p. 153. For more explanations of several patterns used by fiddlers in accompanying folk songs, see *ibid.* pp. 152-3.

²⁸ Music examples quoted from Zhang Xiaohu *Wushengxing diaoshi ji hesheng shoufa* (Pentatonic modes and harmonic techniques) (Beijing: Remin yinyue chubanshe), pp. 30-31, 33-4.

²⁹ Bence Szabolcsi, *A History of Melody*, trans. Cynthia Jolly and Sára Karig (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1965).

³⁰ James J. Y. Liu, *The Art of Chinese Poetry* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), p. 21.

³¹ These eight tones are *yingping*, *yangping*, *yingshang*, *yangshang*, *yingqu*, *yangqu*, *yingru* and *yangru*. It should be noted that the English translation of these tone names used in the linguistic literature does not imply the actual tone contours.

³² If using numbers to represent the way pitch moves over a syllable, the lowest being 1 and the highest being 5, a system proposed by a Chinese linguist, Chao Yuen-Ren, the *yinqu* tone in Shanghai dialect and Cantonese can be represented as /13/ and /22/ respectively, and the *qu* tone /51/ in Standard Mandarin.

³³ For more linguistic features and issues of some major Chinese dialects, refer to William S-Y Wang, *Languages and Dialect of China* (Berkeley, Cali.: Project on Linguistic Analysis, 1991); for specific details of the tone sandhi phenomenon in Chinese dialects, see Mathew Y. Chen, *Tone Sandhi: Patterns Across Chinese Dialects* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

³⁴ The ‘modern style verse’, also known as ‘Tang poetry’ (*tangshi*), developed and reached its peak in the Tang dynasty (618-907), being named so in contrast to the ‘ancient verse’ (*gushi*) emerging in the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 219) written without a tone pattern. The ‘lyric metres’ and the ‘dramatic verse’ are the most predominant forms of literature in the Song Dynasty (960-1278) and the Yuan Dynasty (1260-1341) respectively. For a succinct introduction to the metrical rules and development of various forms of Chinese classical poetry, refer to Liu, *The Art of Chinese Poetry*, pp. 22-33.

³⁵ For an interesting discussion on how inflection in speech may have developed into ‘speech-melody’ and gradually formed tunes, see Szabolsci, *A History of Melody*, pp. 11-27.

³⁶ Some tunes are known as *qupai*, literally ‘song label’ (best translated as ‘name song’, according to Alan R. Thrasher). These tunes originate from various genres, such as folk songs, instrumental repertoires or tunes originally composed for ‘lyric

metres' and 'dramatic verse', and may be shared among different genres. For an introduction to the historical development and stylistic characteristic of *qupai*, see Gao Houyong, 'On *qupai*', *Asian Music*, 20:2 (1989), pp. 4-20; for instrumental *qupai* specifically of the *sizhu* repertoire, see Thrasher, 'The melodic structure of *Jiangnan sizhu*', pp. 237-63.

³⁷ The music and Chinese text is quoted as in Zhongguo yishu yanjiuyuan, *Minzu yinyue gailun*, p. 256. For more details of a clear correlation between lexical tones and the design of melodic contours in *kunqu*, see Wu Junda, *Kunqu changqiang yanjiu* (A study on the singing style and melody of *kunqu*) (Beijing: Remin yinyue chubanshe, 1987), ch. 5.

³⁸ The passage is an excerpt from 'Baoyu Visits the Sick' (*Baoyu tangbing*). The music and Chinese text are quoted as in Zhongguo yishu yanjiuyuan, *Minzu yinyue gailun*, p. 168.

³⁹ This example draws from personal experience with *gezaixi* opera in childhood and only serves for an illustrative purpose. For more discussions on the relationship between tones and music in Taiwanese vocal works, refer to Ding-Sng Tzang, 'Taiyu shengdiao yu taiyu geyao' (Tones in Taiwanese and Taiwanese folk songs), in Lin Songyuan (ed.), *Taiwan minjian wenxue xueshu yantaohui lunwen ji* (Proceedings of the symposium on Taiwanese folk literature) (Zhanghua, Taiwan: Taiwansheng huangxi wenhua xuehui, 1997), pp. 427-447.

⁴⁰ It was not until 1936 that the first book-length study of the relation between lexical tones and melodic contours in Chinese music carried out by a Westerner was published – John Hazedel Levis, *Foundations of Chinese Musical Art* (Peiping

[Beijing]: Henri Vetch, 1936). For a comprehensive introduction to the different functions of the pitch of voice performing in the Chinese language, prosody and music, written especially for Western readers, see Yuen-ren Chao, 'Tone, intonation, singsong, chanting, recitative, tonal composition, and atonal composition in Chinese' in Morris Hale, Horace Gray Lunt, Hugh McLean & Cornelis Hendrik Van Schooneveld (eds) *For Roman Jakobson: Essays on the Occasions of His Sixtieth Birthday* (the Hague: Mouton, 1956), pp. 52-9.

⁴¹ For more detailed discussion on differences in Chinese and Western vocal techniques, see Zhou Xiaoyan 'Zhongguo shengyue yishu de fazhan guiji' (Tracing the development of Chinese vocal art) in Liu Ching-chih and Barbara Fei (eds), *Papers and Proceedings of Two Seminars on Vocal Music in China* (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong, Centre of Asian Studies, 1998), pp. 3-22 and Hu Yuqing, 'Meisheng minzu changfa yitong tanwei' (An initial investigation into similarities and dissimilarities between *bel canto* and ethnical singing), *Journal of Sichuan Normal University (Philosophy & Social Sciences)*, 5 (2000), pp. 60-62.

⁴² Eileen Chang, 'Tan yinyue' (On music) in Eileen Chang, *Liuyan* (Written on water) (Taipei: Huangguan chubanshe, 1991), p. 220.

⁴³ Li Minhui was born in 1909 and the recording (Shanghai Pathé 34278 A & B) is estimated to be recorded in 1933, and certainly no earlier than 1930.

⁴⁴ The score of 'Downstairs The Jade Tower', arranged by Xu himself, was published in *Mingxing Banyuekan*, 3:2 (November 1935), n.p. Unfortunately, neither the recording nor original score of 'Happy Village Girl' is available. The introduction of

Xu's instrumentation is given in Liuli, '*Shenglong huohu de jieshao*' (Introducing *Extremely Forceful*), *Mingxing banyuekan* (1937), n.p.

⁴⁵ Zhengxie Hunansheng Xiangtanshi weiyuanhui wenshi ziliao yanjiu weiyuanhui and Hunan Xiangtan Li Jinhui yishuguan, *Li Jinhui* (Li Jinhui) (Hunan, China, 1994), pp. 101-2. Historically, *hu* and *qiang* both refer, with derogatory implication, to the northern tribes in China and thus *huqing* and *qiangdi* are the fiddle and the flute of the northern barbarians respectively.

⁴⁶ Liner note, *Zhongguo Shanghai sansishi niandai jueban mingqu wu* (Deleted 30-40s hits of Shanghai China, vol.5), 2003, Ancient Sound Restore, Audio CD, ASR-28122003.

⁴⁷ Personal interview with Zhao Jiying, the former leader of Great China New Music Band (*Dahua xin yinyuedui*) in Cosmo Dance Hall (*Gaoshiman wuting*), Shanghai, 29 December 2003.

⁴⁸ According to an interview with Li Jinguang, the composer of this song, by Shuijing. See Shuijing, 'Li Jinguang tan liuxing laoge' (Li Jinguang on old popular song), *Lianhebao*, 22-23 December 1988.

⁴⁹ 'Man On the Flying Trapeze', was originally published in the form of sheet music in London in 1867. 'Cheek To Cheek' was written by Irving Berlin and first performed by Fred Astaire in the 1935 movie *Top Hat*. 'On The Atchison, Topeka And The Santa Fe' was written for the 1946 movie *Harvey Girls* and sung by Judy Garland. The tune of 'The Maine Stein Song' was originally a march, 'Opie', composed by E. A. Fenstad in 1904 and later became a song with lyrics written by

Lincoln Colcord in 1910. 'China Night' was composed by Takeoka Nobuyuki for the Japanese film with the same title.

⁵⁰ According to the composer Li Jinguang, this song was forwarded to him by the Indonesian wife of a recording manager, M. Bernard, of EMI-Pathé in Shanghai in 1943. See Shuijing 'Li Jinguang tan liuxing laoge' (Li Jinguang on old popular songs), *Liangbao*, 22 December 1988. Although this song may well be a folk song or something popular in Indonesia during that period, Li and Shuijing are both wrong in referring to it as the national anthem of Malaysia.

⁵¹ This piece is arranged in the Spanish zarzuela style, particularly with the use of castanets, and has so far been found in the historical recordings to be the only work that is written in the Phrygian mode.

⁵² The blues scale here only refers to the use of the 'blue note', i.e., the minor third and the flattened seventh, in a song when it is obviously written in the Western heptatonic scale, but does not imply that the song is in the 'blues' style. For more discussion on the 'blue note', see Hans Weisethaunet, 'Is there such a thing as the "blue note"?', *Popular Music*, 20:1 (2001), pp. 99-116.

⁵³ Wagner, Naphtali, 'Fixing a hole in the scale: suppressed notes in the Beatles' songs', *Popular Music*, 23:3 (2004), pp. 257-69. Wagner considers these missing notes 'suppressed notes', which are notes consistently left out of the collection of pitch classes, or the scale, in a musical piece and later appear with considerable emphasis.

⁵⁴ For more about Liu Tianhua's life account and work, refer to Wang, *Zhongguo jinxindai yinyue shi*, pp. 95-99.

⁵⁵ ‘Big packing of tune’ refers to the Chinese traditional way of accompanying – all instruments in an ensemble follow the main melody of a song. This expression is seen in Zhou Wei and Chang Jing, *Wo de mama Zhou Xuan* (My mother Zh Xuan) (Taiyuan: Shanxi jiaoyu chubanshe, 1987), p. 3.

⁵⁶ Archive interview clip shown in *Yibai nian de gesheng* (official English title: *The Last Century Pop Music of China*), a four-series documentary first broadcast on Channel 10, China Central Television, 22~25 January 2004.

⁵⁷ See Malcolm Chapman, ‘Thoughts on Celtic music’, in Martin Stokes (ed.), *Ethnicity, Identity ad Music: the Musical Construction of Place* (Oxford: Berg, 1994), p. 41.

⁵⁸ See Buck Clayton, *Buck Clayton’s Jazz World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 76.

⁵⁹ Personal interview with Wei Jun, former pianist at a singing club, Shanghai, 20 February 2004.

⁶⁰ To name a few examples, Hughson F. Mooney, ‘Popular music since the 1920’s: the significance of shifting taste’, *American Quarterly*, 20:1 (1968), pp. 67-85; James T. Carey, ‘Changing courtship patterns in the popular song’, *American Journal of Sociology*, 74:6 (1969), pp. 720-31; Allen Forte, ‘Secret of melody: line and design in the songs of Cole Porter’, *Musical Quarterly*, 77:4 (1993), pp. 607-47; S. I. Hayakawa, ‘Popular songs v.s. the facts of life’, *ETC: A General Review of Semantics*, 12 (1995), pp. 83-95.

⁶¹ The tonal rules in songwriting were also neglected in ‘art songs’, which were composed by academy-trained musicians and set to poems written by intellectuals. In

most Chinese art songs created in the 1930s and 1940s, tones of syllables are not observed by the composer in setting a syllable to more than one music note; in an opposite fashion, melodic directions opposing the pitch movement of syllable tones appear more frequently than those following them. See Chang-Yang Kuo, *Chinese Art Song: A Melodic Analysis* (Taipei: Hwa Kang Press, College of Chinese Culture, 1972), p. 198.

⁶² Zhengxie Hunansheng Xiangtanshi weiyuanhui wenshi ziliao yanjiu weiyuanhui, *Li Jinhui* (Li Jinhui) (Hunan, China, 1994), pp. 100-1.

⁶³ See Marjorie K. M. Chan, 'Tone and melody in Cantonese', in Jon Aske (ed.) *Proceedings of the Thirteenth Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*, Berkeley, California, 14-16 February 1987, pp. 26-37.

⁶⁴ For a brief history of Cantopop and its role as a cultural form to delineate a local Hong Kong identity, see Bryce T. McIntyre, Christine Cheng Wai Sum and Zhang Weiyu, 'Cantopop: the voice of Hong Kong', *Journal of Asian and Pacific Communication*, 12:2 (2002), pp. 217-243; for its current development refer to Wai-Chung Ho, 'Between globalisation and localisation: a study of Hong Kong popular music', *Popular Music*, 22:2 (2003), pp. 143-57.

⁶⁵ See Kelina Kwan, 'Textual and melodic contour in Cantonese popular song', in M. Baroni and R. Dalmonte (eds), *Secondo Convegno Europeo di Analisi Musicale, Vol. I* (Trento: Università di Trento, 1992), pp. 179-87. Kwan's observation is also supported by an earlier study which indicates that the relative pitch level would be more critical than the exact tone contour for Cantonese speakers in tone perception studies. See Chan, 'Tone and melody in Cantonese'.

⁶⁶ Patrick C. M. Wong and Randy L. Diehl, 'How can the lyrics of a song in a tone language be understood?', *Psychology of Music*, 30 (2002), pp. 202-209.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

The preliminary analysis in the introductory chapter showed some musical features of Shanghai popular song, the audience's perception of musical works and fragmented facts of the Shanghai popular music industry. Furthering the findings from the analysis to understand this bygone industry and its products, a two-level research plan was proposed based on the simple model of popular music industry. At the first level, following the hypothetical flowchart, details of the producing, selling and consuming processes were retrieved from various historical sources to reconstruct the industry platform. The first level of work has not only revealed most of the operating mechanism of the industry but also identified several key events which profoundly influenced the development of Shanghai popular song. At the second level, preceded by a discussion on Chinese features in music, a collection of historical recordings were used to examine musical and lyrical components of Shanghai popular song. While the product analysis did not cover all aspects suggested in the composition-performance view of song creation, the second level of this study has illustrated how both Chinese and Western musical elements had been both employed. Based on the result of the two-level work, the concluding chapter discusses the significant findings in this study and questions for future study.

I. The rediscovered past

Taking into consideration the social and political changes in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai and the important events in the music industry that have been discovered in

the work of reconstructing the platform, the development of the Shanghai popular song can now be divided into four stages.

1. Laying the foundation

Covering a time span of approximate ten years, from the late 1920s to the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937, this initial stage saw several important 'firsts' in the history of Chinese popular music. Li Jinhui started writing love songs in 1927, adapting folk tunes and traditional operatic works and using Western instrumental accompaniment. Film companies began the production of sound film and the first song exclusively composed for the screen was produced and released by local record companies in 1930. While an amateur singing group who first performed regularly on radio was organised in 1932, the first commercial singing club was founded six months later and sponsored by local shops to give performances on the air. The first and only 'top three radio singers contest', in which the audience were invited to vote for their favourite radio singers, was held in 1934. The first dance band consisting entirely of Chinese members who delivered a great number of Chinese popular songs at a dancehall was organised in 1934. Moreover, at this stage the two major foreign record companies began to formally employ Chinese staff to conduct the music production. The organisational change of foreign record companies, together with the development of the expanding broadcasting, film and recording industry and the abundance of nightlife in Shanghai, offered great opportunities for songwriters to compose more works. At this stage, songwriters from various backgrounds, members of song-and-dance troupes, self-taught or conservatory-trained musicians, explored the possibilities of using various combinations of Western and Chinese musical elements in popular songs. Their

works, either love songs full of sentimental affairs or songs written for specific scenes in films, allowed the Chinese audience to hear new sound effects as well as to learn to appreciate Western music in a Chinese musical context.

2. *Carpe diem* in the enclave

The second stage was a preparatory stage in which Shanghai popular song was on its way to becoming the mainstream. In addition to the prevailing American music, Chinese popular songs were gradually accepted in many entertainment establishments and moreover, Chinese composers started working full-time in foreign record companies. After the Japanese military took over the Chinese Municipality in Shanghai in 1937, the International Settlement and the French Concession became an enclave and continued to thrive. Commercial activities during the day and flashy and fleshy excitement at night never ceased until late 1941 when the Japanese military entered the two foreign concessions following the outbreak of the Pacific War. Before then, numerous Chinese people fled the Japanese occupied areas and flocked into the two concessions where foreign record companies and most entertainment venues such as cinemas, dancehalls and nightclubs, were located and where people enjoyed the present without thought for the nation's plight and future. Under Japanese military control, patriotic or mass songs with subject matter of the national salvation or anti-Japanese connotations were strictly forbidden in the occupied area. However, in order to avoid any diplomatic problems with Japan and to maintain stability, the authorities of the two concessions would not let anti-Japanese songs spread out within their boundaries either. Hence, the Chinese popular music gained increasing popularity and continued to oil the wheel of the social merry-go-round.

3. Moving to upmarket venues

During the years from 1942 to 1945 when the Japanese puppet regime controlled the whole of Shanghai, thanks to a ban on American music and films imposed by the Japanese authorities, Chinese popular song rose up to an unprecedented status. At this stage, particularly in the last two years, in comparison to other regions of China and Southeast Asia where the Japanese military were fighting desperately, an illusion of peace and prosperity was created in Shanghai. On the one hand, as Japan was eager to establish the 'co-operative body of great East Asia', the flourishing Shanghai city would be an advertisement for this wild fantasy. Multifarious urban entertainments and cultural events, which helped to develop an image of the city's thriving social life, were undoubtedly encouraged. On the other hand, because news about the war or political situations was strictly selected and only approved information was offered by the government-controlled mass media, most citizens could hardly see the whole picture of the reality. This city was virtually isolated from the rest of the world. It was under these tricky circumstances that Shanghai popular songs supplanted American popular music and took pride of place in the entertainment industry.

4. The height of Shanghai popular song

At this stage, from the end of the war in 1945 to the advent of the communist regime in 1949, the production of Shanghai popular song reached the height. Following the victory over Japan came the conflict between the National Party and the Chinese Communist Party. Nevertheless, the production of popular music in Shanghai seemed not to be hampered by the social and political chaos, nor was the rehabilitation of American jazz and films in this city impeded by the turmoil. While

RCA-Victor's production was discontinued in 1945 because manufacturing facilities were seriously damaged during the war, EMI carried on producing Chinese popular music and became the only record company in China capable of manufacturing gramophone records. Chinese songwriters, who had accumulated considerable experience of utilising various musical elements in the production of popular music over the past few years, now gathered in EMI and were headed by Musical Director Li Jinguang. Likewise, in collaboration with these producers, singers and instrumentalists, either talented newcomers or those who had been established in the industry for a long time, all came to the studio in EMI to record new works. Moreover, as the Chinese audience had literally been trained at the previous three stages to take pleasure in listening to the combination of traditional and Western music, they could now enjoy whatever was provided by the industry.

Looking back on the start of modern Shanghai and the four stages of the development of Shanghai popular song, it can be found that in addition to the developing new media and the flourishing entertainment industry, social and political changes in Shanghai also contributed to the popularity and commercial success of Shanghai popular song. Chaos caused by the Small Swords and Taiping Rebellion unexpectedly drove Chinese people back to the areas originally designated for foreigners and allowed them to live side by side with foreigners of all stripes. The abolishment of residential segregation opened up an opportunity for Shanghai to develop into an international metropolis where different cultures and material civilisation encountered and coexisted in harmony. While maintaining their centuries-old traditions, Chinese residents in the foreign concessions also embraced Western civilisation and lifestyles and were willing to integrate Western ideas into

traditional matters. It was Shanghainese people's open-minded personalities and the uninhibited exchange between Chinese and Western cultures that made possible the creation of a type of music which consisted of both indigenous and imported materials.

Shanghai popular song had its origin in Li Jinhui's musical dramas for children, which he created as a supplementary approach for teaching Mandarin Chinese when engaged by the Shanghai National Language Institute, which was actually founded in response to the Chinese government's attempt to promote the use of Mandarin Chinese as an official language. Apparently, it was the financial difficulty in Singapore that made Li turn to the creation of 'love song' and it was the overwhelming popularity of his works encouraged more composers to come on board the popular music industry. Nevertheless, if he had not been involved in the 'national language' education, there might have been no children's musical drama, no song-and-dance performance, no love song, and thus no Shanghai popular song.

The special status of the foreign concessions offered political and economic stability for the continuous and expanded production of popular songs from 1937 to late 1941. While Chinese factories and commercial establishments in other areas of Shanghai and its vicinity were heavily damaged in countless Japanese air raids, undisturbed by the war, record companies operated as usual in this secure enclave. Had the foreign concessions been ceded back to China before the outbreak of Sino-Japanese War, the production facilities of these record companies would have probably been destroyed in the flames of the war and the development of Shanghai popular song might have ceased at the beginning of the second stage. Although the Japanese military eventually entered and occupied the concessions, the ban on American music and films not only induced more production of Shanghai popular

song but also lifted it to an unprecedented position, to be performed with European classical music on the same stage.

Apart from social and political changes, the changes in business practices and the organisational structure of foreign record companies were another factor which induced the vast production of Shanghai popular song. In fact, foreign record companies had never devised any scheme to create a new product line for the Chinese audience since they started business in China, but simply recorded anything that might interest consumers and make profits. Nevertheless, it was EMI and RCA-Victor that provided essential technologies and manufacturing facilities and gave songwriters and artists space to produce what they could. Foreign managers employed Chinese personnel to lead musical production and recording activities so that decisions of what to record or to produce could be made within the organisation rather than being dependent on the outsiders, middlemen. However, this move also allowed Chinese songwriters and singers wider opportunities for their musical works to be brought into the recording studio. On paper, a Chinese musical director signed up singers, accepted new compositions and organised recording sessions on behalf of a foreign record company, yet in practice he was using the resources in the company to enable numerous Chinese songs to be made into records and reach a wide audience through the company's distribution channels. It was particularly true of the situation in EMI. Chinese songwriters gained full control over the music production after composers were employed full-time in the late 1930s, especially after Li Jinguang succeeded Fu Xiangxun as Musical Director.

While foreign record companies brought to China their business practices as well as the recording and record manufacturing technology for economic benefits, in the event, against the unique social and political backdrop in Shanghai, it was Chinese

songwriters who dominated in the production process and determined what sound would reach the audience.

The impression of ethnicity or nationality a piece of music may convey is subject to a listener's knowledge of formal, stylistic features of music as well as musicality to recognise those features. Westerners in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries made negative comments on Chinese music from the perspective of their understandings of music and would consider a work authentic Chinese only when stereotypical characters such as pentatonicism, the use of grace notes and noise created by certain instruments were present. These remarks, though seemingly culturally biased, actually reflect two important features in Chinese music, the heterophonic musical texture and the pentatonic melodic framework. Taking Westerners' comments as a point of departure for exploring the features of the musical works produced under the direction of those Chinese songwriters, there are some interesting findings in the product analysis.

The reason Westerners found the Chinese-style singing voice difficult to appreciate is because Chinese vocalists sang principally in the head voice and thus develops brighter, lighter tones resonating mostly in the anterior part of the head in contrast to the mellow, round and open-throated sounds produced by the Western *bel canto* method. Although to audiences today Shanghai popular singers' voices in most historical recordings also tend to sound nasal and high-pitched, through careful listening, there are still subtle differences among their vocal qualities. The distinctive tone quality produced by Chinese traditional and *bel canto* vocal techniques can be identified in many recordings and sometimes both Chinese and Western singing voices are even heard within one song. Moreover, the immature 'little sister' voice

whose quality does not meet the requirements of either Chinese or Western singing traditions is also found in some recordings.

While traditional Chinese music is usually perceived as pentatonic, it is not always strictly pentatonic because altered tones are also employed as passing, auxiliary or arbitrary ornamental notes or as a result of modulation. In a similar manner, altered tones can also be heard in many Shanghai popular songs which are written on the Chinese pentatonic scale. What is worthy of special notice is their use in ABA- or AABA-form songs. In some cases, the frequent use of altered tones in the melodic line in section B provides a clear and striking contrast in character compared to that of section A, yet the pentatonic framework remains intact. In others, the occurrence of those non-pentatonic tones in section B drastically changes the pentatonicism established in section A into a new system which features the Western diatonic scale and major-minor tonality.

From the melodic point of view, while all types of songs can be performed to the accompaniment of Western instruments, Chinese instruments are only employed to accompany Chinese-style songs. Among various combinations of instruments and melodic styles, the most interesting cases are songs which contained both Chinese and Western musical elements, i.e., tunes in the Chinese or mixed style accompanied by Western instruments. It is found in selected recording examples, when ignoring the distinctive nature of pentatonicism but treating Chinese melodies as those on major or minor Western scales, Chinese-styled songs can be easily accompanied only by the primary I, IV and V chords. In order to add richness and variety to harmony accompaniment, other chords can also be used along with primary chords under common chord progression patterns. When a phrase contains altered tones, there are more possibilities to incorporate secondary chords, secondary dominants and

sophisticated chord progressions to enrich the harmonic language and the dynamic of tension and release in the accompaniment. Songs accompanied by various types of chords are certainly no longer heterophonic in texture. In these songs, a touch of the Chinese heterophonic accompaniment can only be found when there is a duplicated vocal line delivered by an accompanying instrument or when 'big packing of tune' is arranged on purpose.

Perhaps due to a lack of knowledge of the Chinese language and reluctance to approach Chinese singing, most Western observers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries failed to notice that in traditional Chinese vocal works, a melodic line was usually neatly designed and grace notes were added to reflect the pitch movement of lexical tones in lyrics. However, the age-old tonal rules in songwriting were dismissed in Shanghai popular song. Songwriters no longer employed these musical devices and simply ignored lexical tones to allow more melodic freedom, which reduced the intelligibility of lyrics. Therefore, the more the lyrics of a song were in written or literary language, the more likely the audience would need printed lyrics so that the meaning of the lyrics would not be misinterpreted.

In a sense, Shanghai popular song is a westernised Chinese musical product because a great number of works are bodies consisting of Chinese skeletons (lyrics and melodies) and Western flesh (accompaniment) and some Chinese musical features no longer exist in these works. However, from a different perspective, Shanghai popular song can be regarded as a Western product characterised by distinct Chineseness just like foreign concessions in Shanghai, built on the Western system but enlivened with Chinese culture.

In an essay on Chinese cinema and popular song, Paul Leung points out seven factors determining the popularity and commercial success of a song: a good

composer, a good lyricist, a good singer, a good arranger, a good record company, good publicity through the media and a large number of fans.¹ Through the work of rediscovering Shanghai popular song, this study shows besides these contributing factors, unexpected social and political changes also contributed to the thriving pop scene and moreover, the features of musical products reflected the characteristics of the society in which the industry platform was located. In a metropolis full of opportunities in a chaotic era, open-minded songwriters, singers and instrumentalists did not restrict themselves to any specific style but made the most of available musical materials to create numerous works for their omnivorous audience who would appreciate whatever was offered by the industry. Although ranks of scholars, moralists and nationalists derided Shanghai popular song, tried to ban it as decadent and pornographic, and even denounced it as opium for the masses, it was through Li Jinhui's love songs and other ensuing 'decadent sounds' that more ordinary people came to know different forms of Western music.

II. After the rediscovery

The reconstruction of the industry platform and product analysis in this study is just the beginning of understanding Shanghai pop and more work has yet to be done. Apart from the many historical details revealed in this study, there are still facts and figures on some participants and activities in which they were involved that need to be explored. It remains to be seen who facilitated distribution of records and the cooperation between record and film companies, as well as who promoted live performances in radio stations and many other entertainment establishments. It requires further study to understand how censorship was performed on popular music

and record publishing. There are also more facets of musical products to be investigated. The literary qualities of lyrics and social changes that they might have reflected deserve further discussion. In addition, as some singers studied Western singing skills primarily from Russian vocalists, it is worth exploring the difference between the Russian vocal technique and the better known Italian *bel canto* and whether such a difference existed in Shanghai popular song. Although details of White Russian and Filipino instrumentalists' participation in arrangements for recordings remains unclear, a comparative study of their musical works from other countries produced during the same period may reveal a clearer picture of their musicality and contributions.

Despite the incompleteness of the reconstruction of the platform and the product features remaining to be investigated, the hypothetical flowchart in this study proved to be a useful tool in understanding the music industry of the past. The findings of this study have filled in the underrepresented part of the modern history of Chinese music and added to the literature on this under-explored musical area in Shanghai studies. They illustrated that the popular music industry and its products in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai are not merely a result of transplanted Western innovation in China, but an outcome of the transnational exchange between two cultures.

Apart from the historical findings and musical analysis, this study also demonstrated a practicable strategy for understanding an underrepresented repertoire of music in history. Franco Fabbri's five groups of genre rules were useful for the preliminary analysis which systematically examined the general features of Shanghai popular songs. Although the concept of music genre can be elusive, this kind of initial survey helped to build up a picture of not only the musical characteristics of the subject in question but also the context in which the music was produced, sold and

consumed. This picture benefited the work of reconstruction and detailed musical analysis at a later stage of the study. Moreover, the proposed model and the hypothetical flowchart proved to be constructive, even though they initially drew on historical facts and developments of the Anglo-American music industry and it was difficult to tell at the early stage of the study whether they could be applicable to the pop industry in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai. It was with the aid of the flowchart developed from the model of the music industry in Chapter Two that details of the participants involved in the producing, selling and consuming processes and the events taking place around these processes were tracked down accordingly.

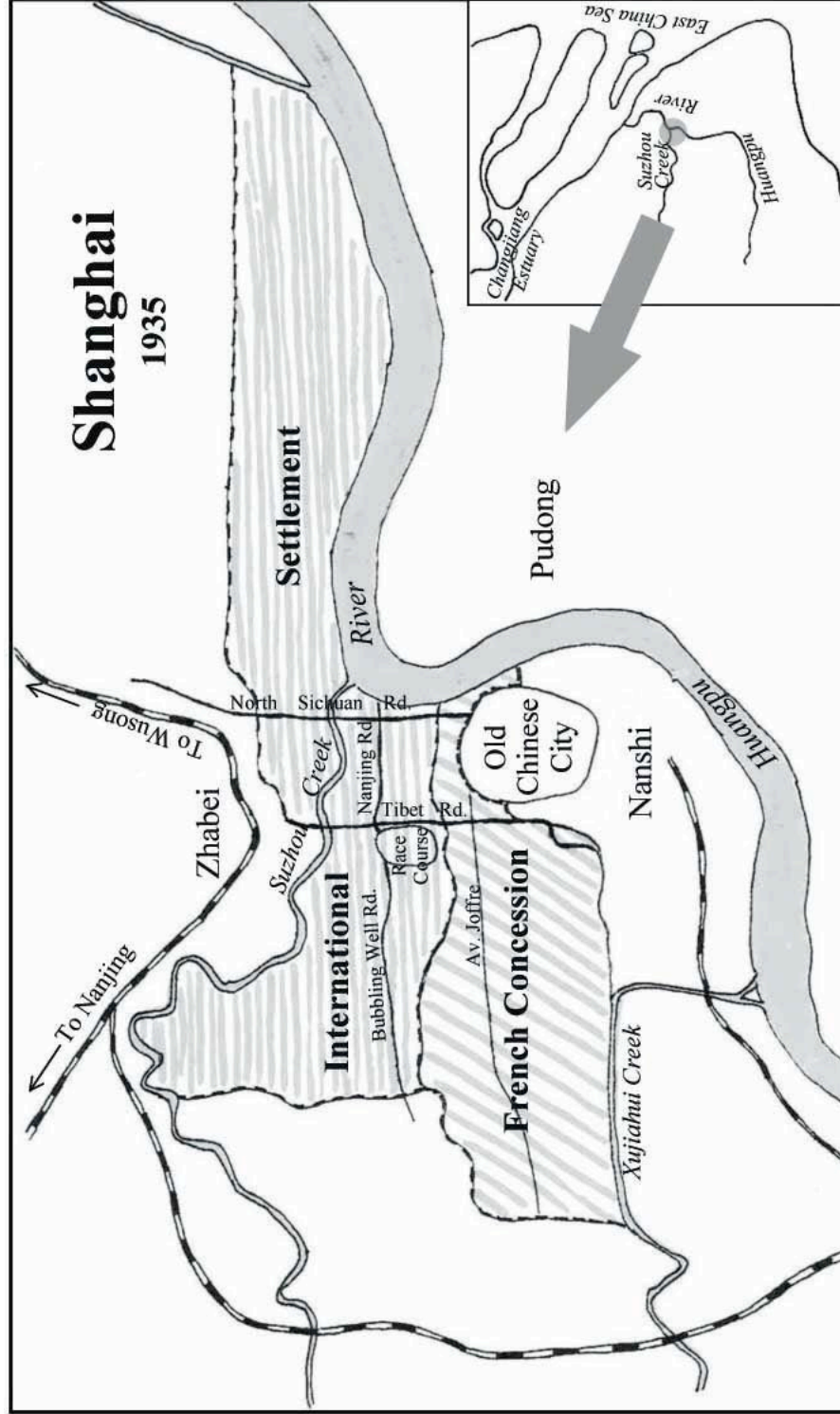
As has been argued, Chinese popular music has long been unduly neglected by cultural historians, not least because of the problems of sources and materials. This study has shown that with a flowchart mapping how musical products moved from record companies to consumers along with the juxtaposition of all involved participants, the history of popular music can be rediscovered. This has been done systematically in this thesis by using songs as evidence, treating media material carefully, and tracking down archives and surviving participants. Finally, the approach employed in this study might also be applied to research into other cultural and historical examples, such as 1930s and 1940s Taiwanese pop. This is another under-explored repertoire of musical works which integrated both Chinese and Western musical elements, produced in a Japanese colony but against a different social and political background. However, the flowchart proposed in this thesis may need to be expanded or contracted in these different cases with further participants added, removed or linked by different collaborative or competitive relationships.

Endnote

¹ Leung is a songwriter, manager of a record company and columnist for *Hong Kong Economic Journal*. The essay was written for the programme of the 17th Hong Kong International Film Festival which featured a special retrospective topic of Chinese cinema from the 1940s through the 1960s. See Paul Leung, 'Mandarin movies & Mandarin pop songs', in Law Kar (ed.), *Mandarin Films and Popular Songs, 40s-60s: Programme of the 17th Hong Kong International Film Festival* (Hong Kong: Urban Council, 1993), p.48.

Appendix I

Map of Shanghai, 1935



Appendix II

Chronology of Shanghai Pop

Year	Social and political events in Shanghai	Events in the Shanghai pop industry
Start of modern Shanghai		
1839	The outbreak of Opium War between China and Great Britain	
1842	<i>The Treaty of Nanjing</i> signed stating that five 'treaty ports', including Shanghai to be opened to foreign trade	
1853	Small Sword rebellion Nanjing occupied by Taiping insurgents	
1854	Revised <i>Land Regulation</i> signed by the British, American and French Consuls, officially abolishing the residential segregation	
1908		The first record company in China, Pathé Phono Cinema Chine, established
1916		Great China Records founded
1921		Pathé Phono Cinema Chine reorganised into Pathé Orient, building the first recording studio in China
1922		First wireless broadcast station set up in China
1923		Li Jinhui's first children's musical drama <i>The Grape Fairy</i> published

Stage One: Laying the foundation	
1927	The first Chinese popular song in modern times 'Drizzles'
1930	RCA-Victor Company (China) formed French Pathé Orient acquired by the British-based Columbia Gramophone Company restructured as British Pathé Orient First sound film <i>Sing-song Girl Red Peony</i> First film song 'Words on Seeking Brother' in the sound film <i>Loose Women Picked Up by Men</i>
1932	Zhabei district bombed by the Japanese military First amateur singing group Art Transformation Club performing on radio First commercial radio singing club Wonderful Sound Group formed Post of Musical Director created in Pathé Orient, taken by Ren Guang
1934	The Electric and Musical Industries (China) established, taking over British Pathé Orient 'Top three radio singers contest' First Chinese dance band Wind Dance Band organised by Li Jiuhui
1935	Position of A&R taken by the Chinese staff in RCA-Victor EMI requiring radio station to pay licensing fees to no avail
Stage Two: Carpe diem in the Orphan Island	
1937	Chinese territories occupied by the Japanese military, foreign concessions becoming an enclave Fu Xiangxun succeeding Ren Guang in EMI, employed as Dramatic Director Chinese songwriters working full-time in foreign record companies

1939		Chinese popular songs included in programmes of first-class dancehalls
1941	Outbreak of the Pacific War	
Stage Three: Rising to upmarket venues		
1942		American music and films banned Shows featuring female singers and musical bands delivering the latest Chinese songs promoted in all entertainment establishments
1943	Abolishment of the French Concession and the International Settlement	
1944		Shanghai popular song first performed with Western classical music on the same stage
Stage Four: The acme of Shanghai popular song		
1945	The end of Sino-Japanese war	Li Jinguang promoted as Musical Direct in EMI EMI becoming the only record company capable of manufacturing gramophone records Business of RCA-Victor ceased
1949	Shanghai 'liberated' by the Chinese Communists	Operation of EMI ceased

Appendix III

List of Informants

Name		Gender	Year of birth	Date and place of interview
Fans				
Zhao Shihui	趙士薈	M	1934	11/12/2003 Shanghai
Shen Fugen	沈富根	M	1933	11/02/2004 Shanghai
Ding Yongxu	丁庸序	M	1937	19/02/2004 Shanghai
Ms Li	李女士	F	1939	21/02/2004 Shanghai
Li Yiqian	李依倩	F	1939	21/02/2004 Shanghai
Ms Shao	邵女士	F	1936	21/02/2004 Shanghai
Ms Shen	沈女士	F	1930	21/02/2004 Shanghai
Wang Jinghua	王靜華	F	1933	21/02/2004 Shanghai
Wang Yixian	王奕賢	M	1927	01/03/2004 Shanghai
Cao Henglong	曹恆龍	M	1940	13/03/2004 Shanghai
Jing Yingti	金鶯啼	F	1934	13/03/2004 Shanghai
Wang Weishan	王渭山	M	1930	13/03/2004 Shanghai
Zhou Baode	周寶德	M	1932	13/03/2004 Shanghai
Peng Guokuan	彭國寬	M	1929	15/03/2004 Shanghai
Wang Tingfu	王庭富	M	1930	15/03/2004 Shanghai
Zhang Yunsong	張雲松	M	1921	15/03/2004 Shanghai
Instrumentalist				
Zhao Jiying	趙濟瑩	M	1920	29/12/2003 Shanghai
Zheng Deren	鄭德仁	M	1924	29/12/2003 Shanghai
Wei Jun	韋駿	M	1917	20/02/2004 Shanghai
Employee of EMI				
Zhu Zhonghua	朱鐘華	F	1924	10/02/2004 Shanghai
Singer				
Wu Yingyin	吳鶯音	F	1921	31/12/2003 Shanghai
Jin Yi	金溢	F	1931	07/01/2004 Shanghai
Zhang Fan	張帆	F	1922	31/01/2004 Beijing
Yan Fei	嚴斐	F	1917	05/02/2004 Tianjin

Appendix IV

List of Song Examples Cited in the Text

Vocal/title	Lyrics	Music	Catalogue number
Bai Guang 白光			
<i>Dengzhe ni huilai</i> 等著你回來 (Waiting for you)	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Chen Ruizhen 陳瑞楨	Pathé 35739B*
<i>Jinxi hexi</i> 今夕何夕 (What sort of night is tonight)	Xu Suling 徐蘇靈	Chen Ruizhen 陳瑞楨	Pathé 35803A
<i>Ni buyao zou</i> 你不要走 (Don't go)	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Pathé 35592A
<i>Qiuye</i> 秋夜 (Autumn night)	Xiao Zhu 小珠	Li Houxiang 李厚襄	Pathé 35786A
<i>Ruguo meiyou ni</i> 如果沒有你 (If living without you)	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Pathé 35773A
<i>Xianjian bu hen wan</i> 相見不恨晚 (Never too late to come to know you)	Yang Xiaozhong 楊小仲	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Pathé 35739A
Bai Hong 白虹			
<i>Bie zou de namo kuai</i> 別走得那麼快 (Don't Go So Fast)	Wen Chao 文超	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Pathé 35740A
<i>Chuntian de jianglin</i> 春天的降臨 (The coming of spring)	Hong Fei 洪菲	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Pathé 35505B
<i>Chun zhi wuqu</i> 春之舞曲 (Dance of spring)	Wu Cun 吳村	Wu Cun 吳村	Pathé 35511A
<i>Lang shi chunri feng</i> 郎是春日風 (He is the spring wind)	Li Houxiang 李厚襄	Li Houxiang 李厚襄	Pathé 35511B
<i>Mai yu</i> 埋玉 (Burying jade)	Unknown	Unknown	Pathé 35510A

<i>Shasha zaihui ba</i> 莎莎再會吧 (Goodbye Shasha)	Wu Cun 吳村	Wu Cun 吳村	Pathé 35510B
<i>Yu busa hua hua buhong</i> 雨不灑花花不紅 (No rain, no red flowers)	Li Jinguang 黎錦光 (adapted from folk)	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Unknown
<i>Zuiren de kouhong</i> 醉人的口紅 (Enchanting lipstick)	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Liu Ruzeng 劉如曾	Pathé 35793A
Gong Qiuxia 龔秋霞			
<i>Chun</i> (Spring)	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Pathé35473A
<i>Dingxiangshu xia</i> 丁香樹下 (Under the clove tree)	Li Houxiang 李厚襄	Li Houxiang 李厚襄	Pathé 35506A
<i>Hen dieniang</i> 恨爹娘 (Grumbling about parents)	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Pathé 35491A
<i>Huanying xinnian</i> 歡迎新年 (Welcome new year)	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Pathé 35473A
<i>Qiangwei chuchu kai</i> 薔薇處處開 (Roses blooming everywhere)	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Pathé 35507B
<i>Qiushui yiren</i> 秋水伊人 (Beyond the frosty water)	He Lüting 賀綠汀	He Lüting 賀綠汀	Pathé 35357A
Huang Feiran 黃飛然			
<i>Reqing de yanjing</i> 熱情的眼睛 (Passionate eyes)	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Liu Ruzeng 劉如曾	Pathé 35784B
Hu Die 胡蝶			
<i>Yelaixiang</i> 夜來香 (Evening fragrance)	Wang Qianbai 王乾白	Yan Gongshang 嚴工上	Pathé 34773A
Lang Yuxiu 郎毓秀			
<i>Beijiu gaoge</i> 杯酒高歌 (Toast and Sing)	An E 安娥	E. A. Fenstad	Unknown
<i>Piaoling de luohua</i> 飄零的落花 (Wandering fallen petals)	Liu Xuean 劉雪庵	Liu Xuean 劉雪庵	Pathé 35108B
Li Lihua 李麗華			
<i>Tianshang renjian</i> 天上人間 (Heaven on earth)	Ye Fang 葉舫	Yan Gefan 嚴個凡	Pathé 35512A

Li Lili 黎莉莉			
<i>Xin fengyang ge</i> 新鳳陽歌 (New song of Fengyang)	An E 安娥	Ren Guang 任光 (adapted from folk)	Pathé 34668A
Li Lili 黎莉莉 & Chen Yanyan 陳燕燕			
<i>Xin nüxing ge</i> 新女性歌 (The song of new women)	Shi Yi 施誼	Nie Er 聶耳	Pathé 35051A/B
Li Minghui 黎明暉			
<i>Kelian de Qiuxiang</i> 可憐的秋香 (The poor Qiuxiang)	Li Jinhui 黎錦暉	Li Jinhui 黎錦暉	Unknown
<i>Maomaoyu</i> 毛毛雨 (Drizzles)	Li Jinhui 黎錦暉	Li Jinhui 黎錦暉	Pathé 34278 A/B
<i>Taoli zheng chun</i> 桃李爭春 (Peach and plum blooming in spring)	Li Jinhui 黎錦暉	Li Jinhui 黎錦暉	Unknown
Li Xianglan 李香蘭			
<i>Yelaixiang</i> 夜來香 (Evening fragrance)	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Pathé 35866A
Ling Ping 梁萍			
<i>Chun lai ren bulai</i> 春來人不來 (Spring arrives but he doesn't)	Shang Chuan 山川	Liu Ruzeng 劉如曾	Pathé 35733A
<i>Shaonian de wo</i> 少年的我 (Young as I am) Pathé 35688A	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	
Ling Ping 梁萍 & Yao Min 姚敏			
<i>Ding ge linggu dang</i> 丁個鈴鼓鐺 (Ding-dong bell and drum)	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Pathé 35864A
Ma Tingting 馬婷婷			
<i>Yu da yuanyang</i> 雨打鴛鴦 (Rain falls on mandarin ducks)	Unknown	Irving Berlin	Unknown
Ouyang Feiyang 歐陽飛鶯			
<i>Xianggelila</i> 香格里拉 (Shangri-La)	Chen Dieyi 陳蝶衣	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Pathé 35637A

<i>Yu mengmeng</i> 雨濛濛 (Misty Rain)	Ke Chun 克純	Huang Yijun 黃貽鈞	Pathé 35637B
Pei Ni 佩妮			
<i>Liagye buneng liu</i> 良夜不能留 (Good night doesn't last)	Chen Dongsun 陳棟蓀	Yao Min 姚敏	Pathé 35720B
Qu Yunyun 區雲雲			
<i>Sanlunche shang de xiaojie</i> 三輪車上的小姐 (Young lady on a pedicab)	Qiu Ziye 裘子野	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Pathé 35691A
Sheng Jialun 盛家倫			
<i>Yeban gesheng</i> 夜半歌聲 (Singing at midnight)	Tian Han 田漢	Xian Xinghai 冼星海	Pathé 35206A/B
Si Yigui 斯義桂			
<i>Jiao wo ruhe buxiang ta</i> 教我如何不想他 (How could I forget her)	Liu Bannong 劉半農	Chao Yuen-ren 趙元任	Pathé 35494A
Wang Renmei 王人美 & Li lili 黎莉莉			
<i>Taohua jiang</i> 桃花江 (The river of peach blossom)	Li Jinhui 黎錦暉	Li Jinhui 黎錦暉	Unknown
Wu Yingyin 吳鶯音			
<i>Dadi huichun</i> 大地回春 (Spring comes back on earth)	Chen Dongsun 陳棟蓀	Yao Min 姚敏	Pathé 35763A
<i>Duanchang hong</i> 斷腸紅 (Spring sadness)	Zhang Sheng 張生	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Pathé 35776A
<i>Hao chunxiao</i> 好春宵 (Pleasant nighttime)	Chen Dongsun 陳棟蓀	Xu Lang 徐朗	Pathé 35675B
<i>Nong ben chiqing</i> 農本癡情 (Infatuation)	Chen Dongsun 陳棟蓀	Li Houxiang 李厚襄	Pathé 35652B

<i>Ping shui xiangfeng</i> 萍水相逢 (Meet by chance)	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Pathé 35856B
<i>Qiuha yueman</i> 秋華月滿 (Full moon in deep autumn)	Man Ying 漫影	Li Houxiang 李厚襄	Pathé 35732A
<i>Yueluo wuti</i> 月落烏啼 (Setting moon and crowing raven)	Lao Yan 勞燕	Da Shi 大士	Pathé 35820B
<i>Wo xiang wangle ni</i> 我想忘了你 (I wanna forget you)	Xu Lang 徐朗	Xu Lang 徐朗	Pathé 35652A
Yao Li 姚莉			
<i>Bailan xiang</i> 白蘭香 (White orchid)	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Pathé 35640A
<i>Buyao ni</i> 不要你 (You are unwanted)	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛 (adapted from folk)	Pathé 35659B
<i>Chongfeng</i> 重逢 (Reencounter)	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Pathé 35702B
<i>Chun de meng</i> 春的夢 (Dream of Spring)	Unknown	Takeoka Nobuyuki 竹岡信幸	Pathé 35894A
<i>Debudao de aiqin</i> 得不到的愛情 (Unrequited love)	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Yao Min 姚敏	Pathé 35779A
<i>Mai xiangsi</i> 賣相思 (Lovesickness for sale)	Bao Yi 包乙	Yan Hua 嚴華	Regal 41638A
<i>Meigui meigui wo ai ni</i> 玫瑰玫瑰我愛你 (Rose, rose, I love you)	Wu Cun 吳村	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Pathé 35500B
<i>Nage bu duo qing</i> 那個不多情 (No one is not amorous)	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Yao Min 姚敏	Pathé 35635A
<i>Qinhuaihe pan</i> 秦淮河畔 (On the river bank of Qinhuai)	Chen Dongsun 陳棟蓀	Yao Min 姚敏	Pathé 35666B
<i>Qiu de huainian</i> 秋的懷念 (The cherished memory of autumn)	Wu Cun 吳村	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Pathé 35500B
<i>Yike poxin</i> 一顆破心 (A broken heart)	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	unknown
Yao Li 姚莉 & Yao Min 姚敏			
<i>Gongxi gongxi</i> 恭喜恭喜 (Congratulations)	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Pathé 35648B

<i>Malai fenggurang</i> 馬來風光 (Malayan scenery)	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	M Bernard (adapted from Indonesian song)	Pathé 35936A
Yao Min 姚敏			
<i>Ruci Shanghai</i> 如此上海 (Such Shanghai)	Yao Min 姚敏	Yao Min 姚敏	unknown
Yi Min 逸敏			
<i>Kan zhe wo</i> 看著我 (Look at me)	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Pathé 35750A
Ying Yin 英茵			
<i>Qiuqian jia shang</i> 鞦韆架上 (On The Swing)	Unknown	Gaston Lyle	Pathé 35355A
Zhang Fan 張帆			
<i>Chouchong ge</i> 臭蟲歌 (Bug song)	Gang Ming 鋼鳴	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Pathé 35728A
<i>Manchang fei</i> 滿場飛 (Party time)	Bao Yi 包乙	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Regal 41629B
<i>Taohua duoduo hong</i> 桃花朵朵紅 (Red peach blossoms)	Shuixi Cun 水西村	Li Houxiang 李厚襄	Pathé 35728B
Zhou Xiaoyan 周小燕			
<i>Hongdou ci</i> 紅豆詞 (Adzuki beans)	Cao Xueqin 曹雪芹	Liu Xuean 劉雪庵	Pathé 35770B
Zhou Xuan 周璇			
<i>Aishen de jian</i> 愛神的箭 (Cupid's arrow)	Chen Dieyi 陳蝶衣	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Pathé 35725A
<i>Bubian de xin</i> 不變的心 (Steadfast affection)	Li Juanqing 李雋青	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Pathé 35857A
<i>Cai binglang</i> 採檳榔 (Betel nut picking)	Yin Yiqu 殷憶秋	Li Jinguang 黎錦光 (Adapted from folk)	Pathé 35504A
<i>Chang xiangsi</i> 長相思 (Everlasting lovesickness)	Wu Cun 吳村	Wu Cun 吳村	Pathé 35462B
<i>Fenghuang yufei</i> 鳳凰于飛 (Paired phoenix)	Chen Dieyi 陳蝶衣	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Pathé 35858 A

<i>Heri jun zailai</i> 何日君再來 (When will you come back again)	Huang Jiamo 黃嘉謨	Liu Xuean 劉雪庵	Pathé 35333A/B
<i>Liang tiao lu shang</i> 兩條路上 (On two roads)	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Pathé 35678A
<i>Mai zahuo</i> 賣雜貨 (Selling groceries)	Li Jinguang 黎錦光 (Adapted from folk)	Li Jinguang 黎錦光 (Adapted from folk)	Pathé 35415B
<i>Meifei wu</i> 梅妃舞 (Dance of meifei)	Cheng Xiaoqing 程小青	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Pathé 35509B
<i>Siji ge</i> 四季歌 (The song of four seasons)	Tian Han 田漢	He Lüting 賀綠汀 (Adapted from folk)	Pathé 35335B
<i>Song dage</i> 送大哥 (Seeing off elder brother)	He Lüting 賀綠汀 (Adapted from folk)	He Lüting 賀綠汀 (Adapted from folk)	Pathé 35677A
<i>Tebie kuaiche</i> 特別快車 (The express train)	Li Jinhui 黎錦暉	Li Jinhui 黎錦暉	Victor 5490A
<i>Tianya genü</i> 天涯歌女 (The wandering songstress)	Tian Han 田漢	He Lüting 賀綠汀 (Adapted from folk)	Pathé 35335A
<i>Wan'an qu</i> 晚安曲 (Good night)	Liu Ruzeng 劉如曾	Liu Ruzeng 劉如曾	Pathé 35772B
<i>Wuyue de feng</i> 五月的風 (May wind)	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Pathé 35577A
<i>Xiao de zanmei</i> 笑的讚美 (Praise for laughter)	Chen Dieyi 陳蝶衣	Liang Yueyin 梁樂音	Victor 42248B
<i>Xiaoxiao dongfang</i> 小小洞房 (The little nuptial chamber)	Wu Guangzu 吳光祖	Chen Gexin 陳歌辛	Pathé 35724B
<i>Xin duihua</i> 新對花 (New flower quiz)	Yan Hua 嚴華	Yan Hua 嚴華 (adapted from folk)	Pathé 35414A/B
<i>Yueyuan huahao</i> 月圓花好 (Full moon and blooming flowers)	Fan Yanqiao 范煙橋	Yan Hua 嚴華	Pathé 35497A
<i>Yi liangren</i> 憶良人 (Recalling my husband)	Li Juanqing 李雋青	Li Houxiang 李厚襄	Pathé 35515A
<i>Zhiyin hechu xun</i> 知音何處尋 (Where is my true audience)	Chen Dieyi 陳蝶衣	Yan Zhexi 嚴折西	Pathé 35708A

Zhou Xuan 周璇 & Yan Hua 嚴華		
<i>Dingning</i> 叮嚀 (Repeated advice)	Li Jinguang 黎錦光	Li Jinguang 黎錦光 Pathé 35552A
Others**		
<i>Biye ge</i> 畢業歌 (Graduation song)	Tian Han 田漢	Nie Er 聶耳
<i>Cailian ge</i> 採蓮歌 (Song of picking lotus)	An E 安娥	Nie Er 聶耳
<i>Cailing ge</i> 採菱歌 (Song of picking water chestnut)	Tian Han 田漢	Nie Er 聶耳
<i>Cungu le</i> 村姑樂 (Happy village girl)	Xu Ruhui 許如輝	Xu Ruhui 許如輝
<i>Da hui laojia qu</i> 打回老家去 (Fighting the way back home)	An E 安娥	Ren Guang 任光
<i>Laohu jiaomen</i> 老虎叫門 (Tiger calling at the door)	Li Jinghui 黎錦暉	Li Jinghui 黎錦暉
<i>Maibao ge</i> 賣報歌 ('Song of newspaper boys)	An E 安娥	Nie Er 聶耳
<i>Matou gongren ge</i> 碼頭工人歌 (Song of dockers)	Tian Han 田漢	Nie Er 聶耳
<i>Saibei cunni</i> 塞北村女 (Girl from the village in the north)	Tang Na 唐納	Nie Er 聶耳
<i>Shanghai kôshinkyoku</i> 上海進行曲 (Shanghai march)	Yamada Hiroshi 山田博	Matsudaira Nobuhiro 松平信博
<i>Shina no yoru</i> 支那の夜 (China night)	Saijô Yaso 西条十八	Takeoka Nobuyuki 竹綱信幸
<i>Taowang qu</i> 逃亡曲 (Song of Exile)	Tang Na 唐納	Nie Er 聶耳
<i>Xia qionglou</i> 下瓊樓 (Downstairs the jade tower)	Xu Ruhui 許如輝	Xu Ruhui 許如輝
<i>Xin nixing ge</i> 新女性歌 (Song of new women)	Shi Yi 施誼	Nie Er 聶耳
<i>Xunxiong ci</i> 尋兄詞 (Words on seeking brother)	Sun Yu 孫瑜	Sun Chengbi 孫成璧

<i>Ying fei renjian zhuitiqu</i> 鸞飛人間主題曲 (The theme song of orioles flying on earth)	Unknown	Unknown	
<i>Yiyongjun jinxingqu</i> 義勇軍進行曲 (March of the volunteers)	Tian Han 田漢	Nie Er 聶耳	
<i>Zongli jinian ge</i> 總理紀念歌 (In memory of the prime minister)	Dai Chuanxian 戴傳賢	Li Jinhui 黎錦暉	
<i>Zhongguo guomindang dangge</i> 中國國民黨黨歌 (Song of the Chinese National Party)	Sun Wen 孫文	Cheng Maoyun 程懋筠	

* Catalogue numbers refer to those of gramophone records released in the Shanghai era not of the re-released recordings listed in discography.

** Songs mentioned in this study but historical recordings not available or not used for product analysis.

Glossary

- An Er 安娥
- Anding bieshu guangbo diantai* 安定別墅廣播電台
- Bai Guang 白光
- Bai Hong 白虹
- Baidai changpian gongsi* 百代唱片公司
- Baige 百歌
- Bailemen wuting* 百樂門舞廳
- baixiangren saosao* 白相人嫂嫂
- bangzi* 椰子
- Baofang gongsi* 寶芳公司
- Baoyu tangbing* 寶玉探病
- Beihai 北海
- Beikai 蓓開
- Beixin shudian* 北新書店
- biangong* 變宮
- bianzhi* 變徵
- biaozi wuqing xizi wuyi* 婊子無情戲子
- 無義
- Cai Chusheng 蔡楚生
- chaguan* 茶館
- Changcheng* 長城
- Chen Dieyi 陳蝶衣
- Chen Gexin 陳歌辛
- Chen He 陳鶴
- Chen Yumei 陳玉梅
- ci* 詞
- Chongqing 重慶
- chuanju* 川劇
- Chunqiu* 春秋
- Da shijie* 大世界
- dabaoqiang* 大包腔
- Dafang shuju* 大方書局
- Daguangming xi yuan* 大光明戲院
- Dahua xin yinyuedui* 大華新音樂隊

- dajie xiaoxiang* 大街小巷
- Dalu* 大路
- daotai* 道台
- Dasheng wuxiandian changji hang* 大聲
無線電唱機行
- Datong she* 大同社
- Datong yuehui* 大同樂會
- Daxin* 大新
- Dazhonghua changpian* 大中華唱片
- Dazhongyuan pixie* 大中原皮鞋
- di* 笛子
- Dianshizhai huabao* 點石齋畫報
- Diantong gongsi* 電通公司
- Dianying zhuankan* 電影專刊
- dihuo* 地火
- Dipi zhangcheng* 地皮章程
- Dongbei dagu* 東北大鼓
- donghai longwang* 東海龍王
- Du Jie* 都杰
- Du Yuesheng* 杜月笙
- Emei* 峨眉
- erhu* 二胡
- fanshi ren jiudei tingxi* 凡是人就得聽戲
- Fan Yanqiao* 范煙橋
- Feicui ma* 翡翠馬
- Feihuacun* 飛花村
- fengmi quanguo* 風靡全國
- Fenghuang yufei* 鳳凰于飛
- Fujian* 福建
- Fuzhou* 福州
- Fu Xiangxun* 傅祥巽
- fumuguan* 父母官
- Gaoshiman wuting* 高士滿舞廳
- Gaoting* 高亭
- Gechang chunse* 歌場春色
- geyongshe* 歌詠社
- genü* 歌女
- Genü hongmudan* 歌女紅牡丹
- Genü zhi ge* 歌女之歌
- Gesheng leihen* 歌聲淚痕
- gexing* 歌星
- gezaixi* 歌仔戲

<i>gong</i> 宮	<i>Hesheng</i> 和聲
Gong Qiuxia 龔秋霞	<i>hirajoshi</i> 平調子
Gong Mujiu 宮慕久	Hong Xiuquan 洪秀全
Guangdong 廣東	Hongkou 虹口
Guangxi 廣西	<i>Honglou chunshen</i> 紅樓春色
Guangzhou 廣州	<i>hongpian dajie xiaoxiang</i> 紅遍大街小巷
<i>guoli</i> 國曆	Hu Die 胡蝶
<i>guohuo</i> 國貨	Hu Xinling 胡心靈
<i>Guotai</i> 國泰	<i>huagu xi</i> 花鼓戲
<i>guoyu</i> 國語	Huang Fang 黃方
<i>guoyu laoge</i> 國語老歌	Huang Feiran 黃飛然
<i>guoyue</i> 國樂	Huang Yijun 黃貽鈞
<i>guoyue jiaoxianghua</i> 國樂交響化	Huangpu 黃浦
<i>gushi</i> 古詩	<i>Huangpu jiang</i> 黃浦江
<i>Haipai</i> 海派	<i>huangse yinyue</i> 黃色音樂
<i>Hakuran no ka</i> 白蘭の歌	<i>huaren jingli</i> 華人經理
Han 漢	<i>huechia</i> 火車; 花車; 貨車
<i>Hanjian</i> 漢奸	<i>huju</i> 滬劇
Hankou 漢口	Humen 虎門
<i>hao</i> 好	Hunan 湖南
Hebei 河北	<i>huqin</i> 胡琴

- Huxi 滬西
- Jiangnan 江南
- Jiangsu 江蘇
- Jindu da xiyuan* 金都大戲院
- Jingpai* 京派
- Jinmen da jiudian* 金門大酒店
- Jinsheng changji gongsi* 金聲唱機公司
- jintishi* 近體詩
- jue* 角
- kunqu* 崑曲
- Kaerdeng da xiyuan* 卡爾登大戲院
- Kaiming* 開明
- Kunlun* 崑崙
- Kuomintang 國民黨
- Lang Yuxiu 郎毓秀
- Lanxin xiyuan* 蘭心戲院
- Laodahua wuting* 老大華舞廳
- Li Houxiang 李厚襄
- Li Jinguang 黎錦光
- Li Jinhui 黎錦暉
- Li Juanqing 李雋青
- Li Lihua 李麗華
- Li Lili 黎莉莉
- Li Minghui 黎明暉
- Li Shutong 李叔同
- Li Xianglan 李香蘭
- Liang Ping 梁萍
- Liang Yueying 梁樂音
- Liangxin* 良心
- Lianhua yingye gongsi* 聯華電影公司
- Lianxing* 聯星
- Libailiu* 禮拜六
- Liji* 禮記
- Lijiachang 李家場
- Lin Gui 麟桂
- Liulang wenyong* 柳浪聞鶯
- Liu Tianhua 劉天華
- Lü Ji 呂驥
- Lu Xun 魯遜
- Ma Loufen 馬陋芬
- Ma Tingting 馬婷婷
- maichang* 賣唱

<i>Malu gongchengju</i> 馬路工程局	Nie Er 聶耳
<i>Malu tianshi</i> 馬路天使	<i>niesi mao</i> 捏死貓
<i>Maque yu xiaohai</i> 麻雀與小孩	Ningbo 寧波
<i>Meiguo wuxiandian shengli changji hezu gongsi</i> 美國無線電勝利唱機合資公司	Ouyang Feiying 歐陽飛鶯
<i>Meihua gewu tuan</i> 梅花歌舞團	<i>pianyin</i> 偏音
<i>Meimei nüxiao</i> 美美女校	<i>pibao gongsi</i> 皮包公司
<i>Miaoyin tuan</i> 妙音團	<i>ping</i> 平
<i>mimi zhi yin</i> 靡靡之音	<i>pipa</i> 琵琶
<i>Mingxing she</i> 明星社	Pudong 浦東
<i>Mingxing yingpian gongsi</i> 明星影片公司	<i>putonghua</i> 普通話
<i>Mingyue gewujushe</i> 明月歌舞劇社	Qi 齊
<i>Mingyue gewutuan</i> 明月歌舞團	Qianfa 前法
<i>Mingyue yinyuehui</i> 明月音樂會	<i>qiangdi</i> 羌笛
Miura Tamaki 三浦環	Qin Pengzhang 秦鵬章
<i>nangyang</i> 南洋	Qing 清
Nanjing 南京	<i>Qingfeng wuyuedui</i> 清風舞樂隊
Nanshi 南市	<i>qingjue</i> 清角
<i>Nanjing da xiyuan</i> 南京大戲院	<i>qingyin</i> 清音
	<i>qipao</i> 旗袍
	<i>qu</i> 去; 曲
	<i>qupai</i> 曲牌

- Qu Yunyun 區雲雲
 Ren Guang 任光
Remin changpian chang 人民唱片廠
ru 入
ruan 阮
run 潤
Sakura 櫻
sanxian 三弦
Sanxiao 三笑
Sanyou gongsi 三友公司
Sanyu yueyueshe 三餘粵樂社
se 瑟
Sensen guoyuedui 森森國樂隊
shang 商; 上
Shanghai guoyu zhuanxiu xuexiao 上海
 國語專修學校
 Shen Xingong 沈心工
sheng 笙
 Sheng Jialun 盛家倫
Shengli changpian gongsi 勝利唱片公
 司
Shenglong huohu 生龍活虎
shidai 時代
shidai qu 時代曲
 Shimonoseki 馬關
shuangqing 雙清
 Shun 舜
 Sichuan 四川
Si jiemei 四姊妹
Si jiemei kafei yinyueting 四姊妹咖啡音
 樂廳
sizhu 絲竹
 Song 宋
 Songjiang 松江
Sulian zhi you she 蘇聯之友社
 Sun Yun 孫瑜
 Sun Chengbi 孫成璧
suona 嗩吶
 Suzhou 蘇州
 Taiping 太平
 Takeoka Nobuyuki 竹岡信幸
tanci 彈詞

Tang 唐	<i>Xianlesi</i> 仙樂斯
<i>tangshi</i> 唐詩	<i>Xianshi gongsi</i> 先施公司
<i>Taowang</i> 逃亡	<i>xiangxiaren</i> 鄉下人
Tian Han 田漢	<i>Xianyue piaopiao chuchu wen</i> 仙樂飄飄 處處聞
Tianjin 天津	<i>xiao</i> 簫
<i>Tianyun she</i> 天韻社	<i>xiao meimei</i> 小妹妹
<i>Tianyi yingpian gongsi</i> 天一影片公司	<i>xiao shi</i> 笑是; 消失
<i>tingzijian</i> 亭子間	<i>xiao shimin</i> 小市民
<i>Tongsheng shudian</i> 同聲書店	<i>Xiaodaohui</i> 小刀會
<i>waidiren</i> 外地人	<i>Xin nüxing</i> 新女性
Wang Jingwei 汪精衛	<i>Xin shijie</i> 新世界
Wang Manjie 汪曼傑	<i>Xin wutai</i> 新舞台
Wang Renmei 王人美	<i>Xingguang gewu yanjiushe</i> 星光歌舞研 究社
Wei 衛	<i>Xingjie</i> 行街
Wei Linggong 衛靈公	<i>Xingshi</i> 醒獅
<i>Wenming shuju</i> 文明書局	<i>Xinjiang</i> 新疆
<i>Wojia yiu ge xiaojiumei</i> 我家有個小九 妹	<i>xinju</i> 新劇
Wu Cun 吳村	<i>Xinhua wuting</i> 新華舞廳
Wu Yingyin 吳鶯鶯	<i>Xinhua yingye gongsi</i> 新華影業公司
Xiamen 廈門	

- Xinsheng changji gongsi* 心聲唱機公司
- xinshi* 新詩; 信使; 心事
- Xinyue liushengji changpian gongsi* 新月留聲機唱片公司
- Xinxin* 新新
- xiqin* 奚琴
- xiyuan* 戲園
- Xu Ruhui* 許如輝
- Xu Zhenya* 徐枕亞
- xuetang yuege* 學堂樂歌
- Yan Gongshang* 嚴工上
- Yan Gefan* 嚴個凡
- Yan Hua* 嚴華
- Yan Zhexi* 嚴折西
- yang* 陽
- Yang Huo* 陽貨
- Yang Lin* 楊琳
- Yangjingbang* 洋涇濱
- yangli* 陽曆
- yangping* 陽平
- yangqu* 陽去
- yangru* 陽入
- yangshang* 陽上
- Yangzi fandan* 揚子飯店
- Yangzi wuting* 揚子舞廳
- Yao Li* 姚莉
- Yao Min* 姚敏
- yaogun yinyue* 搖滾音樂
- yayue* 雅樂
- Yazhou* 亞洲
- Ye shanghai* 夜上海
- Yeban gesheng* 夜半歌聲
- Yecao xianhua* 野草閒花
- Yihai* 藝海
- Yihua she* 藝化社
- Yihua yingye gongsi* 藝華影業公司
- yin* 陰; 淫
- yin yang hebi* 陰陽合璧
- Ying fei renjian* 鶯飛人間
- Ying Yin* 英茵
- yingxing* 影星
- Yinhai sanbuqu* 銀海三部曲

<i>Yinhan shuangxing</i> 銀漢雙星	<i>Zeng Zhimin</i> 增志民
<i>yinli</i> 陰曆	<i>Zhabei</i> 閘北
<i>yinping</i> 陰平	<i>Zhang Changfu</i> 張長福
<i>yinqu</i> 陰去	<i>Zhang Fan</i> 張帆
<i>yinru</i> 陰入	<i>Zhang Huang</i> 張簧
<i>yinshang</i> 陰上	<i>Zhang Shu</i> 張曙
<i>Yinyue jiangxihui</i> 音樂講習會	<i>Zhang Xian</i> 張弦
<i>yineyueshe</i> 音樂社	<i>Zhang Yinwu</i> 張蔭梧
<i>Yiyuan wuting</i> 逸園舞廳	<i>Zhejiang</i> 浙江
<i>Yongan</i> 永安	<i>Zheng</i> 鄭
<i>yu</i> 羽	<i>zhengyin</i> 正音
<i>Yulihun</i> 玉梨魂	<i>zhi</i> 徵
<i>Yu Yuezhang</i> 余約章	<i>zhixian</i> 知縣
<i>Yuan</i> 元	<i>Zhiyin dayuedu</i> 知音大樂隊
<i>yuanyang hudie pai</i> 鴛鴦蝴蝶派	<i>Zhongguo changpian gongsi</i> 中國唱片
<i>yuefenpai guanggao hua</i> 月份牌廣告畫	公司
<i>Yuegong wuting</i> 樂宮舞廳	<i>Zhongguo gechangshe</i> 中國歌唱社
<i>Yueji</i> 樂記	<i>Zhongguo guohuo gongsi</i> 中國國貨公司
<i>yueju</i> 越劇	<i>Zhonghua gewu zhuanmen xuexiao</i> 中華
<i>yueqin</i> 月琴	歌舞專門學校
<i>ze</i> 仄	<i>Zhonghua gewutuan</i> 中華歌舞團

Zhonghua lianhe zhipian gongsi 中華聯

合製片公司

Zhonghua shuju 中華書局

Zhongxi diantai 中西電台

Zhongyang dianying jiancha weiyuanhui

中央電影檢查委員會

Zhongyang shuju 中央書局

Zhou Shoujuan 周瘦鵑

Zhou Xuan 周璇

zimin 子民

Zixia 子夏

Ziye she 子夜社

Ziye yuehui 子夜樂會

Ziye zhouge 子夜週歌

Zuoyi julian yiyue xiaozu 左翼劇聯音樂

小組

Bibliography

- Adorno, Theodor W., 'On popular music', in Simon Frith and Andrew Goodwin (eds), *On Record: Rock, Pop, and the Written Word* (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 301-14.
- Agawu, Kofi, 'Theory and practice in the analysis of the nineteenth-century lied', *Music Analysis*, 11:1 (1992), pp. 3-36.
- All About Shanghai and Environs: A Standard Guide Book* (Shanghai: University Press, 1934/1935; repr. with an introduction by H. J. Lethbridge, Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1983).
- Altman, Rick, 'Cinema and popular song: the lost tradition', in Pamela Robertson Wojcik and Arthur Knight (eds), *Soundtrack Available: Essays on Film and Popular Music* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001), pp. 19-30.
- Amiot, Joseph-Marie, *Mémoire sur la musique des chinois* (Paris: Nyon l'aîné, 1779; repr. Genève: Minkoff, 1973).
- Atkins, E. Taylor, 'Jammin' on jazz frontier: the Japanese jazz community in interwar Shanghai', *Japanese Studies*, 19:1 (1999), pp. 5-16.
- , 'The war on jazz, or jazz goes to war: toward a new cultural order in wartime Japan', *Positions*, 6:2 (1998), pp. 345-92.
- Avshalomov, Jacob & Aaron, *Avshalomov's Winding Way: Composers Out of China – A Chronical* (Philadelphia: Xlibris Corporation, 2001).
- 'Baidai gongsi banshui Zhou Xuan gaoju diyiwei' 百代公司版稅周璇高舉第一位 (Zhou Xuan in the first place of royalties income in Pathé), *Yihai huabao*, 5

- (October 1948).
- ‘Baidai gongsi jiang juxing mingxing gechang dahui 百代公司將舉行明星歌唱大會 (Pathé to hold a star concert)’, *Dianying ribao*, 13 and 14 March 1941.
- Bai Guang 白光, ‘Bai Guang riji’ 白光日記 (The diary of Bai Guang), *Yingmi julebu*, 2 (October 1948), p. 15.
- Bai Jian 白堅, ‘Dianying zhong de duibai, gechang yu yinyue’ 電影中的對白、歌唱與音樂 (Dialogue, singing and music in films), *Lianhua huabao* 6:10 (November 1935), n.p.
- Baranovitch, Nimrod, *China's New Voices: Popular Music, Ethnicity, Gender, and Politics, 1978-1997* (Berkeley, Cali.: University of California Press, 2003).
- Bennett, Anthony, ‘Source of popular song in early nineteenth-century Britain: problems and methods of research’, in Richard Middleton and David Horn (eds), *Popular Music 2: Theory and Method* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 69-89.
- Benson, Carlton, ‘Consumers are also soldiers: subversive songs from Nangjing Road during the New Life Movement’, in Sherman Cochran (ed.), *Inventing Nanjing Road: Commercial Culture in Shanghai, 1900-1945* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell East Asia Series, 1999), pp. 91-132.
- Berlioz, Hector, *Evenings with the Orchestra*, trans. Jacques Barzun (New York: Alfred A. Knof, 1956).
- Bickers, Robert, “‘The greatest culture asset east of Suez’: the history and politics of the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra and Public Band, 1881-1946’, in Chi-hsiung Chang (ed.), *China and the World in the Twentieth Century* (Taipei: Institute of

- History, Academia Sinica, 2001), pp. 835-75.
- Blacking, John, *How Musical Is Man* (London: University of Washington Press, 1974).
- Brace, Tim, 'Popular Music in Contemporary Beijing: Modernism and Cultural Identity', *Asian Music*, 22:2 (1991), pp. 43-66.
- Brackett, David, *Interpreting Popular Music* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000).
- Burns, Lori, 'Analytic methodologies for rock music: harmonic and voice-leading strategies in Tori Amos's "Crucify"', in Walter Everett (ed.), *Expression in Pop-Rock Music: a Collection of Critical and Analytical Essays* (London: Garland Publishing, 2000), pp. 213-46.
- Carey, James T., 'Changing courtship patterns in the popular song', *American Journal of Sociology*, 74:6 (1969), pp. 720-31.
- Chan, Marjorie K. M., 'Tone and melody in Cantonese', in Jon Aske (ed.), *Proceedings of the Thirteenth Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*, Berkeley, California, 14-16 February 1987, pp. 26-37.
- Chan, Wellington K. K., 'Selling goods and promoting a new commercial culture: the four premier department stores on Nanjing Road, 1917-1937', in Sherman Cochran (ed.), *Inventing Nanjing Road: Commercial Culture in Shanghai, 1900-1945* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell East Asia Series, 1999), pp. 19-36.
- Chang, Eileen 張愛玲, 'Tan yinyue' 談音樂 (On music), in Eileen Chang, *Liuyan* 流言 (Written on water) (Taipei: Huangguan chubanshe, 1991)
- 'Chanpianshang yu diantai jiufen guangbo diantai zhangao shengli' 唱片商與電台糾

- 紛廣播電台暫告勝利 (Radio stations take the upper hand on the argument between record companies and radio stations for the time being), *Diansheng*, 4:31 (August 1935), p. 648.
- Chao, Yuen-ren 趙元任, 'Tone, intonation, singsong, chanting, recitative, tonal composition, and atonal composition in Chinese', in Morris Hale, Horace Gray Lunt, Hugh McLean & Cornelis Hendrik van Schooneveld (eds) *For Roman Jakobson: Essays on the Occasions of His Sixtieth Birthday* (the Hague: Mouton, 1956), pp.52-9.
- , *Xin geshi ji* 新歌詩集 (A collection of new song-poetry) (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Press, 1960).
- Chapman, Malcolm, 'Thoughts on Celtic music', in Martin Stokes (ed.), *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: the Musical Construction of Place* (Oxford: Berg, 1994), pp. 29-44.
- Ch'en, Jerome, *China and the West: Society and Culture 1815-1937* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1979).
- Chen Gang 陳鋼 (ed.), *Meigui meigui wo ai ni: gexian Chen Gexin zhi ge* 玫瑰玫瑰我愛你：歌仙陳歌辛之歌 (Rose, rose I love you: songs of the immortal Chen Gexin) (Taipei: Vista Publishing, 2003).
- , *Shanghai laoge mingdian* 上海老歌名典 (A compilation of the legendary Shanghai old songs) (Taipei: Vista Publishing, 2003).
- Chen, Mathew Y., *Tone Sandhi: Patterns Across Chinese Dialects* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- Chen, Szu-Wei, 'The rise and generic features of Shanghai popular songs in the 1930s

- and 1940s', *Popular Music*, 24:1 (2005), pp. 107-25.
- Chen Yiping 陳一萍, *Zhongguo zaoqi dianying gequ jingxuan* 中國早期電影歌曲集選 (Selections of songs from Chinese early films) (Beijing: Zhongguo dianying chubashe, 2000).
- Chen Yike 陳伊克 (ed.), *Dianying mingge ji* 電影名歌集 (A collection of famous film songs) (Shanghai: Xiandai yinyue yanjiushe, 1943).
- Cheng Jihua 程季華, Li Shaobai 李少白 and Xing Zuwen 邢祖文, *Zhongguo dianying fazhan shi, diyijuan* 中國電影發展史第一卷 (A history of the development of Chinese film, vol. 1) (Beijing: Zhongguo dianying chubanshe, 1981).
- Chenshu 陳述, 'Xiugai liuxing gequ geci de jianyi' 修改流行歌曲歌詞的建議 (Suggestions concerning the revision of lyrics in popular songs), *Shenbao*, 16 February 1940.
- Cochran, Sherman, 'Transnational origins of advertising in early twentieth China', in Sherman Cochran (ed.), *Inventing Nanjing Road: Commercial Culture in Shanghai, 1900-1945* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell East Asia Series, 1999), pp. 37-58.
- Cooke, Deryck, *The Language of Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974).
- Cooper, B. Lee, 'Lyrical commentaries: learning from popular music', *Music Educators Journal*, 77:8 (1991), pp. 56-9.
- Dapangzi 大胖子, 'Xiangei geyongjie' 獻給歌詠界 (For the singing circle), *Gexing huabao*, 1 (August 1935), p. 17.
- Datong xingge xuan* 大同新歌選 (Collection of New Song of the Great Unity Club), 2

- (no date).
- Dandai Zhongguo de guangbo dianshi bianjibu 當代中國的廣播電視編輯部 (ed.), *Zhongguo de changpian chubanshiye* 中國的唱片出版事業 (The record industry of China) (Beijing: Beijing guangbo xueyuan chubanshe, 1989).
- Dankworth, Avril, *Jazz: an Introduction to Its Musical Basis* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968).
- Deacon, David, Michael Pickering, Peter Golding and Graham Murdock, *Researching Communications: a Practical Guide to Methods in Media and Culture Analysis* (London: Arnold, 1999).
- Denisoff, R. Serge and Mark H. Levine, 'The one dimension approach to popular music: a research note', in Timothy E. Scheurer (ed.), *American Popular Music: Reading From the Popular Press, Volume 1: the Nineteenth Century Tin Pan Alley* (Ohio: Bowling Green State University Press, 1989), pp. 9-15.
- Denzin, Norman K., 'Problems in analyzing elements of mass culture: notes on the popular songs and other artistic productions', *American Journal of Sociology*, 75:6 (1970), pp. 1035-8.
- Denzin, Norman K. and Yvonna S. Lincoln (eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994).
- 'Dianying gequ ci nanxie' 電影音樂詞難寫 (It's difficult to write lyrics for film song), *Dianying zhoubao*, 16 (October 1948), n.p.
- Du Yunzhi 杜雲之, *Zhongguo dianying shi* 中國電影史 (A history of Chinese films) (Taipei: Taiwan Commercial Press, 1971).
- 'Duiyu gequ ciju de yijian' 對歌曲詞句的意見 (Opinions about lyrics of songs),

- Shenbao*, 4 April 1940.
- Ellis, Henry, *Journal of the Proceedings of the Late Embassy to China* (London: John Murray, 1817; repr. Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1972).
- Fabbri, Franco, 'A theory of musical genres', in David Horn and Philip Tagg (eds), *Popular Music Perspectives* (Göteborg and London: IASPM, 1982), pp. 52-81.
- Fan Zuyin 樊祖蔭, *Zhongguo duoshengbu minge gailun* 中國多聲部民歌概論 (An outline of Chinese polyphonic folk songs) (Beijing: Remin yinyue chubanshe, 1994).
- Fangfei 芳菲, 'Shier dianzhong yihou buzhun boyin' 十二點鐘後不准播音 (No broadcasting after 12 o'clock), *Jingbao*, 6 July 1933.
- 'Fazujie kaiting shouyinji zhe zhuyi' 法租界開聽收音機者注意 (Beware, radio listeners in the French Concession), *Diansheng ribao*, 16 August 1933.
- Farrell, Gerry, 'The early days of the gramophone industry in India: historical, social and musical perspectives', *British Journal of Ethnomusicology*, 2 (1993), pp. 31-53.
- Feld, Steven and Aaron A. Fox, 'Music and language', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 23 (1994), pp. 25-53.
- Field, Andrew D., 'Selling souls in sin city: Shanghai singing and dancing hostess in prints, films, and politics, 1920-49', in Yingjin Zhang (ed.), *Cinema and Urban Culture in Shanghai, 1922-1943* (Stanford, Cali.: Stanford University Press, 1990), pp. 99-127.
- Fink, Robert, *The Origin of Music: an Essay* (Saskatoon: Greenwich, 1985).
- Forte, Allen, *The American Popular Ballad of the Golden Era, 1924-1950* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995).

- , ‘Secret of melody: line and design in the songs of Cole Porter’, *Musical Quarterly*, 77:4 (1993), pp. 607-47.
- Frith, Simon, *Performing Rites: on the Value of Popular Music* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996).
- , ‘The industrialization of popular music’, in James Lull (ed.), *Popular Music and Communication*, 2nd edn (London: Sage Publication, 1992), pp. 49-74.
- , ‘The popular music industry’, in Simon Frith, Will Straw and John Stree (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 26-52.
- , ‘Towards an aesthetics of popular music’, in Richard Leppert and Susan McClary (eds), *Music and Society: the Politics of Composition, Performance and Reception* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 133-49.
- , ‘Why do songs have words?’, in Simon Frith (ed.), *Music for Pleasure: Essays in Sociology of Pop* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), pp. 105-28.
- Gaisberg, Frederick William, *The Music Goes Round* (New York: Macmillan, 1942; repr. New York: Arno Press, 1977).
- Gammon, Vic, ‘Problems of method in the historical studies of popular music’, in David Horn and Philip Tagg (eds), *Popular Music Perspectives* (Göteborg and London: IASPM, 1982), pp. 16-31.
- Gao Ping 高平, ‘Yinli de yanyong’ 陰曆的沿用 (Continue using the lunar calendar), *Xinsheng zhoukan*, 1:1 (10 February 1934), pp. 13-14.
- ‘Ge diantai xubo waishang changpian’ 各電台續播外商唱片 (Radio stations resume the broadcasting of records of foreign companies), *Diansheng*, 4:30 (July 1935), p.

- 628.
- Gild, Gerlinde, 'Early 20th century "reforms" in Chinese music', *Chime*, 12-13 (1998), pp. 116-23.
- Green, Douglas M., *Form in Tonal Music: an Introduction to Analysis*, 2nd edn (London: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979).
- Gronow, Pekka, 'The record industry comes to the Orient', *Ethnomusicology*, 25:2 (1981), pp. 251-84.
- , 'The record industry: the growth of a mass medium', *Popular Music*, 3 (1983), pp. 53-75.
- Gubrium, Jaber F. and James A. Holstein (eds), *Handbook of Interview Research: Context & Method* (London: Sage Publication, 2002).
- Haishang kanyang shijiunian ke 海上看洋十九年客, 'Shenjiang louxi' 申江陋習 (Bad customs in Shanghai), *Shenbao*, the 11th day of the 3rd lunar month the year Kueyou (1873).
- 'Haishang shida gexing xuanju' 海上十大歌星選舉 (Ten best pop stars in Shanghai contest), *Gexing huabao*, 2 (September 1935), n.p.
- Hamm, Charles, *Music in the New World* (London: W. W. Norton and Company, 1983).
- , *Putting Popular Music in Its Place* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
- Han, Kuo-Huang, 'Folk songs of the Han Chinese: characteristics and classification', *Asian Music*, 20:2 (1989), pp. 107-28.
- , 'J. A. van Aalst and his *Chinese Music*', *Asian Music*, 19:2 (1988), pp. 127-30.

- Hauser, Ernest O., *Shanghai: City For Sale* (Shanghai: The Chinese-American Publishing Company, 1940).
- Hanna, Judith Lynne, 'Moving messages: identity and desire in popular music and social dance', in James Lull (ed.), *Popular Music and Communication* (London: Sage Publication, 1992), pp. 176-95.
- Hayakawa, S. I., 'Popular songs v.s. the facts of life', *ETC: A General Review of Semantics*, 12 (1995), pp. 83-95.
- He Lüting 賀綠汀 [Luo Ting 羅亭], 'Guanyu Li Jinhui' 關於黎錦暉 (About Li Jinhui), *Yinyue jiaoyu*, 2 (1934), pp. 32-4.
- , 'Zuo gequ de jijian chubu zhishi' 作歌曲的幾件初步知識 (Several facts of songwriting at the primary stage), *Diantong*, 10 (October 1935), n.p.
- Hennion, Antoine, 'The production of success: an anti-musicology of the pop song', *Popular Music*, 3 (1983), pp. 159-93.
- Hirsch, Paul M., 'Processing fads and fashions: an organization-set analysis of culture industry systems', *American Journal of Sociology*, 77:4 (1972), pp. 639-59.
- Ho, Wai-Chung, 'Between globalisation and localisation: a study of Hong Kong popular music', *Popular Music*, 22:2 (2003), pp. 143-57.
- Hongcao 紅草, 'Sui shi xiao shiqing ye shi da wenti' 雖是小事情也是大問題 (A trifle can be an issue), *Gexing huabao*, 4 (March 1935), p. 9.
- Horkheimer, Max and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1998).
- Horner, Bruce and Thomas Swiss (eds), *Key Terms in Popular Music and Culture* (Malden, Mass: Blackwell, 1999).

- Horton, Donald, 'The dialogue of courtship in popular songs', *American Journal of Sociology*, 62:6 (1957), pp. 569-78.
- Hoskins, Andrew, 'New memory: mediating history', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 21:4 (2001), pp. 333-46.
- Hu Junxiu 胡俊修, 'Shanbian: you chuantong xiangzhun xiandai – cong 20 shiji 30 niandai Shenbao guanggao kan jindai Shanghai shehui shenghuo bianqian' 嬗變：— 從20世紀30年代《申報》廣告看近代上海社會生活變遷 (The changes of social life in modern Shanghai: from traditional to pre-modern-based on the studies of Shun Pao's advertisements in the thirties of 20th century), *Journal of Zhoukou Teachers College*, 19:6 (2002), pp. 86-93.
- Hu Yuqing 胡郁青, 'Meisheng minzu changfa yitong tanwei' 美聲、民族唱法異同探微 (An initial investigation into similarities and dissimilarities between bel canto and ethnical singing), *Journal of Sichuan Normal University (Philosophy & Social Sciences)*, 5 (2000), pp. 60-62.
- Hu Zhimei 胡芝楣 (ed.), *Gepu di er ji* 歌譜第二集 (Songbook, issue 2) (Shanghai: Anding bieshu guangbo diantai, 1934).
- Hua Mei 華梅 (ed.), *Laoge daquan: 40-60 niandai Zhongguo liuxing gequ* 老歌大全：四〇—六〇年代中國流行歌曲 (The complete collection of old songs: Chinese popular songs, 40-60's) (Taipei: Wenhua tushu, 1989).
- Huang Guolong 黃國隆, *Zhongwai gujin yinyue chaoliu* 中外古今音樂潮流 (The trends in ancient and modern, Chinese and foreign music) (Taipei: Wuzhou chubanshe, 1970).
- Huang Hao, 'Yaogun yinyue: rethinking Mainland Chinese rock 'n' roll', *Popular*

- Music*, 20:1 (2001), pp. 1-11.
- Imperial Maritime Customs (eds), *Treaties, Conventions, Etc., Between China and Foreign States, vol. 1* (Shanghai: Statistical Department of the Inspectorate General of Customs, 1908).
- Ji 吉, 'Fang bielai wuyang de Bai Guang' 訪別來無恙的白光 (Interview: Bai Guang back and well), *Xin yingtan* 3:2 (1944), p. 28.
- Jin Shan 金山, 'Tantan gechang' 談談歌唱 (A few words on singing), *Dawanbao*, 22 April 1948.
- Jones, Andrew F., *Like a Knife: Ideology and Genre in Contemporary Chinese Popular Music* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell East Asia Series, 1992).
- , *Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in the Chinese Jazz Age* (London: Duke University Press, 2001).
- Karolyi, Otto, *Traditional African and Oriental Music* (London: Penguin Books, 1998).
- Kraus, Richard Kurt, *Piano and Politics in China: Middle Class Ambitions and the Struggle Over Western Music* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).
- Kuhn, Annette, *An Everyday Magic: Cinema and Culture Memory* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002).
- Kuhn, Philip A., 'The Taiping rebellion', in John K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 10: Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911, Part I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).
- Kuo Chang-Yang 郭長揚, *Chinese Art Song: a Melodic Analysis* (Taipei: Hwa Kang

- Press, College of Chinese Culture, 1972).
- Kwan, Kelina, 'Textual and melodic contour in Cantonese popular song', in M. Baroni and R. Dalmonte (eds), *Secondo Convegno Europeo Di Analisi Musicale, Vol. I* (Trento: Università di Trento, 1992), pp. 179-87.
- Labor Statistics in Shanghai, 1930-1937* (Shanghai: International Labor Office, China Branch, 1938).
- Lay, G. Tradescant, *The Chinese As They Are: Their Moral, Social, and Literary Character; with Succinct Views of Their Principal Arts and Sciences* (London : W. Ball and Co., 1841; repr. Boston Elibron Classics, 2005).
- Lee, Leo Ou-Fan 李歐梵, *Shanghai Modern: the Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999).
- Legge, James (trans.), *The Sacred Books of China: the Texts of Confucianism, Pt. 4* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885).
- Lester, Joel, *The Rhythms of Tonal Music* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986).
- Leung, Paul, 'Mandarin movies & Mandarin pop songs', in Law Kar 羅卡 (ed.), *Mandarin Films and Popular Songs, 40s-60s: Programme of the 17th Hong Kong International Film Festival* (Hong Kong: Urban Council, 1993), pp. 47-9.
- Levis, John Hazedel, *Foundations of Chinese Musical Art* (Peiping [Beijing]: Henri Vetch, 1936).
- Lewis, H. George, 'Who do you love? The dimensions of musical taste', in James Lull (ed.), *Popular Music and Communication* (London: Sage Publication, 1992), pp. 134-51.

- Li Boyuan 李伯元, *Modern Times: A Brief History of Enlightenment*, trans. Douglas Lancashire (with an introduction by Douglas Lancashire, Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1996).
- , *Wenming xiaoshi* 文明小史 (A short history of civilisation) (Beijing: Tongsu wenyi chubanshe, 1955).
- Li Suyuan 鄺蘇元 and Hu Jubin 胡菊彬, *Zhongguo wusheng dianying shi* 中國無聲電影史 (A history of Chinese silent films) (Beijing: Zhongguo dianying chubanshe, 1981).
- Li Yan 李岩, 'Dong laile chun haihui yuan ma: jinian Li Jinhui danchen 110 zhounian xueshu yantaohui yaodian shilu' 冬來了，春還會遠嗎？—紀念黎錦暉誕辰110週年學術研討會要點實錄 (Faithful record of the seminar on Li Jinhui's 110 birthday), *Musicology in China*, 1 (2001), pp. 141-4.
- Lindberg, Ulf, 'Popular modernism? The "urban" style of interwar Tin Pan Alley', *Popular Music*, 22:3 (2003), pp. 283-98.
- Link, E. Perry, 'Traditional-style popular urban fiction in the teens and twenties', in Merle Goldman (ed.), *Modern Chinese Literature in the May Fourth Era* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977), pp. 327-50.
- Liu Guowei 劉國煒, *Jinqu wushi nian: guoyu liuxing gequ shiyong baodian* 金曲五十年—國語流行歌曲實用寶典 (Fifty years of the golden songs: a practical treasury of Mandarin Chinese popular songs) (Taipei: Donggong guoji guanggao youxian gongsi, 1996).
- , *Laoge qingweiliao: liuxing gequ liushi nian* 老歌情未了—流行歌曲六十年

- (Endless love for old songs: sixty years of popular songs) (Taipei: Huafeng wenhua, 1997).
- Liu, James J. Y., *The Art of Chinese Poetry* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962).
- Liu Xing 劉星, *Zhongguo liuxing gequ yuanliu* 中國流行歌曲源流 (The origins of Chinese popular songs) (Taichung, Taiwan: Taiwan shengzhengfu xinwenchu, 1988).
- Liu Xue'an 劉雪庵, 'You "Chuzheng ge" shoudao yingqu de gailiang' 由「出征歌」說到影曲的改良 (From "The Song of Campaign": words on making better film songs), *Dianying wenhua*, 1 (October 1935), n.p.
- 'Liulang wenyng kao qu qu nanyang' 「柳浪聞鶯」靠曲去南洋 (*Orioles in Willow Waves* exported to Southeast Asia for its songs), *Dianying hua*, 11 (August 1948), n.p.
- Liuli 琉璃, 'Shenglong huohu de jieshao' 「生龍活虎」的介紹 (Introducing *Extremely Forceful*), *Mingxing banyuekan* (1937), n.p.
- London, Kurt, *Film Music: A Summary of the Characteristic Features of Its History, Aesthetics, Technique; and Possible Developments* (London: Faber & Faber, 1936).
- Longhurst, Brian, *Popular Music and Society* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).
- Lopes, Paul D., 'Innovation and diversity in the popular music industry, 1969 to 1990', *American Sociology Review*, 57:1 (1992), pp. 56-71.
- Lu, Hanchao 盧漢超, *Beyond the Neon Lights: Everyday Shanghai in the Early Twentieth Century* (Berkeley, Cali. and London: University of California Press, 1999).

- McIntyre, Bryce T., Christine Cheng Wai Sum and Zhang Weiyu, 'Cantopop: the voice of Hong Kong', *Journal of Asian and Pacific Communication*, 12:2 (2002), pp. 217-243
- MacDonald, Glenn M., 'The economics of rising stars', *The American Economic Review*, 78:1 (1988), pp. 155-66.
- Manuel, Peter, *Cassette Culture: Popular Music and Technology in North India* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1993).
- , *Popular Music of Non-Western World: An Introduction Survey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).
- Martin, Peter J., *Sounds and Society: Themes in the Sociology of Music* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995).
- Mathews, Gordon, 'Fence, flavor, and phantasm: Japanese musicians and the meanings of "Japaneseness"', *Japanese Studies*, 24:3 (2004), pp. 335-50.
- McCracken, Allison, 'Real men don't sing ballads: the radio crooner in Hollywood, 1929-1933', in Pamela Robertson Wojcik and Arthur Knight (eds), *Soundtrack Available: Essays on Film and Popular Music* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001), pp. 105-33.
- Meadows, Eddie S., 'A preliminary analysis of early rhythm and blues musical practices', 7:3 (1983), pp. 172-82.
- 'Meikuangyuxia de boyin tuanti' 每況愈下的播音團體 (Broadcasting groups get worse every time), *Yule zhoubao*, 2:20 (May 1936), p. 389.
- Meyer, Leonard B., *Explaining Music: Essays and Explorations* (London: University of California Press, 1973).

- Middleton, Richard, 'Popular music analysis and musicology: bridging the gap', in Richard Middleton (ed.), *Reading Pop: Approaches to Textual Analysis in Popular Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 104-21.
- , *Studying Popular Music* (London: Open University Press, 1990).
- 'Mingxing yingpian gongsi gexin xuanyan' 明星影片公司革新宣言 (Declaration of the reformation of Star Motion Picture), *Jingbao*, 20 July 1936.
- Mingxing she 明星社 (eds), *Dianying mingge ji* 電影歌曲集 (A collection of famous film songs) (Shanghai: Dongfang shuju, 1939).
- Moon, Krystyn R., *Yellow Face: Creating the Chinese in American Popular Music and Performances, 1850s-1920s* (London: Rutgers University Press, 2005).
- Mooney, Hughson F., 'Popular music since the 1920's: the significance of shifting taste', *American Quarterly*, 20:1 (1968), pp. 67-85.
- , *Rock: the Primary Text: Developing a Musicology of Rock*, 2nd edn (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001).
- , 'Songs, singers and society, 1890-1954', *American Quarterly*, 60:3 (1954), pp. 221-32.
- Negus, Keith, *Popular Music in Theory: an Introduction* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1996).
- , *Producing Pop: Culture and Conflict in the Popular Music Industry* (London: Arnold, 1992).
- Ng, Mau-Sang, 'Popular fiction and the culture of everyday life: a cultural analysis of Qin Shouou's Qiuhaitang', *Modern China*, 20:2 (1994), pp. 131-56.
- North-China Hong List* (Shanghai: North-China Daily News & Herald Ltd., 1930).

- Ostransky, Leory, *The Anatomy of Jazz* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1960).
- Ouyang Feiying 歐陽飛鶯, *Wo chang Xianggelila: Ouyang Feiying huiyi lu* 我唱香格里拉：歐陽飛鶯回憶錄 (I sing Shangri-la: a memoir of Ouyang Feiyin) (Taipei: Yuzhouguang chubanshe, 1998).
- Pang, Laikwan, *Building Up a New China in Cinema: the Chinese Left-Wing Cinema Movement, 1932-1937* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002).
- Perlis, Vivian, 'Oral history and music', *The Journal of American History*, 81:2 (1994), pp. 610-19.
- Peterson, Richard A., 'Why 1955? Explaining the advent of rock music', *Popular Music*, 9:1 (1990), pp. 97-116.
- Peterson, Richard A. and David G. Berger, 'Cycles in symbol production: the case of popular music', *American Sociological Review*, 40:2 (1975), pp. 158-73.
- Picken, Laurance E. R., 'The musical implications of Chinese song-texts with unequal lines, and the significance of nonsense-syllables, with special reference to art-songs of the Song Dynasty', *Musica Asiatica*, 3 (1981), pp. 53-77.
- Pope, Edgar W., 'Signifying China: exoticism in prewar Japanese popular music', in Tôru Mitsui (ed.), *Popular Music: Intercultural Interpretations* (Kanazawa, Japan: Graduate Program in Music, Kanazawa University, 1998), pp. 111-20.
- Power, William Tyrone, *Recollections of a Three Years' Residence in China; Including Peregrinations in Spain, Morocco, Egypt, India, Australia, and New-Zealand* (London: Richard Bentley, 1853).

- Pu 浦, 'Shouyin zayi' 收音雜憶 (Miscellaneous memories of radio), *Shanghai wuxiandian*, 12, (June 1938), n.p.
- Pu Canxiu 浦嫠修, 'Qiwen gongshang' 奇文共賞 (Marvellous writings to be read), *Shanghai wuxiandian*, 13 (July 1938), n.p.
- Qian Nairong 錢乃榮, *Shanghai fangyan liyu* 上海方言俚語 (The Shanghai dialect and slang) (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexue yuan chubanshe, 1989).
- Qian Renkang 錢仁康, 'Zhao Yuenren de gequ chuanguo' 趙元任的歌曲創作 (Zhao Yuan-Ren's art song), *Musicology in China*, 1 (1988), pp. 7-14.
- Qin Qiming 秦啟明 (ed.), *Yinyuejia Ren Guang* 音樂家任光 (The musician Ren Guang) (Anhui, China: Anhui wenyi chubanshe, 1988).
- 'Quanshi geyongjie boyin jiemubiao' 全市歌詠界播音節目表 (A timetable of singing clubs in the city), *Gexing huabao*, 2 (September 1935), p. 16.
- Reed, Christopher A., 'Re/collecting the sources: Shanghai's Dianshizhai Pictorial and its place in historical memories, 1884-1949', *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture*, 12:2 (2000), pp. 44-71.
- Riesman, David, 'Listening to popular music', *American Quarterly*, 20:4 (1950), pp. 359-71.
- Ryan, John and Richard A. Peterson, 'The product image: the fate of creativity in country music songwriting', in James S. Ettema and D. Charles Whitney (eds), *Individuals in Mass Media Organizations: Creativity and Constraint* (London: Sage Publication, 1982), pp. 11-32.
- Sadie, Stanley (ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London : Macmillan, 1980).

- Saito Kyouharu 齊藤孝治, *Nie Er: shanliang de shengya* 聶耳—閃亮的生涯 (Nie Er: a splendid life), trans. Zhuang Li 莊麗 (Shanghai: Shanghai yinyue chubanshe, 2003).
- ‘Sanda boyin gexing jingxuan de yiyi’ 三大播音歌星競選的意義 (The significance of top three radio singers contest), *Dawanbao*, 26 May 1934.
- ‘Sanda boying gexing jingxuan da jiexiao’ 三大播音歌星競選大揭曉 (The result of top three radio singers contest), *Dawanbao*, 14 June 1934.
- Scheurer, Timothy E., ‘Thou witty: the evolution and triumph of style in lyric writing, 1890-1950’, in Timothy E. Scheurer (ed.), *American Popular Music: Reading Form the Popular Press, Volume 1: the Nineteenth Century Tin Pan Alley* (Ohio: Bowling Green State University Press, 1989), pp. 104-19.
- Schutz, Alfred, ‘Making music together: a study in social relationship’, in Arvid Broderon (ed.), *Collective Papers II: Studies in Social Theory* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), pp. 159-78.
- Sergeant, Harriet, *Shanghai* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1991).
- Sha Hanqun 沙漢昆, *Zhongguo minge de jiegou yu xuanfa* 中國民歌的結構與旋法 (The structure and melody of Chinese folk songs) (Shanghai: Shanghai yiyue chubanshe, 1998).
- Shanghai Directory* (Shanghai: North-China Daily News & Herald Ltd., 1941).
- Shanghai Hong List* (Shanghai: The Investigation Bureau of Commerce and Industry, 1939 and 1940).
- Shanghai Municipal Council (ed.), *Shanghai gonggong zujie gongbuju nianbao* 上海

- 公共租界工部局年報 (The annual report of Shanghai Municipal Council)
(Shanghai: Shanghai Municipal Council, 1932, 1933 and 1934).
- Shanghai shehui kexueyuan lishi yanjiusuo 上海社會科學院歷史研究所 (eds),
Shanghai xiaodaohui qiyi shiliao huibian 上海小刀會起義史料彙編 (Collection
of historical materials on the Shanghai Small Sword Uprising) (Shanghai:
Shanghai remin chubanshe, 1958; repr. 1980).
- ‘Shanghai swing’, *Post Magazine*, *Sunday Morning Post* (Hong Kong, 7 December
2003), pp. 10-4.
- Shanghai tong she 上海通社 (ed.), *Shanghai yanjiu ziliao xuji* 上海研究料續集
(Shanghai research materials vol. 2) (Shanghai: Shanghai tong she, 1935).
- Shanghai wenhua yishu zhi bianzuan weiwenhui Shanghai yiyue zhi bianjibu 上海文
化藝術誌編纂委員會上海音樂誌編輯部 (eds), *Shanghai yinyue zhi* 上海音樂誌
(Shanghai music chronicle) (Shanghai, 2001).
- Shanghai zujie zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui 上海租界誌編纂委員會 (eds), *Shanghai
zujie zhi* 上海租界誌 (A chronicle of concessions in Shanghai) (Shanghai:
Shanghai shehui kexue yuan chubanshe, 2001).
- Shanghaishi dang’anguan 上海市檔案館 (eds.), *Riwei Shanghai shizhengfu* 日偽上
海市政府 (Japanese puppet Shanghai city government) (Beijing: Dangan
chubanshe, 1986).
- Shanghaishi dang’an guan 上海市檔案館, Beijing guangbo xueyuan 北京廣播學院
and Shanghaishi guangbo dianshi ju 上海市廣播電視局 (eds), *Jiu Zhongguo de
Shanghai guangbo shiye* 舊中國的上海廣播事業 (The broadcasting industry of

- Shanghai in old China) (Beijing: Guangbo dianshi chubanshe, 1985).
- Shen'ao 神葵, 'Xin nüxing haile baidai' 新女性害了百代 (*New Women harmed Pathé*), *Jingbao*, 15 May 1935.
- Shepherd, John, 'A theoretical model for the sociomusicological analysis of popular musics', *Popular music*, 2 (1982), pp. 145-77.
- Shi Kangqiang 施康強, 'Yijousanliunian wuyue ershiyiri, Shanghai' 一九三六年五月二十一日, 上海 (21st May 1936, Shanghai), *Dushu*, 2 (1994), pp. 41-7.
- Shuhua 樹華, 'Mingxing lu nanxing baowei Zhou Xuan Bai Hong' 明星路難行 包圍周璇白虹 (Difficult pass – Zhou Xuan and Bai Hong surrounded), *Dianying ribao*, 15 May 1941.
- Shuijing 水晶, 'Geci zhi mei: tantan liuxing laoge de geci chuangzuo' 歌詞之美：談談流行老歌的歌詞創作 (The beauty of lyrics: a few words on the composition of lyrics of old popular songs), in Shuijing (ed.), *Guiguan yu heye* 桂冠與荷葉 (Laureate and lotus leaf) (Taipei: Jiuge chubanshe, 1990), pp. 143-56.
- , 'Li Jinguang tan liuxing laoge' 黎錦光談流行老歌 (Li Jinguang on old popular songs), *Lianhebao*, 22 and 23 December 1988.
- , *Liuxing gequ cangsang ji* 流行歌曲滄桑記 (A record of the vicissitudes of popular song) (Taipei: Dadi chubanshe, 1985).
- Siji 司基, 'Zhongguo dianying xingezatan' 中國電影新歌雜譚 (Rambling on new Chinese film songs), *Shengbao*, 22 December 1938.
- Solie, Ruth A., 'Melody and the historiography of music', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 43:2 (1982), pp. 297-308.

- Solomon Larry, 'Solomon's glossary of technical musical terms', web publication, on Solomon's Resources of Music Theory and Composition
<<http://solomonsmusic.net/glossary.htm>>, accessed 13 April 2005.
- Steen, Andreas, 'Zhou Xuan: when will the gentleman come back again', *Chime*, 14-15 (1999/2000), pp. 124-53.
- Stefani, Gino, 'Melody: a popular perspective', *Popular Music*, 6:1 (1987), pp. 21-35.
- Stefani, Gino and Luca Marconi, 'Melody: prototypes, family airs, modes of sign production', *Contemporary Music Review*, 17:3 (1998), pp. 57-67.
- Stephenson, Ken, *What to Listen for in Rock: a Stylistic Analysis* (London: Yale University Press, 2002).
- Stock, Jonathan, 'An ethnomusicological perspective on musical style, with reference to music for Chinese two-stringed fiddles', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 118:2 (1993), pp. 276-99.
- , 'Reconsidering the past: Zhou Xuan and the rehabilitation of early twentieth-century popular music', *Asian Music*, 26:2 (1995), pp. 119-35.
- , *Huju: Traditional Opera in Modern Shanghai* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).
- Stratton, Jon, 'Capitalism and romantic ideology in the record business', *Popular Music*, 3 (1983), pp. 143-56.
- Studwell, William E., 'Intergenerational flow of popular music: the positive example of Glenn Miller', *Music Reference Services Quarterly*, 6:3 (1998), pp. 59-63.
- Syle, Edward W., 'On the musical notation of the Chinese', *Journal of the North-China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 2 (1859), pp. 176-179.

- Szabolcsi, Bence, *A History of Melody*, trans. Cynthia Jolly and Sára Karig (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1965).
- Tagg, Philip, 'Analysing popular music: theory, method and practice', *Popular music*, 2 (1982), 37-67.
- Tan Yi 譚憶, 'Chuchuang chenlie: zui wei youxiao zhi guanggao' 櫥窗陳列—最為有效之廣告 (Window exhibition: the most effective advertising), *Baidai yuekan*, 1:1 (July 1937), pp. 19-20
- Tang Yating, 'Musical life in the Jewish refugee community in Shanghai: popular and art music', *Journal of Music in China*, 4 (2002), pp. 167-86.
- Tang Zhenchang (ed.), *Shanghai's Journey to Prosperity, 1842-1949* (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 1996).
- 'Tantan gechang' 談談歌唱 (A few words on singing), *Dawanbao*, 22 April 1948.
- Taylor, Timothy D., 'Music and the rise of radio in 1920s America: technological imperialism, sociolization, and the transformation of intimacy', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 22:4 (2002), pp. 425-43.
- Temperly, David, 'Syncopation in rock: a perceptual perspective', *Popular Music*, 18:1 (1999), pp. 19-40.
- The Nanking Government's Laws and Regulations, Vol. VI* (Shanghai: British Chamber of Commerce, 1931).
- 'The Shanghai boom', *Fortune*, 11:1 (January 1935), pp. 30-40.
- Thrasher, Alan R., 'The melodic structure of Jiangnan sizhu', *Ethnomusicology*, 29 (1985), pp. 237-63.
- , 'The sociology of Chinese music: an introduction', *Asian Music*, 12:2 (1981), pp.

17-53.

‘Tianya genü jingcai’ 天涯歌女精彩 (The brilliant Wandering Songstress), *Dianying ribao*, 18 October 1940.

Toynbee, Jason, *Making Popular Music: Musicians, Creativity and Institutions* (London: Arnold, 2000).

Tzang Ding-Sng 臧汀生, ‘Taiyu shengdiao yu taiyu geyao’ 台語聲調與台語歌謠 (Tones in Taiwanese and Taiwanese folk songs), in Lin Songyuan 林松源 (ed.), *Taiwan minjian wenxue xueshu yantaohui lunwen ji* 台灣民間文學學術研討會論文集 (Proceedings of the symposium on Taiwanese folk literature) (Zhanghua, Taiwan: Taiwansheng huangxi wenhua xuehui, 1997), pp. 427-447.

van Aalst, J. A., *Chinese Music* (Shanghai: Statistical Department of the Inspectorate General of Customs, 1884; repr. New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corp, 1964).

van der Merwe, Peter, *Origins of the Popular Style: the Antecedents of the Twentieth-Century Popular Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

Vignolle, Jean-Pierre, ‘Mixing genres and reaching the public: the production of popular music’, *Social Science Information*, 19:1 (1980), pp. 79-105.

Waara, Carrie ‘Invention, industry, art: the commercialization of culture in Republican art magazines’, in Sherman Cochran (ed.), *Inventing Nanjing Road: Commercial Culture in Shanghai, 1900-1945* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell East Asia Series, 1999), pp. 61-89.

Wagner, Naphtali, ‘Fixing a hole in the scale: suppressed notes in the Beatles’ songs’, *Popular Music*, 23:3 (2004), pp. 257-69.

Wakeman, Frederic E., *Policing Shanghai, 1927-1937* (London: University of

- California Press, 1995).
- Wang Wenhe 王文和, *Zhongguo dianying yinyue xunzong* 中國電影音樂尋蹤 (Tracing Chinese film music) (Beijing: Zhongguo guangbo dianshi chubanshe, 1995).
- Wang, William S-Y, *Languages and Dialect of China* (Berkeley, Cali.: Project on Linguistic Analysis, 1991).
- Wang Yuhe 汪毓和, 'New music of China: its development under the blending of Chinese and Western cultures through the first half of twentieth century, part I', *Journal of Music in China*, 30:1 (2001), pp. 1-40.
- , 'New music of China: its development under the blending of Chinese and Western cultures through the first half of twentieth century, part II', *Journal of Music in China*, 30:2 (2001), pp. 187-228.
- , *Zhongguo jinxindai yinyue shi* 中國近現代音樂史 (A history of Chinese contemporary and modern music), 2nd edn (Beijing: People's Music Press, 1994).
- Warburton, Annie O., *Melody Writing and Analysis*, 2nd edn (London: Longmans, 1960).
- 'We have Chinese New Year with us again', *The China Weekly Review*, 67:11 (10 February 1934), p. 397
- Wei, Betty Peh-T'i, *Shanghai: Crucible of Modern China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).
- Weisethaunet, Hans, 'Is there such a thing as the "blue note"?' , *Popular Music*, 20:1 (2001), pp. 99-116.
- Wong, Patrick C. M. and Randy L. Diehl, 'How can the lyrics of a song in a tone

- language be understood?', *Psychology of Music*, 30 (2002), pp. 202-209.
- Wong Kee-Chee 黃奇智, *The Age of Shanghainese Pops: 1930-1970* (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing, 2001).
- Wu Dingbo and Patrick D. Murphy (eds), *Handbook of Chinese Popular Culture* (London: Greenwood Press, 1994).
- Wu Jian 吳劍 (ed.), *Jieyu hua – Zhongguo sansishi niandai liuxing gequ* 解語花—中國三四十年代流行歌曲 (Jieyu flower: Chinese popular songs from the 30s and 40s) (Harbin: Beifang wenzue chubanshe, 1997).
- , *Jieyu hua – Zhongguo sansishi niandai liuxing gequ* 解語花 (續集一) —中國三四十年代流行歌曲 (Jieyu flower (sequel 1): Chinese popular songs from the 30s and 40s) (Harbin: Beifang wenzue chubanshe, 1998).
- , *Jieyu hua – Zhou Xuan de ge erbai shou* 解語花 (續集二) —周璇的歌二百首 (Jieyu flower (sequel 2): 200 songs of Zhou Xuan) (Harbin: Beifang wenzue chubanshe, 1999).
- Wu Junda 武俊達, *Kunqu changqiang yanjiu* 崑曲唱腔研究 (A study on the singing style and melody of kunqu) (Beijing: Remin yinyue chubanshe, 1987).
- 'Xiren changpian Shang xianzhi bosong changpian: guangbo diantai dashou daji' 西人唱片商限制播送唱片—廣播電台大受打擊 (Western record companies place restrictions on airplay: radio stations under vehement attacks), *Diansheng*, 4:27 (July 1935), p. 563
- Xin Ping 忻平, *Cong Shanghai faxian lishi: xiandaihua jingcheng zhong de Shanghai ren ji qi Sshehui shenghuo, 1927-1937* 從上海發現歷史—現代化進程

- 中的上海人及其社會生活1927-1937 (Discovering history from Shanghai: people and their social life in Shanghai in the process of modernisation, 1927-1937) (Shanghai: Shanghai remin chubanshe, 1996).
- ‘Xinhua gongsi sheli gewu zu’ 新華公司設立歌舞組 (Hsin Hwa Motion Picture set up song-and-dance unit) *Xinhua huabao*, 4:1 (April 1939), n.p.
- Xiong Yuezhi 熊月之 (ed.), *Shanghai tongshi*, vol. 9: *minguo shehui* 上海通史 第九卷 民國社會 (A general history of Shanghai, vol. 9: society in the Republican era) (Shanghai: Remin chubanshe, 1999).
- Xu Ruhui 許如輝, ‘Ge xiandai yuejia ji gechangjia’ 給現代樂家及歌唱家 (For contemporary musicians and vocalists), *Gexing huabao*, 4 (December 1935), p. 8.
- Xu Guozhen 徐國禎, *Shanghai Shenghuo* 上海生活 (Shanghai life) (Shanghai: Shijie shuju, 1933).
- Xu Weigong 徐為公, ‘Xiezai haishang shida gexing xuanju shi: yong shemo biao zhun lai xuanju women weilai de gexing?’ 寫在海上十大歌星選舉時——用什麼標準來選舉我們未來的歌星? (At the time of ten best pop stars in Shanghai contest: what is the criteria for selecting our future singers?), *Gexing huabao*, 3 (October 1935), p. 11.
- Xu Wenxia 許文霞, ‘Wode fuqin Xu Ruhui yu Zhongguo zaoqi liuxing gequ’ 我的父親許如輝與中國早期流行歌曲 (My father Xu Ruhui and Chinese early popular songs), *Musicology in China*, 1 (2001), 63-77.
- , ‘Xu Ruhui yu mingqu “Yongbiele wo de didi”’ 許如輝與名曲《永別了弟弟》 (Xu Ruhui and the famous song ‘Farewell My Younger Brother’), *Shanghai tan*, 3

- (2003), pp. 60-1.
- Yapo 雅珀, 'Bai Guang shi zheyang yiuyu de' 白光是這樣憂鬱的 (So melancholic is Bai Guang), *Dianying zhoubao* 3 (31 July 1948), n.p.
- Yamaguchi Yoshiko 山口淑子 and Fujiwara Sakuya 藤原作彌, *Wode qianbansheng: Li Xianglan zhuan* 我的前半生—李香蘭 (The first half of my life: the biography of Li Xianglan), trans. He Ping 何平 and Zhang Li 張利 (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 1987).
- Yang Jiayou 楊嘉祐, 'Bange shiji de Shanghai xiaobao' 半世紀的上海小報 (Shanghai tabloids during the half century), *Dang'an chunqiu*, 3 (2002), pp. 41-7.
- Yang Ruiqing 楊瑞慶, *Zhongguo mingge xuanlü xingtai* 中國民歌旋律形態 (The melodic patterns of Chinese folk songs) (Shanghai: Shanghai yinyue chubanshe, 2002).
- Yang Xiaolu 楊曉魯 and Zhang Zhengtao 張振濤 (eds), *Zhongwai tongsu gequ jianshang cidian* 中外通俗歌曲鑑賞辭典 (A dictionary of appreciation of Chinese and foreign popularised songs) (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 1990).
- 'Yangqingui koushu: Mick Korin' 洋琴鬼口述—Mick Korin (Foreigner instrumentalists' own words: Mick Korin), *Tiaowu ribao*, 10 March 1941.
- 'Yangqingui koushu: Tino' 洋琴鬼口述—Tino (Foreigner instrumentalists' own words: Tino), *Tiaowu ribao*, 11 March 1941.
- Ye Gan-lin, 'A preliminary study of the numerical characteristics of Chinese folk songs', *Chinese Music*, 18:2 (1995), pp. 34-8.
- , 'A preliminary study of the numerical characteristics of Chinese folk songs II',

- Chinese Music*, 18:3 (1995), pp. 44-8.
- Yeh, Wen-Hsin 葉文心, 'Shanghai modernity: commerce and culture in a republican city', *China Quarterly*, 150 (1997), pp. 375-94.
- Yibai nian de gesheng* 一百年的歌聲 (official English title: *The Last Century Pop Music of China*), a four-series documentary first broadcast on Channel 10, China Central Television, 22~25 January 2004.
- Yin Mengxing 殷夢醒 (ed.), *Dianying mingge yiqian qu* 電影名歌一千曲 (1000 famous film songs) (Shanghai: Xingguang gewu yanjiushe, 1934).
- Yingying, Madame 鶯鶯女士 (ed.), *Dianying mingge wubai qu* 電影名歌五百曲 (500 famous film songs) (Shanghai: Xingguang gewu yanjiushe, 1935).
- Yu Ling 于伶, *Ye Shanghai* 夜上海 (*Shanghai night*), in *Yuling juzuo xuan* 于伶劇作選 (A selection of Yu Ling's stage plays) (Beijing: Renmin wenzue chubanshe, 1979).
- Yupian 羽片, 'Yongsu de dushi yiyue' 庸俗的都市音樂 (The vulgar urban music), *Xinyiyue yuekan (Huananban)*, 1:2 (May 1946), p. 30.
- Yuan Jian 袁劍, 'Cong Lipai yinyue shuo dao shidaiqu' 從黎派音樂說到時代曲 (From Li's music to songs of the time), *Xinyinyue yuekan*, 1:4 (August 1946), p. 23.
- Yuan Jin 袁進, *Yuanyang hudie pai* 鴛鴦蝴蝶派 (Mandarin duck and butterfly school) (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1994).
- 'Zai tiaowuting: shenghuo huaxiang' 在跳舞廳—生活畫像 (At a dancehall: a portrayal of daily life), *Dawanbao*, 13 December 1940.
- Zak, Vladimir, 'Asafev's theory of intonation and the analysis of popular songs',

- Popular Music*, 2 (1982), pp. 91-111.
- Zhang Xiaohu 張肖虎, *Wushengxing diaoshi ji hesheng shoufa* 五聲性調式及和聲手法 (Pentatonic modes and harmonic techniques) (Beijin: Remin yinyue chubanshe).
- Zhang Zhongli 張仲禮 (ed.), *Jindai shanghai chengshi yanjiu* 近代上海城市研究 (Modern Shanghai studies) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1991).
- ‘Zhenggao boyin diantai’ 正告播音台 (Admonishment to radio stations), *Shenbao*, 5 June 1940.
- Zheng Yimei 鄭逸梅, *Shubao hua jiu* 書報話舊 (Talk of old times in books and newspapers) (Shanghai: Xuelin chubanshe, 1983).
- ‘Zhengli guangbo jiemu zhi banfa’ 整理廣播節目之辦法 (Procedures for regulating broadcast programmes), *Yule zhoubao* 2:27 (July 1935), p. 531.
- Zhengxie Hunansheng Xiangtanshi weiyuanhui wenshi ziliao yanjiu weiyuanhui 政協湖南省湘潭市委員會文史資料研究委會 and Hunan Xiangtan Li Jinhui yishuguan 湖南湘潭黎錦暉藝術館, *Li Jinhui* 黎錦暉 (Li Jinhui) (Hunan, China, 1994).
- ‘Zhiyi dayuedui fengtou jian’ 知音大樂隊鋒頭健 (The Appreciation Band makes a showy display), *Tiaowu ribao*, 19 March 1942.
- Zhongguo yishu yanjiuyuan yinyue yanjiusuo 中國藝術研究院音樂研究所, *Minzu yinyue gailun* 民族音樂概論 (An introduction to Chinese ethnic music) (Taipei: Shijie wenwu chubanshe, 1994).
- Zhou Wei 周偉 and Chang Jing 常晶, *Wo de mama Zhou Xuan* 我的媽媽周璇 (My mother Zhou Xuan) (Taiyuan: Shanxi jiaoyu chubanshe, 1987).

Zhou Xiaoyan 周小燕, 'Zhongguo shengyue yishu de fazhan gui' 中國聲樂藝術的發展軌跡 (Tracing the development of Chinese vocal art) in Liu Ching-chih and Barbara Fei (eds), *Papers and Proceedings of Two Seminars on Vocal Music in China* (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong, Centre of Asian Studies, 1998), pp. 3-22.

'Zhou Xuan zhi Tianya genü chaqu Baidai gongsi guanwei changpian' 周璇之天涯歌女插曲 百代公司灌為唱片 (Pathé Records made recordings for Zhou Xuan's brilliant film songs in *The Wandering Songstress*), *Dazhong yingxun*, 30 (February 1941).

Zhu Junzhou 祝均宙, 'Shanghai xiaobao de lishi yange' 上海小報的歷史沿革 (A history of Shanghai tabloids), *Xinwen jianjiu ziliao*, 42 (1988), pp. 137-53.

Zou Yiren 鄒依仁, *Jiu Shanghai renkou bianqian de yanjiu* 舊上海人口變遷的研究 (Research on population change in old Shanghai) (Shanghai: Shanghai remin chubanshe, 1980).

Chinese-language Periodicals

Baidai yuekan 百代半月刊 (Pathé seminonthly)

Beiyang huabao 北洋畫報 (North China pictorial)

Boyin tiandi 播音天地 (Broadcast world)

Boyinjie 播音界 (Broadcast circle)

Dafengbao 大風報 (The wind daily news)

Dawanbao 大晚報 (The China evening news)

- Dazhong yingxun* 大眾影訊 (Popular cinema news)
- Diansheng* 電聲 (Movietone)
- Diantong banyue huabao* 電通畫報 (Denton pictorial)
- Diantong zazhi* 電通雜誌 (Denton gazette)
- Dianying gushi* 電影故事 (Film story)
- Dianying huabao* 電影畫報 (The screen pictorial)
- Dianying huaju* 電影話劇 (Cinema and stage play)
- Dianying ribao* 電影日報 (Movie daily news)
- Dianying wenhua* 電影文化 (Advocate of culture in cinema)
- Dianying zhoubao* 電影週報 (Cinema weekly news)
- Gexing huabao* 歌星畫報 (Pop star pictorial)
- Guangbo yuekan* 廣播月刊 (Broadcast monthly)
- Guangbo wuxiandian* 廣播無線電 (Broadcast and radio)
- Jingbao* 晶報 (The crystal daily)
- Kaiming* 開明 (Enlightenment)
- Liangyou huabao* 良友畫報 (The young companion)
- Lianhebao* 聯合報 (United daily news)
- Lianhua huabao* 聯華畫報 (United China pictorial)
- Mingxing banyuekan* 明星半月刊 (Movie star semimonthly)
- Qingqing dianying* 青青電影 (Evergreen film magazine)
- Shanghai huabao* 上海畫報 (Shanghai pictorial)
- Shanghai wuxiandian* 上海無線電 (Shanghai radio weekly)

Shenpao 申報 (Shanghai daily news, or originally titled *The Shun Pao Daily*)

Tiaowu ribao 跳舞日報 (Daily dance review)

Xianle huabao 仙樂畫報 (Ciro's pictorial)

Xin yingxing 新銀星 (Silverland)

Xinhua huabao 新華畫報 (New China pictorial, or originally titled *Hsinhua in Pictures*)

Xinsheng zhoukan 新生週刊 (New life weekly)

Xinwenbao 新聞報 (The news)

Xinyinyue yuekan 新音樂月刊 (New music monthly)

Xinyiyue yuekan (Huananban) 新音樂月刊 (New music monthly (South China edition))

Yinhai huabao 銀海畫報 (Silver sea pictorial)

Yingmi julebu 影迷俱樂部 (Film fan club)

Yingmi zhoubao 影迷週報 (Film fan weekly news)

Yingwu ribao 影舞日報 (Film and dance daily news)

Yingxi zazhi 影戲雜誌 (Film magazine)

Yinyue jiaoyu 音樂教育 (Music education)

Yinyue shijie 音樂世界 (Music world)

Yisheng 藝聲 (Art sound)

Yule Zhoubao 娛樂週報 (Variety weekly)

Zhongguo dianying huabao 中國電影畫報 (China film pictorial)

Zhongguo wuxiandian 中國無線電 (China wireless)

Discography

- 30-50 niandai baidai qianxi shiji jingxuan xilie* 30-50年代百千禧世紀精選系列
(Highlights of the 30s and 50s of Pathé millennium edition), 2000, EMI (Hong Kong), 2 Audio CDs, 7243 5 29043 27.
- Bai Guang 白光, *Lian zhi huo, Baidai bainian xilie 12* 戀之火—百代百年系列12
(Fire of love, a hundred years of Pathé, vol.12), 2005, EMI (Hong Kong), Audio CD, 0094633129221.
- , *Ruguo meiyou ni, Baidai Zhongguo shidai qu mingdian 20* 如果沒有你—百代中國時代曲名典20 (If living without you, The legendary Chinese hits, vol.20), 1992, EMI (Hong Kong), Audio CD, FH 81020 2.
- Bai Hong 白虹 *Lang shi chunri feng, Baidai Zhongguo shidai qu mingdian 18* 郎是春日風—百代中國時代曲名典20 (He is the spring wind, The legendary Chinese hits, vol.18), 1992, EMI (Hong Kong), Audio CD, FH 81018 2.
- Bai Hong and Zhou Xuan 白虹、周璇 *Zuiren de kouhong, Baidai bainian xilie 4* 醉人的口紅—百代百年系列4 (Enchanting lipstick, a hundred years of Pathé, vol.4), 2005, EMI (Hong Kong), Audio CD, 009433145122.
- Gong Qiuxia, Zhang Fan, Chen Qi and Chen Juanjuan 龔秋霞、張凡、陳琦、陳娟娟, *Si jiemei, Baidai bainian xilie 17* 四姊妹—百代百年系列17 (Four sisters, a hundred years of Pathé, vol.17), 2005, EMI (Hong Kong), Audio CD, 0094633159327.
- Lin, Jenny, *Chinoiserie*, 2000, BIS, Audio CD, 1046189.

- Qu Yunyun 屈雲雲, *Zhongguo Shanghai huaqiang nügaoyin Qu Yunyun jingdian mingqu* 中國上海花腔女高音屈雲雲經典名曲 (The classics of coloratura soprano Qu Yunyun of Shanghai China), private release, 2 Audio CDs, no issue number.
- Shanghai dianying ji, Baidai bainian xilie 26* 上海電影歌集 百代百年系列26 (A selection of Songs from Shanghai films, a hundred years of Pathé, vol.26), 2005 EMI (Hong Kong), Audio CD, 0094634468428.
- Wen Chin-Lung 溫金龍, *Erhu chuanshuo* 二胡傳說 (The legend of erhu fiddle), 2002, BMG (Taiwan), Audio CD, 74321373922.
- Yao Li 姚莉, *Dongfang jingdian shuang CD xianliang zhencang ban – san* 東方經典雙CD限量珍藏版—參 (Classic of the Orient double CD collector's limited edition vol.1), 2001, EMI (Malaysia), 2 Audio CDs, 7243 5 37391 26.
- Ye shanghai jingxuan* 夜上海精選 (Highlights of Shanghai night), 1992, EMI (Hong Kong), Audio CD, 0777 7 78235 21.
- Ye shanghai jingxuan er* 夜上海精選(二) (Highlights of Shanghai night, vol.2), 1993, EMI (Hong Kong), Audio CD, 0777 7 78392 25.
- Ye shanghai jingxuan san* 夜上海精選(三) (Highlights of Shanghai night, vol.3), 1993, EMI (Hong Kong), Audio CD, 7243 8 27459 21.
- Ye shanghai jingxuan si* 夜上海精選(四) (Highlights of Shanghai night, vol.4), 1994, EMI (Hong Kong), Audio CD, 7243 8 28926 25.
- Zhongguo Shanghai sansishi niandai jueban mingqu yi* 中國上海三四十年代名曲 (一) (Deleted 30-40s hits of Shanghai China, vol.1), Various artists, 2000, Lee

Leng Kok, Audio CD, LLK-15062000.

Zhongguo Shanghai sansishi niandai jueban mingqu er 中國上海三四十年代名曲

(二) (Deleted 30-40s hits of Shanghai China, vol.2), Various artists, 2000, Lee

Leng Kok, Audio CD, LLK-11112000.

Zhongguo Shanghai sansishi niandai jueban mingqu san 中國上海三四十年代名曲

(三) (Deleted 30-40s hits of Shanghai China, vol.3), Various artists, 2001, Lee

Leng Kok, Audio CD, LLK-11042001.

Zhongguo Shanghai sansishi niandai jueban mingqu si 中國上海三四十年代名曲(四)

(Deleted 30-40s hits of Shanghai China, vol.4), 2002, Lee Leng Kok, Audio CD,

LLK-11042002.

Zhongguo Shanghai sansishi niandai jueban mingqu wu 中國上海三四十年代名曲

(五) (Deleted 30-40s hits of Shanghai China, vol.5), 2003, Ancient Sound Restore,

Audio CD, ASR-28122003.

Zhongguo Shanghai sansishi niandai jueban mingqu liu 中國上海三四十年代名曲

(六) (Deleted 30-40s hits of Shanghai China, vol.6), 2004, Ancient Sound Restore,

Audio CD, ASR-01102004.

Zhongguo shidai qu qingge duichang 中國時代曲情歌對唱 (The love duets of

Chinese songs of the times), 2000, EMI (Malaysia), Audio CD, 7243 5 24277 27.

Zhongguo shidai qu qingge duichang vol.2 中國時代曲情歌對唱 vol.2 (The love

duets of Chinese songs of the times, vol.2), 2000, EMI (Malaysia), Audio CD,

7243 5 24278 26.

Zhongguo shidai qu qingge duichang vol.3 中國時代曲情歌對唱 vol.3, (The love

- duets of Chinese songs of the times, vol.3), 2001, EMI (Malaysia), Audio CD, 7243 5 31660 21.
- Zhou Xuan 周璇, *Dongfang jingdian shuang CD xianliang zhencang ban – yi* 東方經典雙CD限量珍藏版—壹 (Classic of the Orient double CD collector's limited edition vol.1), 2001, EMI (Malaysia), 2 Audio CDs, 7243 5 37383 27.
- , *Dongfang jingdian shuang CD xianliang zhencang ban – er* 東方經典雙CD限量珍藏版—貳 (Classic of the Orient double CD collector's limited edition vol.2), 2001, EMI (Malaysia), 2 Audio CDs, 7243 5 37386 24.
- , *Jinsangzi Zhou Xuan* 金嗓子周璇 (The Golden Voice Zhou Xuan), 1985, China Record Company (Shanghai), 2 cassettes, L-36 and 70.
- , *Zhou Xuan* 周璇 (Zhou Xuan), 1993, China Record Company (Shanghai), 4 cassettes, CL-51-4.