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CHINESE CHORUS
(CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CHINESE CHOIR HISTORY)**

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Contents

Contents	I
Abstract	III
Preface	1
I. The Origin of Chinese Chorus	2
1. Christianity and the Origin of Chinese Chorus—the Budding Period	2
2. The School Songs and Army Songs—the Abuilding Period of Chinese Secular Chorus	12
3. Li Shutong and His Choral Works	20
4. Xiao Youmei and the National Conservatory of Music	25
5. <i>Charm of the Sea</i> —A Peak of Chinese Chorus in the Early of the 20 th Century	29
6. Huang Zi and His <i>Everlasting Regret</i>	35
7. Questions at Issue about the Origin of Chinese Chorus	43
II. Chinese Chorus in the Anti-Japanese War and the Liberation War	51
1. Transformation of Chinese Chorus	51
2. <i>Resisting the Enemy</i> and <i>The Flags are Fluttering</i>	59
3. The First Female Chorus Conductor in China—Zhou Shu'an	63
4. The July 7 Incident and the Climax of Chinese Chorus	66
5. Xian Xinghai and His Works	70
6. <i>Yellow River Cantata</i>	74
7. He Lüting and His Choral Works	82
8. Zheng Lücheng and His Work <i>The Eighth Route Army Cantata</i>	87
9. Lü Ji and His Work <i>Nirvana of the Phoenix</i>	90
10. Other Choral Works in the Period of the Anti-Japanese War	95
11. About the Academic School during the Anti-Japanese War	99
III. Chinese Chorus after the Yan'an Rectification Movement	107
1. Choral Works in the Liberated Areas	108
2. Choral Works in the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled Areas	114
3. Accomplishments of Chinese Choral Music Achieved under the Influence of Western Chorus	127

IV. Chinese Chorus in the Early Days of the People's Republic of China	133
1. Influence of Academic Criticism on Chinese Choral Works in the Early Days of the New China	133
2. Chinese Chorus in the Early Years after the Founding of the People's Republic of China	135
3. Qu Xixian and Her Choral Works	143
4. Ma Geshun and His <i>The Anointed One</i>	147
5. Influence of the Hungarian Incident on Chinese Chorus	149
6. Chinese Choral Works after the Anti-Rightist Movement	153
7. Choral Works Reflecting the National Construction	154
8. Chinese Choral Works in the Cultural Revolution	156
V. Problems in Chinese Chorus after the Cultural Revolution and Its Current Situation	163
1. Several Problems of Chinese Chorus after the Cultural Revolution	163
2. The Developments of Chinese Chorus and Choral Works after the Cultural Revolution	166
3. Influence of the Economic Construction Wave on Chinese Chorus	173
English Bibliography (translated from Chinese)	178
Original Chinese Bibliography	182
Appendix	186

Abstract

Generally, research on the origin and development of Chinese chorus, though discussed from time to time, still seems unsystematic in China and Chinese scholars have not come to a final consensus. Based on analyses of historical facts, the objective of this dissertation is to sort out the main thread of this issue from various views by means of supplementing, correcting and specifying the existing ideas, so as to reveal the developing track of Chinese chorus in history. It may be useful for those, home and abroad, who are interested in the history of Chinese chorus and also for the scholars who would like an in-depth study of this history.

While researching the history of Chinese chorus, the author was rather surprised at the revealed facts: before the entry of Christian music into China, Chinese people did not know what chorus was like. Although Christianity made several inroads into China before the Opium War in 1840¹, it had a very small sphere of influence. Because of the changes in Chinese imperial powers, hymns had no substantial influence on Chinese mainstream music until start of the War. The influence of Christian music was confined only to churches and their followers up until the rise of the School Songs in the early 20th century.

In 1894, China was defeated in the first Sino-Japanese War². Affected by this, and with the support of Emperor Guangxu(1871-1908), some enlightened Chinese started the “Hundred Days Reform Movement”. Although this political movement faced enormous resistance which ended in fiasco, it forced the late Qing government to passively launch some reforms. For example, one such reform involved abolishing the traditional Chinese Bagu³ education and setting up new schools which resulted in the birth of the School Songs. In 1913, under the influence of the School Songs, Li Shutong⁴ composed the first secular chorus *Chun You(Spring Outing)* in China, this marked the transition of Chinese chorus from church music to secular music.

¹ The Opium War, there were two Opium Wars between China and the United Kingdom in China's modern history: the First one was from June 1840 to August 1842, the Second one was from October 1856 to October 1860. The two Opium Wars gradually made China become a semifeudal and semicolonial society from a feudal society.

² . The First Sino-Japanese War happened from July, 1894 to April, 1895 between China and Japan, the war made the Chinese nation into the abyss of disaster. The Second Sino-Japan War was from 1937 to 1945.

³ Bagu was a kind of dogmatic and backward as well as stereotyped imperial examination system in Ming and Qing Dynasty of China.

⁴ Li Shutong (1880 - 1942), a famous musician in the modern musical history of China. See pp. 20 - 22.

Before the September 18 Incident in 1931⁵, Chinese chorus had been walking along the road of artistic chorus. This period witnessed the emergence of a group of outstanding composers and a number of far-reaching choral works. It was also in this period that the first Conservatory of music, the National Conservatory of Music, was established in Shanghai, China. After the September 18 Incident, Chinese chorus changed gradually from artistic chorus to anti-enemy chorus and was gradually differentiated into two schools: the Academic School and the Salvation School. The former was mainly comprised of musicians from areas that were controlled by the Chinese Nationalist Party, the latter, under the leader of the Communist Party, consisted of amateurs and disciples of the Academic School. The first anti-Japanese chorus was created by a representative of the Academic School. However, the Academic School received no attention and, to some extent, was suppressed by the Chinese Nationalist Party. Therefore, after the July 7 Incident in 1937, also called the “Lugou Bridge Incident” when Japan launched an all-out offensive attack on China, the leadership of Chinese chorus shifted to the Salvation School. From that time on, it evolved into Mass Singing which became a tool for a purely political struggle not only against the Japanese but also against the Academic School. When the Communist Party assumed power on the mainland in 1949, the struggle further evolved into an internal struggle of the chorus world which lasted until the beginning of the 1980s. All the choral works composed during this long period were full of a strong fighting spirit but were not high in artistic value.

Many contemporary Chinese musicians believe that Chinese chorus developed from Mass Singing, but, some consider multi-part folksongs as its origin while others vote for hymns. However, due to the long-term political struggle, the voice of the last one is weak. And in terms of how Christian music became the origin of Chinese chorus, the latest has not been given enough discussion. At present, China’s reform and opening policy has been carried out and political interference of academic research has been eliminated. Benefiting from this, this dissertation, in the spirit of academically seeking truth from facts, starts with the influence of Christianity on the origin of Chinese chorus, then gives an objective study and analysis on the history of Chinese chorus since 1840, and finally makes an authentic discussion on the present backwardness and plight faced by Chinese chorus.

⁵ The September 18 Incident refers to the event that the Japanese Army stationed in the Northeast China suddenly occupied Shenyang city by force on September 18, 1931.

Preface

In China, scholars have different ideas about the origin of Chinese Chorus. In the latest literature which title is *The Study of the Development of Chinese College Chorus* published by *Journal of Xinghai Conservatory of Music*, 2(2010), pp.96-101, the author, Chen Ying still wrote that: “Chinese Chorus originated from political struggle, struggle for production and social life, and it was quite different from European Chorus which originated from Christian music.” However, in my opinion, I would like to accept the view that Chinese Chorus was affected by Christian music (Church music).

During writing my paper, I found that studying Christian music in China and the School Songs were the two keys to open the door of Chinese Chorus. Unfortunately, a lot of Chinese musicians don't know the developing process of Christian music in China at all. Even if some papers were published about Christian music of China, we could find that some of them are not agree with the historical facts. For example, when I prepared materials of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom for my dissertation, I found that some Chinese musicians misunderstood fully about the sacred music of the Kingdom, so I wrote some papers to correct them. So far, nine of my essays were published or will be published in different Chinese music publications. As for the School Songs, the topics could be found in any music publications of China, but essays discussing the relationship between the School Songs and the origin of Chinese Chorus still stay at a superficial level. People paid much more attention to Li Shutong and his *Spring Outing*, the first Chinese secular chorus composed in 1913, but they ignored Li Shutong's educational background in Japan, so they came to the conclusion that Chinese Chorus originated from social life exclusively. In fact, if they studied the Japanese chorus deeper while Li Shutong studied there, they could find that Japanese Christian Music gave a huge influence to Li Shutong. In order to explain the problem about the origin of Chinese Chorus clearly, I think it is necessary to begin my work from the 7th century A.D. when the first wave of the Christian gospel came to China.

Throughout the modern history of Chinese chorus, it is clear that Chinese early chorus has roughly gone through three periods of development: the budding period from 1840 to 1902, the abuilding period from 1902 to 1913 and the developing period after 1913. Before 1902, chorus music had been brought to China along with Western missionaries through the “door” forced to open by the Western powers since the Opium War in 1840. But it was only known by Chinese people mainly in churches as hymns and its vitality in this period was very fragile. As a matter of fact, church music rose in China always with the spread of Christianity that knocked at the door of China several times in history, yet it did not exert much influence on the traditional Chinese music owing to its confinement to the imperial court and the narrow Christian circle in China. Its development was closely related to the imperial power of China, fluctuating with alterations of the power. Therefore, in 1840 when hymns was heard and finally survived on this vast land, it is related to the decline of the imperial power.

I . The Origin of Chinese Chorus

1. Christianity and the Origin of Chinese Chorus—the Budding Period

With Han music¹ from the Yellow River Valley as its core, Chinese music also absorbed some musical nutrition from other ethnic groups in China as well as foreign countries. Among the latter, the most significant one should be Indian music which was brought to China with Buddhism. Through a long history of integration and evolution, Chinese music, in terms of the vocal music (mainly in Han music), had formed following features: a focus on the pentatonic scale, changes in melodies and rhythms as its central idea, tempo, national mode, lyrics, and little attention paid to harmony or consideration of modulation and polyphony. Thus the traditional Chinese vocal music was regarded as a kind of monophonic and linear music which, for Westerners who had been accustomed to Western music, sounded like a line floating in the air. Due to these features, the traditional Chinese mainstream music had been displayed for a long time by monophonic music instead of polyphonic music and solo instead of chorus.

¹ Han, the Han People or the Hans who are those Chinese that do not include the Minorities in China. Han Music means old Chinese Music.

The origin of Western chorus could be traced back to the Christian chants. As described in *Bible*, Jesus said to his eleven disciples after resurrection: “Go into the entire world, and proclaim the good news to the whole creation.”² Later, generations of Christians took these words as their great commission and stirred up waves of spreading the gospel throughout the world. Wherever the gospel appeared, Christian chants could be found. The first wave of the Christian gospel came to China in the 7th century. According to a Chinese stele excavated in Xi’an of China in 1625, Nestorianism, an earlier sect of Roman Christianity, was introduced into Chang’an (now Xi’an in Shanxi Province), the capital of the Tang Dynasty (618-907) in 635 and drew great attention of Emperor Taizong³. Later on, Christianity knocked at the door of China in the 13th and 16th centuries respectively.

In each wave of spreading Christian beliefs, chants came simultaneously as well with Western missionaries to China. *Sanwei mengdu zan* (三威度赞 *The Hymn*



Nestorian stele No. 1

to the Holy Trinity) of Roman Nestorian Christianity, found in Dunhuang Grottoes⁴ of China in the Qing Dynasty (1616-1911), turned out to be a chant lyrics by Nestorians in the Tang Dynasty. *Worship- ping Songs* in *Mojingji* (墨井集) written by a Chinese priest Wu Yushan (1632-1718), was in fact a Catholic song. Robert Morrison (1782-1834), a British missionary, came to China for preaching in 1807. In 1818, he published a twenty-seven-page hymnbook entitled *Hymns for Self-Cultivation* in Chin-

ese. Actually, it was edified from English

hymns that were generally used by British churches. Morrison published another hymnal anthology *Prayer Praise* at Macao in 1833. However, both books came out in the later part of the second gospel wave in the 16th century and had little influence on Chinese music. The reason why church music had no significant influence on Chinese music for the first two waves lied in that Christianity in China was always closely connected to imperial power and

² Mark Chapter 16, Section 15, *Bible* (Patriotic Movement Committee of the Chinese Christian and China Christian Council, 2005), New Testament, 63.

³ Li shimin (599-649), the second emperor of the Tang Dynasty (618-907).

⁴ Dunhuang Grottoes, in Gansu Province, the largest existing treasure house of Buddhist art of the world.

chants were only known by those in the royal court or church members, that prevented Christianity from entering the mainstream society of China. Regarding this, a Belgian missionary Ferdinand Verbiest (1623-1688), who had a good relationship with Emperor Kangxi⁵, had deep feeling and once sincerely said: “We have to behave at the will of Emperor. If we disobey his will or even show slight dissatisfaction with it, the entire mission of our missionaries could be threatened at once!”⁶ Though missionaries like Ferdinand behaved with great caution at Emperor, Emperor Kangxi was infuriated by the Chinese rites controversy, a dispute within Roman Catholic Churches that arose over whether Chinese folk religion rituals and offerings to their ancestors constituted idolatry from the 1630s to the early 18th century. At that time, it was mainly Catholic missionaries who preached in China but many Chinese people did not accept Christianity by hearts, for it repelled Confucianism⁷. In order to reverse the situation, the Jesuit of Catholicism permitted Chinese to keep their traditional customs of ancestral worship, Confucius in particular. This received criticism from other Catholic sects. The issue was finally became to a dispute between Pope Clement XI(1700-1721) and Emperor Kangxi. The Pope did not permit the view of the Jesuit and ordered them to revert to the Catholic customs, while Emperor Kangxi believed that Chinese ancestral worship had no religious bearing and issued a command to expel missionaries who rejected Chinese customs. The diffusion of Christianity in China cooled down and nearly perished especially after a ban issued by Emperor Yongzheng⁸ and application of the closed-door policy by Emperor Qianlong⁹. The situation did not change until the Opium War in 1840.

The 19th century saw the last arrival of Christianity in China. Different from the previous peaceful spreading of the gospel, this time the gospel came along with European warships, which forced the door of China to open permanently. Before 1840, China was an independent and closed feudal country in which Christianity was prohibited. At that time, the self-sufficient economy in the combination of small-scale farming and cottage industries took predominance in China's economy activities. This natural economy had resulted in less dependance on trade with foreign countries that, on the contrary, need more from China. In the 1820s and

⁵ Kangxi (1654-1722), the second emperor of the Qing Dynasty (1616-1911) which was the last Dynasty in China.

⁶ Wang Xiumei, Duan Qideng, *History of Christianity* (Jiangsu People's Publishing House, 2007), 125.

⁷ Confucius (551-479 B.C.), great ancient thinker and educator in China, the founder of the Confucian School.

⁸ Yongzheng (1678-1735), Kangxi's son, the third emperor of the Qing Dynasty.

⁹ Qianlong (1711-1799), Yongzheng's son, the fourth emperor of the Qing Dynasty.

1830s, the trade from China to the Great Britain exceeded £ 200 million to £ 300 million each year. In order to change the unfavorable situation, the Great Britain tried to make the Chinese government open its trade markets by means of diplomacy, but in vain. Hence the Great Britain began to carry out a policy of force annihilation, smuggling opium from India to China, which did great harm to Chinese people. Under this circumstance, the Qing government (the Chinese government of that time) for the sake of its ruling, took measures to fight against the opium trade, which triggered the famous Opium War¹⁰. In June, 1840, the United Kingdom invaded China with help of more advanced warships so as to maintain the profitable opium trade. After over two years' war, the corrupted and backwardly equipped the Qing government was forced to surrender. This aggression and another one allied with France in 1856 brought about a series of unequal trade treaties to China, proclaiming the legality of the opium trade. During the two wars, many Western missionaries were involved in either as spies or translators, just like adding fuel to fire to promote the aggressions. "After the wars, their intention of free preaching in mainland China were fulfilled in a legal form by some Treaties. Thus the diffusion of Christianity regained its former place in China."¹¹



The Opium War in 1840 No. 2

European chorus originated from church music. Although the earlier history of chorus may date back to the ancient Rome or even Greece, but such music disappeared due to the lack of notation and the alteration of dynasties. With the coming of the New Testament era, especially Gregorian Chant emerged and

¹⁰ See p. III.

¹¹ Yao Minquan, Luo Weihong, *A Brief History of Christianity in China* (Religious Culture Publishing House, 2000), 20.

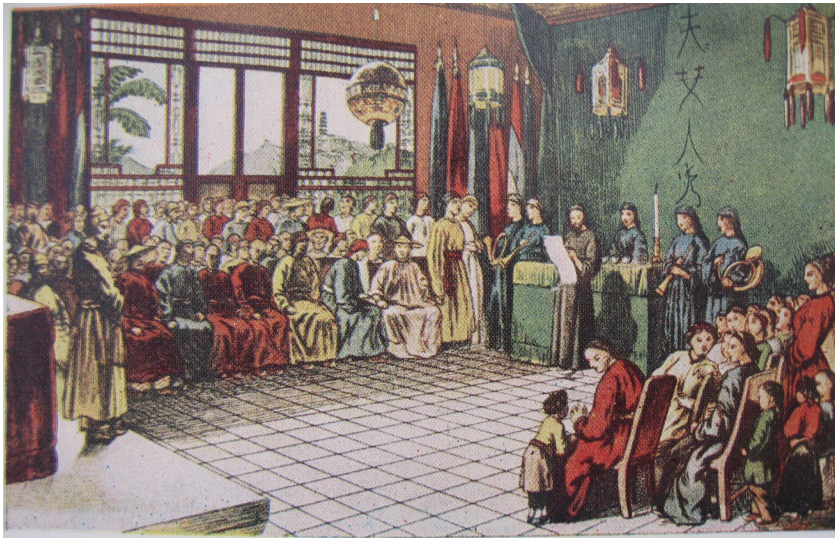
polyphonic music developed based on it, chorus was standardized by Christians, hymns glorifying God in Christianity became the origin of Western chorus.

Christianity had always been spread with music, chorus like a specter travelled following the steps of missionaries. Before the arrival of Christianity, there was no real chorus music in China, or there was no polyphonic chorus transcribed by tablature. Western missionaries set up churches, church schools and conducted other preaching activities, making it possible to introduce Western music and with the increase of Chinese christians, chorus was spread more and more widely. Thus, a view held that the Chinese chorus started from the Opium War, especially from the time when the first church and church school was set up.

After the religious ban was lifted after 1840, Christianity developed even more rapidly. In 1847, under the influence of Christian belief that Jesus is the Son of God, Hong Xiuquan (1814-1864), a broken-down Chinese intellectual from Guangdong Province, founded the Society of God-Worshippers, holding that he was the younger brother of Jesus Christ. He also adapted *Bible*, making it readable for his followers. In 1851, he led more than twenty thousand God-worshippers to launch an upheaval in Jintian¹² and established a Taiping (Great Peace) Heavenly Kingdom, declaring himself the Kingdom King. Their sphere of influence expanded quickly. On March 19, 1853, the Taiping Army (God-Worshippers) conquered Nanjing¹³, made it as the capital of the new Kingdom. Sooner, half of China was occupied by them. The rapid spread of the Taiping forces was directly related to their religious beliefs that if they became believers of God-worshippers, they could enter the heaven by the name of the Kingdom King after death. Therefore, no one feared death in war. Undoubtedly, they would gain the advantage in morale in combats against the faithless and coward the Qing troops.

¹² Jintian, a small village in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

¹³ Nanjing, the capital of Jiangsu Province, a very important city in old China.



The God-worshippers were in Church¹⁴

No. 3

Like Christianity, the Society of God-worshippers also abided by the seven-day worship system. During their service, all the leaders and soldiers were supposed to sing the hymn:

Praise the Lord, for He is Father of the Heaven
 Praise Jesus, for He is the Saint Saviour
 Praise Holy Ghost, for He is the Holy Spirit
 Praise the Trinity, for this is the true God¹⁵
 etc.

On some religious occasions, hymns were also intoned by the Taipings. The most frequently song is the Doxology with tune of the *Old 100th* created by French composer Louis Bourgeois (1510-1561). In this song, the text was instead by the Taiping's hymn that was so-called the Trinity of the Society of God-worshippers.

C. Taylor, an American missionary , once witnessed the liturgy of the Taipings. "They sang hymns with Chinese folk musical instruments as accompaniment."¹⁶ Though not so solemn in his eyes, it proved to be a meaningful try to combine Western music with the Chinese traditional instruments

¹⁴ A. F. Lindley (translated by Wang Weizhou, Wang Yuanhua), *Experienced the Taiping Revolution in China* (Shanghai People's Publishing House, 1997), 165.

¹⁵ Chen Lingqun, "Taiping Things to Explore Music History", in the *Research on Modern Music of China in the 20th Century*, ed. Qin Luo (Shanghai Conservatory of Music Publishing, 2004), 67.

¹⁶ Xia Chuntao, *Heaven's Fall—Religion of Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace* (China People University Press, 2006), 268.

unintentionally. Later on, having finished the mission of preaching in China, Scottish James Legge (1815-1897) with other missionaries went to the Temple of Heaven in Beijing and sang the Doxology with strong flavor of Taiping Heavenly Kingdom before they returned to their countries¹⁷. From this we can see that the Doxology not only influenced half of China but also was transmitted back to the international societies by missionaries. Despite this, the Society of God-worshippers that was led by Hong Xiuquan, a heterodox convert to Christianity,

The Doxology with tune of the *Old 100th*¹⁸

No. 4



was not in tune with Western Christianity, therefore, the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom could not get the supports from the international communities and was suppressed by both the Western Christian countries and the Qing government. After 14 years' war with a loss of over 100 million population¹⁹, the rebellion was put down at last. If the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom had not been wiped out, if a new country had been established to take place of the Qing government and if the God-worshipping religion had become the state religion, chorus would have been transmitted to China much earlier.

But history can not be assumed. After the defeat of the Society of God-

¹⁷ Liu Wei, "Research on the Church Music of the Taiping Revolution", *Music Research* 4 (2009), 59.

¹⁸ Chinese Christian Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee, China Christian Council, *Hymns (New Editor)*, ed. *Hymns (New Editor) (Stave Edition)* (Chinese Christian Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee and China Christian Council Publishing 1991), 380.

¹⁹ According to the population records of the Qing dynasty, before the outbreak of the Taiping heavenly kingdom in 1851, there was a population of 400 million in China, but when the rebellion was suppressed, national population was 240 million, 160 million was lost. Considering that some population might not be recorded by the Government after the War, now Chinese academia estimates that the real loss of population in the 14 years should be 100 million, so it was also called the biggest casualties of war in the human history.

worshippers, the influencing range of hymns had not exceeded the areas where there were the Crosses any more. It was only that with the development of Christianity in China, it became more and more systematic. It was estimated that a number of publications about hymnal books reached several thousand after 1840. At that time, hymns by Christians and chorus courses imparted in church schools were mostly produced by missionaries through matching Chinese lyrics to Western hymn tune. Before 1858, hymns issued in the mainland China were only in form of Ci (lyrics), a special poetic form in China. In 1858, Protestants published *Hymns of Holy Mountain* (圣山谐歌) in Ningbo, Zhejiang Province and all the poems were recorded in four-part that set the precedent of matching music score in Chinese church music.

In 1872, Shanghai Meihua Press published *Anthem Score* in which tunes of more than 360 hymns came from prevailing religious music in Europe. It was in the late 19th century that some missionaries, for the convenience of preaching, revised some melodies of folk music familiar to the ordinary Chinese people as etude. In this period, the spread of Christianity expanded from the southeast coastal regions where Chinese was the official language to Yunnan and Guizhou provinces where some ethnic groups inhabited, and some hymnal books written in local dialects were published like mushroom after rain. From 1850 to 1870, more than 30 types of hymnbooks came out across the whole country, among which more than a half were written in local dialects. These hymns first appeared in form of lyrics. After the publishing of *Hymns of Holy Mountain*, hymnal anthology compiled in local dialects were attached with scores one after another.

In 1913, appearance of a secular chorus *Chun You* (Spring Outing) composed by Li Shutong²⁰ started the development from the sacred music to the secular music in China. Since then, Chinese chorus developed both in religious and secular worlds. Throughout the history of European music in the Middle Ages, we can see that European music grew up in the same way. In the first half of the Middle Ages, church music and secular music developed separately and the former took a leading position. In the late of the Middle Ages, the two began to blend into each other. It seemed to be incidental superficially, however, there was a historical inevitability behind. In the circle of Chinese religions, in 1931 the well-known Chinese Christian theologian Zhao Zichen (1888-1979) collaborated on *People's Hymnal* in which Chinese secular music was adopted as the theme and matched

²⁰ See. p. IV.

with four-part songs. It could be a miniature of the effects of Chinese secular music on church music. In order to unify hymns used by all the parishes, the Chinese Protestant Episcopal Church compiled *Hymns of Praise*, consisting of 466 hymns in the same year. Before that, an award had been offered for Chinese hymns, thus there were also some Chinese works in the book. Inspired by this, the Church of Christ in China united the Chinese Protestant Episcopal Church and other four large churches compiled another work *Hymns of Universal Praise* in 1936. One tenth of all the 514 pieces of hymns were written in Chinese, one eighth in Chinese folk and traditional music while others adopted that of Protestant music from Occidental countries,²¹ all the previous excellent hymns were included in *Hymns of Universal Praise*. That's why it is regarded as a masterpiece of Chinese hymns. 114,000 copies of the first edition were printed and the circulation of the book had reached a number as high as 442,000 when the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949.²²

After 1840, Western missionaries had left not only the christian beliefs and singing methods of hymns but also scores, musical instruments, music theories and composing approaches as well as styles of Western music. Before 1900, they used to apply direct sermons such as preaching in person, tour sermons and distribution of handouts to attract people to convert to Christianity. But this only worked mainly on the lower-class people and had little influence on the upper-class and intellectuals. Since 1900, Western missionaries had set up educational institutes and released publications to attract Chinese to join them and change Chinese people's attitudes toward Christianity. This transformation of Churches received support from the Roosevelt's Administration of the United States. Church schools in China developed rapidly during this period . According to the book *Christianity in China*, there were 350 religious-founded schools in China in the 1870s. By the year 1922, there had been 6890 elementary and middle schools founded only by Protestants and 13 universities in addition. Tsinghua University²³, the most prominent university in Beijing, China, for example, was founded by the United States government with part of war indemnity from China as a refund after 1900.²⁴ Music lessons were provided in most church schools and some of them even offered piano course. These music lessons cultivated a lot of young Chinese who grew to love

²¹ Tian Fei, "Chinese Hymns in *Hymns of Universal Praise*", *Music Art—Journal of Shanghai Conservatory of Music* 4 (1996), 68.

²² Tao Yabing, *Ming and Qing Dynasties Exchanges between Chinese and Western Music* (Oriental Press, 2001), 76.

²³ Tsinghua University, in Beijing, the best and most famous university of science and engineering in China.

²⁴ Luo Weihong, *Christianity in China* (China Intercontinental Press, 2004), 130.

Western music such as Xian Xinghai²⁵, Zhou Shu'an²⁶, Ma Geshun²⁷ and other influential figures in the history of Chinese chorus. They received their enlightenment of music in church schools or in churches. The music lessons in church schools together with music in churches changed the beliefs of Chinese people on one hand, and they influenced the traditional music of China and promoted the development of the Chinese chorus on the other hand.

When European chorus had entered the Romantic Period of music, Chinese chorus was hobblingly stepping forward. If we compare European chorus as an adult in this period of the chorus history, Chinese chorus was just an infant then. Fortunately, with the diffusion of Christianity in the mainland China, the gospel of chorus, after having gone through ups and downs, was finally blown to the land, making music workers of the land received the blessings from God.

In the history of Chinese modern music, many musicians for political reasons avoided talking about the role that missionaries had played in the origin of Chinese chorus. Even scholars engaged in researching on the Chinese chorus history chose to either avoid the issue or understate it. These resulted in such a situation that teachers did not introduce this period of the history even during their music teaching, the scholars did not mention religion at all in their publications in order to get away from troubles. Many young musicians were puzzled when talking about the subject of Christianity and Chinese chorus. However, no one can deny that forever. In the West, the chorus history in the Middle Ages and Renaissance is inseparable to the music history of Christianity. Not to recall the past, even many excellent Western contemporary composers also composed some famous religious works in their lives. Under the philosophical guidance of “making the past serve the present, making foreign things serve China”²⁸, we have to talk about European chorus when mentioning Chinese chorus and it is inevitable to speak of religious works and church music. Religious works can be seen in repertoire of every chorus concert in the modern society. Another fact that should not be overlooked is that Christianity has seldom been successfully prohibited due to lifting of religion ban after the Opium War. According to the incomplete statistics, during the 90 years

²⁵ Xian Xinghai (1905-1945), composer, pianist, his *Yellow River Cantata* is the most well-known work in China.

²⁶ Zhou Shu'an (1894-1974), music educator, the first female composer and chorus conductor in China.

²⁷ Ma Geshun(1914-), conductor, advisor of the Chinese Christian Vocal Committee.

²⁸ Chinese proverb.

from the Opium War to the Second Sino-Japan War²⁹, the number of Catholic grew to 2.8 million while Orthodox Christians and Protestants were about several hundred thousand. Since 1949, Christianity has not been prohibited in the People's Republic of China, with exception of the decade Cultural Revolution (from 1966 to 1976). Different from the past, churches in the new China (the People's Republic of China) have cut off all the links with foreign counterparts and become a new type of churches with Chinese socialist characteristics that sticks to the principles of self-governance, self-support and self-propagation. Currently, chorus sung by Chinese Christians can be heard at times in Chinese churches. Today when chorus is challenged by the commodity economy, some talents for chorus are still trained in the God's houses, which can not be ignored.

The fact that Chinese chorus originated from the Christian music after the Opium War enabled it to share the same noble descent of Western chorus. This undoubtedly laid a sound foundation for Chinese students to study foreign chorus abroad and return to China to develop their own.

2. The School Songs and Army Songs—the Abuilding Period of Chinese Secular Chorus

Before Christianity was introduced to China, the Chinese traditional music existed mainly in operas of Han ethnic group. It was composed by using basic melodies of existing Qupai³⁰ and refilling new texts. That is commonly known as “melody type composing technology” in China. Similarly, in order to preach their teachings, missionaries arranged hymns either by selecting tunes from foreign music and translating the texts from English into Chinese, or by rewriting new texts related to the Christian principles. Because of this, hymns were accepted shortly after they came out and greatly influenced the development of the School Songs in the history.

Wang Pu, a Chinese scholar, argued that: “The rise and popularity of the School Songs were resulted from the influence of church schools, the presentation and publicity of the Reformists of the Wuxu Reform³¹, the support of Chinese

²⁹ See p. III.

³⁰ Qupai: a kind of Chinese traditional tunes of drama from Yuan Dynasty (1206 – 1368) in China.

³¹ The Wuxu Reform is also called the Hundred-day Reform in China. See p. 14.

students in Japan and the approval of the Qing government.”³² The School Songs mentioned here is a general term that refers to campus songs that were taught in elementary and middle schools and widely sung by the masses from the 1900s to the 1930s. It was not only a kind of significant enlightenment in the history of Chinese modern music, but also a milestone. It was a bridge for church music to come into the realm of secular music, in other words, it signified the secularization of church music.

While the School Songs rose, Chinese clumsy Meter Score (公尺谱)³³ was still used in China because few people could understand Western musical notations such as staves and even fewer knew the Western composing techniques. Under such circumstances, it was both practical and convenient to select melodies and refilling new lyrics like church music did in China. In 1902, Shen Xingong (1870-1947) created *Man Should Have High Spirit* by adopting a melody of Japanese song *Hand*



play and refilling lyrics. It was regarded as the first Chinese school song that was created by Chinese musician. Though it was not a real chorus, it symbolized the transition of Chinese chorus from the budding period to the abuilding period.

More than 180 pieces of Shen Xingong's school songs were created by adopting famous songs or folk tunes from Japan or other Occidental countries and refilling in new texts, while only a few were completely composed by Shen himself.

Chinese Meter Score No.5

Most tunes of his works were adopted from hymns. According to Qian Renkang³⁴, Shen

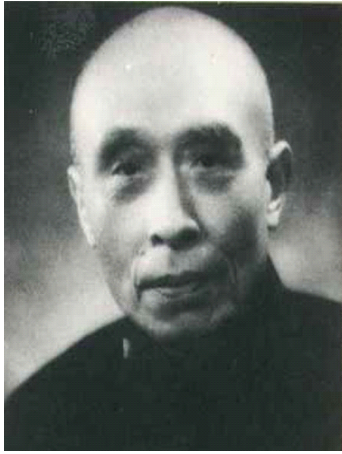
Xingong's *Spring Outing* actually adopted the melody of hymn *There is a Fountain Filled with Blood*. Shortly after its publication, this work became a popular teaching material and was widely sung in schools. His other works such as *The Guest Coming* and *Human and The Nature* were all created in the same way³⁵.

³² Liang Maochun, *Research on the Change of Chinese Music* (Baihua Literary Press, 2007), 89.

³³ Chinese meter score is a notation of China's unique approach before Western Notation came to China, it used Chinese characters to express sound level and duration.

³⁴ Qian Renkang (1914-), musicologist, composer.

³⁵ Qian Renkang, *Testing the Source of the School Songs* (Shanghai Music Publishing House, 2001), 314-315.



Shen Xingong was later called “The Father of the School Songs” in China. He converted to Christianity in 1946. His whole life could be a miniature of the early stage of the Chinese modern music due to his significant role in the history of Chinese music. From his works and his final convert to Christian, we can clearly see the strong impact of Christianity on the Chinese modern music.

After defeat in the Opium War, some insightful

Shen Xingong No.6 Chinese began to pursue the key to the question why such a large Empire was beaten down by a country so small in size. This resulted in the nationwide Westernization Movement with its slogan “Learning Merits from the Foreign to Conquer the Foreign”. The Movement aimed at promoting Western-styled modern industries while maintaining China’s economic structure, educational and political systems. In 1894, the First Sino-Japanese War³⁶ broke out and ended with complete annihilation of the Chinese Northern Naval Fleet, a major achievement of the Movement. The War forced Chinese to realize that merely relying on the industrial Westernization could not change the backward economic situation and nor could prevent China from being humiliated by foreign powers. Therefore, under the guidance of Emperor Guangxu³⁷, an overall reform began from economy to education, from political system to military affairs in 1898. This was known as the Wuxu Reform or the Hundred-day Reform in the history of China. This reform intended to set up a constitutional monarchy and develop capitalism by comprehensively studying Western cultures, sciences and technologies as well as managements to make the country richer and stronger. As the conservatives hoped to protect their vested interests, they only supported economic and military reform but were against any changes in political and educational fields by any possible means. Due to the conflicts between the Reformists and the Conservatives, a ferocious struggle was inevitable until the Reform ended up with a bloody failure.

Both the Westernization Movement and the Hundred-day Reform had exercised far-reaching influences on the modern history of China. Although they ended up with failure, the idea of reform had been widely accepted. Under the huge

³⁶. See p. III.

³⁷ Guangxu (1871-1908), the ninth emperor of the Qing Dynasty.

pressure from the masses, the Qing government had to carry on a new reform in 1901. One of the important contents was to abolish the Chinese traditional Bagu³⁸ educational system and to establish new schools. The School Songs became prosperous under such circumstances. Under these new schools, Liang Qichao³⁹, a representative of the reformists urged to set up music courses and develop formal music education in schools so as to uplift Chinese patriotism with the help of music. He said: “Let it be if we were not going to develop education in the country, once we decided to do it, music course is necessary. It is a shame that nobody is able to compose new music in such a large country.” then he added: “there is still some space for music to advance in schools, which is good news for our education circle.”⁴⁰

For the educational system, another representative figure of the Reformists, Kang Youwei⁴¹ suggested that China should follow the steps of French and Germany in the far east and learn from Japan in the nearest. Bound by the geographical location and transportation, most Chinese students turned their eyes on the neighbor country—Japan, therefore, it became a trend to study in Japan. Shen Xingong was one of them. He went to Japan in April, 1902, at that time school songs were very popular in Japan. He could strongly feel the significant role of school songs in political propaganda and the social lives of Japanese. Inspired by this, when he came back to China in February, 1903, he opened up singing course in a primary school where he taught. Hence, he was the first one to start the School Songs in China.

Before Japan was discovered by Europeans in the 16th century, its music had been deeply affected by China. The history of cultural exchanges between China and Japan could date back to as early as 2,000 years ago when Japan paid attention to China in the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220). This kind of exchange reached its peak in the Sui (220-589) and Tang dynasties (581-907). According to Japanese scholars, in terms of economy and culture, Japan had lagged behind China for 1,000 years at that time. Japan had mainly input through the Korean Peninsula social system, production techniques, culture and arts, religious beliefs and philosophical ideas from China. It was not until 600 A.D. that ambassadors in the Sui Dynasty and the

³⁸ See p. III.

³⁹ Liang Qichao (1873-1929), a well-known political activist, Emperor Guangxu's supporter, enlightened thinkers in modern history of China.

⁴⁰ Liang Qichao, *Drinking Ice Chamber Poetry* (People's Literature Publishing House, 1959), 88.

⁴¹ Kang Youwei (1858-1927), a well-known statesman, thinker and social reformer, Emperor Guangxu's supporter.

Tang Dynasty were directly sent to China to absorb Chinese culture under approval of the Japanese Government. From the 5th century to the 10th century, the absorption of Chinese music culture played an important role in the process of learning Chinese culture. Actually, only in terms of music, it was not until the period of the Meiji Reform⁴² that Japan stopped this unilateral study. Having been long influenced by Chinese music, Japanese music also used the composing technology of melodic pattern as its main composing approach. In the middle of the 16th century, as silk trade was destroyed by some rampant Japanese, Portuguese became the middlemen for the trade between China and Japan. Later, following Portuguese merchants, Western missionaries came to Japan. In the year 1549, St. Francos Xavier (1506-1552), a Spanish Jesuit came to Kagoshima of Japan with some merchants and was authorized by the local seignior to preach. Subsequently, the Jesuits came to Japan and spread throughout Kitakyushu within ten years. The earliest theological seminary was founded near Kitakyushu and Tokyo in 1580. In the following century from 1549, missionaries helped Japanese set up schools, organize choirs and taught them the way to make Western instruments, church music entered Japanese society. The rapid development of Christianity affected Japan in their beliefs, social ideas, ethic notions, culture and arts. Later on, Japan entered a seclusion phase out of the concern over the powerful influence of Christianity. All religious activities were prohibited, Christianity came into a period of underground activity in Japan.⁴³

During the Opium War, China, a nation that had been always idolized by Japan, was defeated by an island country no bigger than Japan. This greatly shocked the ideological circle of Japan. An idea of constitutional monarchy came into existence. In 1868, seven years later after the beginning of the Westernization Movement in China, Japan started the Meiji Reform by following the path of the United States and European countries rather than continuously learning from China. It was a fundamental reform for Japan in the fields of political affairs, economy, culture, art and education. The Westernization Movement in China failed, but the Meiji Reform in Japan succeeded eventually, that resulted in the rapid development of Japan in Asia.

Like China, Japan was also oppressed by Western countries before this period. In the middle of the 19th century, Japan was forced to establish diplomatic

⁴² The Meiji Reform (1868-1877), a comprehensive reform movement in Japan.

⁴³ Suzuki Fanlong (Japan) (translated by Niu Jianke), *Religion and Japanese Society* (China Book Company, 2005), 50-53.

relations with some countries from Europe and America, which resulted in the diffusion of Christianity. In the late years of Meiji Administration⁴⁴, the Churches of Christ in Japan, founded in 1859, announced that the number of Japanese Christians accounted for 75 thousand while the faculties in church schools came to 90 thousand. By the middle and late 20th century, the number of Christians in Japan had been nearly one million among which nearly 30 thousand were teachers⁴⁵. The development of Christianity also promoted the spread of Western music at the same time. Japan began to follow Western countries instead of China. In addition, it also learned the educational system of Western music and established music schools. Shuji Izawa (1851-1917) was sent to the United States to learn American secular music in 1872. After returning Japan, he invited his teacher L.M. Mason (1828-1897) who was a Christian to Japan, they edited the first secular vocal books in Japan together.⁴⁶

Japanese Christian music in the early period of Meiji Reform was also created by adopting melodies of hymns and translating the texts of Hymns into Japanese, new hymns were sung in Japanese churches and religious-funded schools. Since few Japanese could understand the Western music techniques, the method of selecting melodies and refilling in lyrics which was similar to the “melody type composing technology” learned from China, the composing technology used by Japanese churches was easily accepted by Japanese society, and it was rapidly employed in campus songs. Among the three earliest songbooks compiled by Shuji Izawa for Japanese elementary schools, about a half of songs were created by adopting Western music and refilling texts.

Japanese School Songs were still developing vigorously when the first group of Chinese students like Shen Xingong arrived in Japan. It was the first time for Chinese to study music in Japan in the history of cultural exchanges between the two countries. Facing the Europeanized new music, Chinese students who just set foot on Japan were refreshed and paid homage to it. Zeng Zhimin⁴⁷, who went to Japan one year earlier than Shen Xingong and also played an important role in the development of the Chinese School Songs, once described his feeling when he first arrived in Japan: “When I first came to Japan, I frequented to music concerts and

⁴⁴ Meiji Administration, 1868-1912.

⁴⁵ Yasuo Furuya (Japan) (translated by Lu Ruoshui, Liu Guopeng), *History of Japanese Theology* (Shanghai Joint Publishing, 2002), 8-9.

⁴⁶ Zhang Qian, “Comparison of Japanese School Songs and Chinese”, *Music Research* 3 (1996), 44-48.

⁴⁷ Zeng Zhimin (1879-1929), a music educator, music theorist and music activist in the modern history of China.

visited teachers there. I found that Japanese music was vastly different from that of China, it was so amazing that I had to admire it more.”⁴⁸

To compose new music of their own by adopting existing melodies of Japanese and Western music became a popular method that was what Chinese students learned from Japan in this period.

As vigorous development of church music and the School Songs, Western secular music also began to infiltrate into China. At the beginning of the last century, there appeared some brass bands and foreign instrument shops in China, books and pictorials about Western music were also issued, some Western musicians came to China for performance. Together with religious music, these strengthening penetration activities shocked the traditional Chinese music greatly. In 1879, Westerners founded Shanghai Public Band in British Settlement in Shanghai. In 1907, the band was expanded into an orchestra. In 1922, it was expanded again and changed its name into the Shanghai Municipal Council Orchestra.⁴⁹ From then on, the Orchestra began to develop into the first-class in the Far East and started the road for Westerners to train Western music talents in China.

Affected by the widespread of school music, Chinese troops also began to practice army songs. Before that, Chinese army only used trumpet and drum for issuing orders, there were no real army songs. Even if there were some, they were merely with vulgar tunes or lyrics. A passionate army song can encourage morale of soldiers, display spirit of army and stimulate minds of soldiers to the most.

Some of army songs in the early period directly came from school songs, some were created by adopting melodies of either school songs or Chinese folk music and refilling in new lyrics. For example, a widely spread song in troops of the Warlords *Five Brave Generals* was created by applying a melody of a school song *The Joy of Joining the Army* and refilling new lyrics.

Among all the troops of the warlords, the Northwest Army led by Feng Yuxiang⁵⁰ got the deepest influence. It was the largest private forces with 195,000 soldiers in China. He was called “the Christian General”. He asked all his soldiers to read *Bible*, sing hymns and pray. Meanwhile, he also composed army songs by himself. According to Wang Yuhe, a Chinese musicologist, Feng had created nearly 500 army songs based on melodies of hymns, school songs and folk music during

⁴⁸ Yan Ming, *Introduction to Music Criticism in 20th Century China* (People's Publishing House, 2002), 85.

⁴⁹ Xiabentaizi (Japan) (translated by Jin Peng), *The Capital of Musicians—Shanghai: Origin of Western Music in Modern China* (Shanghai Music Publishing House, 2003), 97、101.

⁵⁰ Feng Yuxiang (1882-1948), military strategist, patriotic generals, prominent democrats in modern China.

the period from 1911 to the 1930s.⁵¹ These works were used as the important materials to drill and educate his Army. Among them, *Spirit of a Soldier* was introduced on American *Time Magazine* issued on July 2, 1928 and its influence had been brought to overseas. Another work *Song of Shooting Discipline* created according to a melody of a chant had been sung by all the troops.

Song of Shooting Discipline

N0.7

1. 射 击 军 纪 重 要, 皆 须 确 实 施 行。
 2. 时 时 留 意 官 长, 更 须 注 视 敌 人。
 3. 或 见 目 标 消 灭, 或 闻 官 长 之 令。
 4. 战 斗 非 常 之 际, 纵 令 干 部 全 无。
 5. 激 烈 枪 火 之 下, 前 进 不 可 停 止。
 虽 在 敌 火 之 下, 务 要 坚 韧 沉 着。
 如 无 官 长 命 令, 不 准 擅 自 发 枪。
 指 挥 各 兵 停 发, 即 行 停 止 射 击。
 或 值 指 挥 失 效, 全 仗 自 己 维 持。
 无 论 如 何 隐 匿, 不 能 不 受 损 伤。
 力 求 发 扬 枪 火 效 力, 时 常 注 意
 敌 人 消 灭 有 令 即 停, 不 能 命 中
 射 击 军 纪 至 为 重 要, 节 省 子 弹
 人 人 须 有 独 断 性 质, 人 自 为 战
 至 近 距 离 万 勿 退 却, 如 或 退 却
 利 用 地 形, 时 常 注 意 利 用 地 形。
 决 不 轻 发, 不 能 命 中 决 不 轻 发。
 人 人 须 知, 节 省 子 弹 人 人 须 知。
 方 能 却 敌, 人 自 为 战 方 能 却 敌。
 等 于 自 创, 如 或 退 却 等 于 自 创。

Like the School Songs, army songs were also sung in unison. Although both of them were not the typical chorus, but their rises marked that China had already accepted the methods to create new songs by selecting melodies and translating or

⁵¹ Wang Yuhe, *Chinese Modern Music History* (Higher Education Press, 2005), 63.

refilling in texts. School songs and army songs made by those methods had been spread all over the country, by them, Chinese people came to know Western music and accept the unison, which provided fertile soil for creating Chinese chorus.

The Chinese School Songs and the Army Songs developed under the joint influences of church music, Japanese school songs and Western secular music. It is safe to say that the Chinese School Songs and the Army Songs were fruits of the combination of Western church music and Chinese secular music, this brought about the rise of the Chinese modern music and the birth of Chinese secular chorus.

3. Li Shutong and His Chorus Works

Chinese school songs were recorded by Western staves and sung by students in unison at first. Shortly after the birth of the School Songs, the first secular chorus in China was created by Li Shutong. After that, Chinese chorus entered its developing phase.



Li Shutong was a very important composer and scintillating art educator in the period of the School Songs, he led a legendary life. He had profound foundation of Sinology and was proficient in Western music and art. In addition, he also possessed a solid grasp of Chinese calligraphy, drama and poetry.

Li Shutong was born in a rich salter's family in Tianjin in 1880. His father had a principal wife surnamed Jiang and two concubines surnamed Zhang and Guo respectively. The principal wife Jiang once gave birth to a son who died young. His concubine Zhang also did so but the child was weak and troubled with disease. Guo bore no kids. For feared that Zhang's boy could not live longer, Li Shutong's father married another 16 years old concubine with surname Wang when he was 67 years old. The next year Li Shutong was born by concubine Wang. His father died when Li Shutong was five years old. For Li Shutong's father believed in Buddhism while alive, his family invited many monks to release his soul from purgatory by singing some Buddhist scriptures, Li Shutong witnessed the whole process of the funeral,

Li Shutong NO. 8

and since then he could not get rid of Buddhism in his mind.

Li Shutong had been familiar with Chinese classics such as the *Four Books* (*The Great Learning*, *The Doctrine of the Mean*, *The Confucian Analects*, and *The Works of Mencius*) and *Five Classics* (*The Book of Songs*, *The Book of History*, *The Book of Changes*, *The Book of Rites*, and *The Spring and Autumn Annals*)⁵², which laid a sound foundation for his profound knowledge of Sinology. In 1897, his mother made a decision for him to marry a daughter of a tea merchant in Tianjin who was two years elder than him. According to *The Great Master Hongyi*⁵³, Li Shutong began to learn piano after his marriage by himself. At that moment, he had two *Basic Piano* written in English by foreign authors. In order to learn how to play piano, he invited a reformist to teach him English and then he managed to translate them into Chinese gradually and practiced piano courses one by one.⁵⁴ Because Li Shutong was a bastardy, his mother and he felt unhappy after his father's death, so he went to Shanghai with his mother and wife in October, 1898.

In 1904, the Shanghai Research Association was founded and Li Shutong participated in some of its activities. The association had courses which served the out-of-school youth specially. At that time, Shen Xingong was teaching music in Shanghai and issued three editions of *Collection of the School Songs*. Li Shutong came to invite him to teach music in the Shanghai Research Association. During Shen's lectures, Li Shutong also listened to the courses sitting by the side. It is said that was the beginning of Li Shutong's elementary education of Western music. Owing to his gift, Li grasped the core of Shen Xingong's method by selecting melodies and refilling in new lyrics. Sooner he allocated *Song of Motherland* for the Shanghai Research Association based on *Laoliuban*, a prevailing Chinese folk string and bamboo flute music. This was the first time that Chinese created school song by using melody of Chinese folk music. The song was spread throughout all schools in China and Li Shutong also became a famous musician of the School Songs across the country.

Li's mother died in 1905. He decided to study in Japan like Shen Xingong. After the funeral of his mother, he went to Japan in the autumn of 1905 to study Western painting and music. One year later, he edited the earliest music journal *Little Music Magazine* in Japan and issued it to China. In the journal, he carried

⁵² "Four Books" and "Five Classics" were the basic bibliography of Confucianism after the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279), all of students of Confucian scholars had to read them.

⁵³ Master Hongyi, Li Shutong's Buddhist name.

⁵⁴ Xu Xingping, *The Great Master Hongyi* (China Youth Press, 2007), 16.

Biography of Beethoven, which enabled Chinese people to know the master of music in the Western world for the first time.⁵⁵ Li Shutong came back to China in 1910. He once worked as a music teacher or an art teacher in many schools after his return. In 1913, he created the first Chinese chorus *Spring Outing*(*Chun You*) after making the lyric and melody all by himself by virtue of the Western composing technology what he studied in Japan. That made him become the pioneer in the field of Chinese secular chorus and laid the foundation for his lofty position in the field.

Like Shen Xingong, most of Li Shutong's works were produced by selecting melodies of Western or Japanese music and refilling the lyrics by himself, only a small amount of works were composed by himself. We can see from *The Great Master Hongyi Songs* edited by Qian Renkang⁵⁶, all in his life, Li Shutong created 98 songs in that 17 were chorus. And among all his chorus, 15 were created by adopting melodies from Chinese or foreign music and refilling in new lyrics. The two-part song *Hard to Say Goodbye* was composed by Li Shutong and the lyrics by Ye Qingchen⁵⁷ while the other one *Spring Outing* was produced just by himself in its true sense.⁵⁸ Li Shutong's vocal works influenced the later generations significantly and made him become a deserved representative in the period of the School Songs.

Spring Outing came up by chance. In 1913, Li Shutong was invited to an appointment of all Chinese well-known litterateurs. He was late because of his busy social business. In order to give him a "punishment", Chinese famous poet Liu Yazi (1887-1958) suggested that Li should create two poems of seven-character within each sentence in ten minutes, one should contain the character of "Chun"(spring) in each line of the poem, while the other should not contain any "Chun" literally but should convey the meaning of it. Li Shutong agreed. He thought for a while and made two poems of seven-character Chinese poems within five minutes, the texts as follows:

⁵⁵ Sun Jinan, "Li Shutong's Mind of Music Education from *Little Music Magazine*", *Music Art* 1 (1991), 22.

⁵⁶ Qian Renkang, *The Great Master Hongyi Songs*, Tung Ta Book Co. Ltd. 1993.

⁵⁷ Ye Qingchen (1000-1049), noted official of the Song Dynasty.

⁵⁸ Qian Renkang, *The Great Master Hongyi Songs* (Tung Ta Book Co. Ltd. 1993), 45-48.

The first poem

When spring breeze touches face like a thin gauze,
People dress themselves in spring as plainly as in a picture.
They go outing in the picturesque spring,
With thousands of blossoms whirling around spring girl.

The second poem

Pear blossoms take on a slightly tinted white, while cauliflowers yellow,
Willow catkins fall all over the ground and canola fragrant.
When people return home, orioles are chirping in the fields;
Beside the flowers sparse bell also sends off the setting sun.

(Literal translation by the author)

All the sentences of the poems are composed of seven Chinese characters and each poem consists of four sentences. In the first poem, each sentence contains a Chinese character “Chun” while there is no “Chun” throughout the second poem. The literary talent of Li Shutong aroused the admiration and praise from all the people present there.⁵⁹ He was also very excited. Later on, he combined the two pieces of poems into a three-part chorus.

Spring Outing was created by adopting the Western techniques. Its birth marked Chinese chorus from church music step into secular music, that means a new era arrived when Chinese musicians created chorus free from churches by using the composing techniques of Western chorus, the days when Chinese could not create chorus by using the Western composing techniques has gone.

During his study in Japan, Li Shutong studied Western realistic painting, he tended to be pragmatic both in aesthetic appreciation and life pursuit. The internal emotion was expressed through description of natural sceneries in many of his works. We can see from the lyrics of *Spring Outing* that he combined a light make-up people with numerous spring flowers and the chirps of orioles, showing that spring is very much in air. In addition, the simple natural tune, lyric and graceful melody, well-written structure and scientific harmony all made a picturesque meaning of lyrics flowing with music, as if we were walking in picture

⁵⁹ Chen Jingye, *Research on Li Shutong's School Songs* (Zhonghua Book Company, 2007), 59.

in good moods and living a splendid life. This song absorbed typical characteristics of Western music in tempo, form and texture. Although some people of later

Spring Outing

No. 9

Moderato
mf

女声

男声

春 风 吹 面 薄 于 纱， 春 人 妆 束 淡 于 画。

5

游 春 人 在 画 中 行， 万 花 飞 舞 春 人 下。

9

p *mp*

梨 花 淡 白 菜 花 黄， 柳 花 委 地 芥 花 香。

13

mf *rit.*

莺 啼 陌 上 人 归 去， 花 外 疏 钟 送 夕 阳。

generation argued that this song had a trace of imitation of Western hymns, that did not affect much on Li Shutong's masterpiece for its graceful melody and proper lyrics which enjoyed a high standard of art chorus. The work was also regarded as a model of modern chorus by Chinese composers.

Like Shen Xingong, Li Shutong's works were not only influenced by Japanese music but also by church music. Li Shutong's legendary life lay in that he was indulged in Buddhism when he was young and then was influenced by Christian music which aroused his interest in church music. He once wrote a four-part choir named *Incarnation* shortly after his mother passed away. It was originally used to glorify Buddhism, however, he matched it with the melody of a

hymn *Nearer My God To Thee* produced by American composer L. Mason. Just imagine how great the influence of Christian church music on him. In regards to his other works, the three-part choir *Man and Nature* was created based on the melody of hymn *Another Six Days Work Is Done*, the two-part choir *Smile, Spring God Come* was created according to the melody of *Lord, I Lift Your Name on High*, two four-part choir *The Morning Sun* and *The Recluse* all originated from hymns. Other unison works such as *Love* and *Skinless* were created by filling in new lyrics according to melodies of hymns too.⁶⁰

To some extent, Shen Xingong and Li Shutong kept teacher-student relationship. However, the achievements of Li Shutong were far greater than Shen Xingong in the musical world, just as a Chinese proverb: “pupil learns from a master and surpasses the master”. In 1918, when Li Shutong reached the zenith of his career, he converted to Buddhism and became one of the Four Mages who influenced China the most in the Chinese Buddhism circle. After Li Shutong became a monk, he still produced several chorus by using melodies of Western music and refilling in new lyrics such as *Today and Tomorrow* and *Contemplation of the Mind*. However, the influence of them was far less than *Spring Outing* which was created before he entered the religion. Nevertheless, as the earliest Chinese chorus works that were created by using the Western composing techniques, they can not be neglected in terms of their art value and historical contribution.

4. Xiao Youmei and the National Conservatory of Music



Xiao Youmei No.10

In 1927 when the School Songs developed prosperously, Xiao Youmei founded the first music education institute in China, the National Music School in Shanghai which was later renamed the National Conservatory of Music. Thus, the curtain of Chinese higher music education was unveiled.

Xiao Youmei(1884-1940) was born in Xiangshan County (Sun Yat-sen county now), Guangdong Province. He started to learn classical Chinese in the teaching house owned by his father when he was a child. His family migrated to Macao in 1889 where he began to learn English and Japanese. Macao had been

⁶⁰ Qian Renkang, “How to Rewrite Old School Songs”, *Music Art* 1 (1992), 36-41.

occupied by Portuguese for more than 300 year by then. At that time, music was very well-received in Macao under the influence of Catholics. One of Xiao Youmei's neighbors was a Portuguese missionary who often played harmonium at home. The melodious sound aroused Xiao's boundless love for music. Later on, Xiao Youmei wrote in his autobiography that: "I often heard my neighbor playing harmonium and admired him so much, but I had no chance to learn it then."⁶¹ In spite of this, the influence of religious music had been rooted in his younger heart, which would be the direct reason for him to choose music as his career for all his life.

The Reform of 1898 ended up with a failure. However, a group of new schools were built and used for teaching Chinese and Western science all over China. In 1899, Xiao Youmei studied at the Shimin Junior High School in Guangdong Province and began to receive a new type of education. At that time, singing was listed as one of the required courses. The next year, the Eight Power Allied Forces like the United States, France Britain and some other five countries. invaded China, which aroused strong patriotism of Xiao Youmei. In 1901, one year earlier than Shen Xingong, he went to Japan and studied in the Affiliated Middle School of Tokyo Normal College at his own expenses in hope of revitalizing the Chinese nation by learning from Japan. Though musicians were looked down upon at that time, he still chose some courses of piano and vocal in Tokyo Imperial Music School despite the objection from his family so as to realize his dream since childhood while he continued to study in that Affiliated Middle School. In 1906, Xiao Youmei got a scholarship of government sponsorship for oversea study. He entered the Department of Philosophy of Tokyo Imperial University and studied pedagogy there. Meanwhile, he continued to study piano at the Tokyo Imperial Music School. In 1909, he came back to China after graduation. He was sent to Germany by the government of China to study music theories and composition in 1912. Four years later, he obtained his PhD in Philosophy at Leipzig University with his dissertation *The Historical Research on Chinese Orchestra before the 17th Century*.

Xiao Youmei was the first one who studied music abroad in the modern history of music and stayed abroad for the longest period. What's more, he was also the first Chinese musician who got European PhD.

⁶¹ Xiao Youmei, *Xiao Youmei Collection I*. (Shanghai Music Publishing House, 2004), 81.

Xiao Youmei came back home in 1920 after his study and visited Cai Yuanpei⁶²—president of Peking University⁶³. In 1922, an affiliated music institute was founded at Peking University and he was appointed as director of teaching affairs of this institute. In 1926, Liu Zhe, the music education Supervisor of the Northern Warlord government at that time issued an order to cancel the Music Institute at Peking University by declaring that music is indecent and does no good to social feelings. Thus, Xiao Youmei was forced to go to Shanghai. On October 1, 1927, Cai Yuanpei became president of the Great School of Nanjing Government (it was changed into the Ministry of Education later on). He supported Xiao to establish a National School of Music, which upgraded into the National Conservatory of Music⁶⁴ in 1929 and Xiao was president of the Conservatory until his death.

The National Conservatory of Music was the precursor of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. The objectives of the Conservatory were rather clear, that was to introduce Western music to China and reorganize the Chinese traditional music with the help of the Western music knowledge. Xiao Youmei held that our traditional music lagged far behind Western music and one of the reasons for the backwardness of music culture in the modern China was that there was no real music educational institute throughout the Chinese history. The music circle of China should learn from Western music and make research on tablature, harmony, counterpoint, instrumentation and form of Western music if we want to reorganize the Chinese traditional music. In order to apply this idea to the teaching process, students were required to translate the Chinese Meter Score⁶⁵ into staves in their promotion exam of specialized courses in the Conservatory⁶⁶.

Xiao Youmei believed that high-quality faculty was the key to realize the tenet of a school. Thus, he did his best to recruit famous Chinese musicians and those from other countries that could be found in Shanghai. He once invited foreign teacher Ariigo Foa⁶⁷ as a lecturer for violin and Igor Shevtzoff⁶⁸ as a lecturer for

⁶² Cai Yuanpei (1868-1940), educator, politician, the first education chief of the Republic of China's, from 1916 to 1927 served Peking University, opened the wind of Chinese "academic" and "freedom".

⁶³ In Beijing, the most famous University in the fields of languages and cultures in China.

⁶⁴ Actually, the Conservatory was renamed several times: the National Training School of Music (1929), Branch of the National Conservatory of Music (1943), Shanghai National Training School of Music (1945), Shanghai and Huadong Branches of Conservatory of Music (in the early 1950s) and it received its current name Shanghai Conservatory of Music in 1956. In order not to confuse our readers, we generally call this school "the National Conservatory of Music".

⁶⁵ See p. 13.

⁶⁶ Chen Lingqun, "Xiao Youmei's Contributions to Music Theory", *China in Recent Study of the History of Modern Music in the 20th Century* (Shanghai Conservatory of Music Publishing, 2004), 176-178.

⁶⁷ Ariigo Foa (1900-1981), Russian, violinist.

⁶⁸ Igor Shevtzoff (1894 -?), Russian, cellist.

cello. When the school changed its name into Conservatory, he also invited Vladimir Shushli⁶⁹ as a full-time staff of vocal music TRG (teaching and research group) and Boris Zakharoff⁷⁰ in Piano TRG.⁷¹ In 1929, Xiao paid a visit to the world famous Russian pianist Boris Zakharoff who sojourned in Shanghai and intended to invite him to teach in the Conservatory by raising his salary to 400 RMB/month (the average salary of professors was only 200 RMB/month). Later on, Boris Zakharoff became director of Piano TRG and worked until he died. People whom he invited included Chinese experts in the fields of music or literature such as Zhu Ying⁷², Yi Weizhai⁷³, Long Muxun⁷⁴ and Chinese musicians who used to study abroad such as Wang Ruixian⁷⁵, Du Tingxiu⁷⁶, Zhou Shu'an⁷⁷, Ying Shangneng⁷⁸, Huang Zi⁷⁹, Li Weining⁸⁰, Xiao Shuxian⁸¹ and Wu Bochao⁸², among whom the famous musician Huang Zi was appointed as director of teaching affairs. Under the cultivation of such powerful faculty, many musicians rose in the music circle of China such as Xian Xinghai⁸³, He Lüting⁸⁴, Li Huanzhi⁸⁵, Jiang Dingxian⁸⁶ and Qian Renkang⁸⁷.

The establishment of the National Conservatory of Music contributed a lot to modern Chinese music, Chinese chorus in particular, in many aspects. In the Conservatory, chorus was an important discipline from the beginning of its founding. From 1931 to 1937, the Conservatory published 27 volumes of Music Publications in *Series of the National Conservatory of Music* by Commercial Press. Three of them are chorus books including *Selection of English Chorus* edited by Zhou Shu'an (1931), *Songs of Patriotic Chorus* composed by Huang Zi (1934) and *Collections of Lyric Chorus* composed by Li Weining (1937).

Chorus course took an important place in teaching process of the

⁶⁹ Vladimir Shushlin (1896-1978), Russian, vocal music educator.

⁷⁰ Boris Zakharoff (1888-1943), Russian, pianist.

⁷¹ Chen Lingqun, "The First Decade of the National Conservatory of Music", *Music Art* 3 (2007), 53.

⁷² Zhu Ying (1889-1954), music theorist, composer, lute player.

⁷³ Yi Weizhai (1874-1941), famous lyrics writer.

⁷⁴ Long Muxun (1902-1966), famous lyrics writer.

⁷⁵ Wang Ruixian, birthday and the date of death unknown, a pianist.

⁷⁶ Du Tingxiu, birthday and the date of death unknown, a composer and conductor.

⁷⁷ See p. 11.

⁷⁸ Ying Shangneng (1902-1973), baritone singer, vocal educator, composer.

⁷⁹ See pp. 35-36.

⁸⁰ Li Weining, birthday and the date of death unknown, a composer, pianist.

⁸¹ Xiao Shuxian (1905-1991), composer and conductor.

⁸² Wu Bochao (1903-1949), composer, pianist conductor and music educator.

⁸³ See p. 11.

⁸⁴ He Lüting (1903-1999), famous musician and educator in China.

⁸⁵ Li Huanzhi (1919-2000), composer, conductor, music theorist, studied in the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai from 1937.

⁸⁶ Jiang Dingxian (1912-2000), composer, music educator.

⁸⁷ See p. 13.

Conservatory and the attitude of president Xiao Youmei towards chorus also promoted its development greatly. In 1924, Xiao Youmei composed a female chorus *Farewell to My Alma Mater* for the graduates of Beiping Female Normal College and accompanied it with orchestra later on. In 1929, Xiao Youmei found that there lacked chorus in Chinese style in teaching, he created a four-part chorus *A Moonlit Night on the Spring River* in spare time. He also made meaningful attempt on creating pattern of combining Chinese and Western music.

On the whole, there were mainly two factors that influenced the creation of Chinese chorus greatly: one was the Li Shutong's *Spring Outing*, the other one was chorus arranged by ensembles in Christian churches or in church schools. The coincident appearance of *Spring Outing* made Chinese chorus free from the sphere of hymns and started a new era of Chinese chorus in schools. However, the ensembles of churches and church schools paid more attention to practice of chorus, they not only sang hymns during their religious services but also performed some famous European chorus works such as Oratorio, Cantata or Mass on some large-scale feast occasions. All of these religious works had influenced the creation of Chinese chorus significantly. The works of Xiao Youmei, such as *Farewell to My Alma Mater* and other chorus works at the corresponding period strengthened the impact of Chinese musicians on Chinese chorus.

The School Song was the period when Chinese musicians began to introduce and popularized Western music to Chinese common people. Since the establishment of the National Conservatory of Music, the pioneers of the Chinese modern music started to train Chinese musicians for China herself. It had realized a fundamental leap in the history of Chinese modern music since Western music was introduced to China in form of hymns. After that, China had its own training base for music talents where high quality music intellectuals came up continuously in the following years. In the field of chorus, because great importance had been attached to chorus by the National Conservatory of Music from top leader to common teacher, Chinese chorus was put into an express way objectively and reached its first climax in the 1930s.

5. *Charm of the Sea*—A Peak of Chinese Chorus in the Early of the 20th Century

During the prosperous development of the School Songs, a talented musician Zhao Yuanren stood out in the music circle of China. It was him who promoted



Chinese chorus to a peak in the modern history of Chinese music.

In the history of Chinese chorus, Zhao Yuanren (1892-1982), a rare versatile was regarded as a “wise man with Renaissance style” by public. In 1910, he went to Cornell University in America to study Mathematics and took physics and music as elective courses when he was 18 years old. After graduation, he entered Harvard University to study philosophy and selected music, psychology and history. In 1918, he obtained his PhD for his dissertation *Continuity Research on Methodology*. He once taught physics in his Alma Mater Cornell University for one year in 1919. The next year, he taught physics, mathematics and psychology in Tsinghua University⁸⁸ and served as an interpreter for the distinguished British philosopher B. Russell (1872-1970) at the same year. He went to America in 1921 where he taught philosophy and Chinese while studying on linguistics at Harvard University. In 1925, he came to Tsinghua University again and taught mathematics, physics, Chinese phonology, general linguistics, modern Chinese dialects, Chinese score and melody as well as appreciation of Western music. In 1938, he immigrated to America and offered a Chinese music course in University of Hawaii. He used to teach Chinese and linguistics at the University of California-Berkeley later and was invited as an honorary professor after his retirement. From 1925, he took Chinese linguistics and phonetics as his major research direction. His achievements enabled him to rank the world famous “Great Master of Language” and “The Father of Chinese Linguistics”. He enjoyed a great reputation both at home and abroad. However, many people nowadays began to know him for his music and further learned his achievements in linguistics and his erudition out of curiosity. From the above we can imagine the great influence of his music in China.

The most influential work of Zhao Yuanren in the music circle of China was *A Collection of Modern Poetry* published in 1928. The collection contains 14 songs altogether that were composed by him in the 1920s, among which the chorus *Charm of Sea* (the text by Xu Zhimo⁸⁹) was the one that he satisfied with most. The song has been sung until today.

Some music lovers may regard Zhao as a professional composer when they

⁸⁸ See p. 10.

⁸⁹ Xu Zhimo (1897-1931), a modern poet, essayist.

have listened to his music. However, the truth is not so. Zhao Yuanren had never taken part in any formal music creation activities throughout his life, he just composed music as an amateur. But different from other amateurs, he had received standard and complete training in music. He learned to play piano as a boy and used to study classical harmony, counterpoint and composition after his arrival in America. He also studied broadly in the fields of European classic music and modern music. Thus, He Lüting, a famous Chinese musician once said: “Although he is an amateur, he did devote to music, he has grasped all the basic music knowledge and often analyzes the classic, romantic or modern works on piano. All of these involve investigation, analysis, study as well as entertainment.”⁹⁰

Zhao Yuanren had composed more than 100 songs that were mainly created in the years when he taught in China. His music works were seldom seen after his third return to America in 1938.

His interest in music accompanied Zhao Yuanren throughout his entire life. The chorus even served a major pattern of entertainment in his family. He once organized “The Zhaos’ singing group” in his family. He divided many songs into four-part and practiced them with his four daughters. He used Chinese alphabet to compose three-part choir which were applied also to his language teaching. In this way, the mode of chorus was also accepted by students during his teaching process. All the chorus works by Zhao Yuanren were greatly influenced by Western church music. For instance, the four-part mixed choir *Alas! March 18* was created to grieve the patriotic people killed by the Northern Warlord Government on “The Massesacre of March 18”⁹¹ with a strong taste of church music.

A number of works were composed or organized by Zhao Yuanren, only a few of them were released. Among the issued ones, This work was produced within 10 days for a poem of Xu Zhimo. It was the peak work in the early history of the Chinese modern chorus. His super composing ability was shown in this chorus work. He arranged melody deliberately in order to show his pursuit for Chinese national flavor. Especially, the skillful application of mixed four-part choir, male choir, female choir and solo plus chorus were still accepted as classic in the field of Chinese chorus, even judged by the modern music standards.⁹² Therefore, the work

⁹⁰ He Lüting, “Preface of *Zhao Yuanren Music Collection*”, *Music Research* 1 (1988), 20.

⁹¹ On March 18, 1926, the Northern Warlord Government in Beijing killed 47 people and injured more than 200 who protested foreign aggression, it is called the “the massesacre of March 18”.

⁹² Hu Zhili, “The Art about the Choral Works—Charm of the Sea”, *China Music* 1 (2005), 204.

has always been listed in repertoires by many concerts since its publication.

Gal, single gal, why do you linger on the beach in the twilight?

Go home, home gal!

Oh, no! I don't. I like the evening breeze.

On the beach, in the twilight, is a girl lingering, lingering.

Gal, Gal with hair hanging loose, why are you wandering on the cold sea

Go home, home gal!

Oh, no! Listen to my song, sea, I sing, an' you sing along

Underneath the starlight, in the chilling wind is whirling the gal's resonance,
pitch or low voice

Gal, daring gal! The black curtail falls, an' storm is coming,

Go home, home gal!

Oh, no! Look at my dance, like a seagull in the waves

In the darkness, on the beach spins a shadow, dancing, dancing

Listen, the rage of the sea, gal, go home, gal!

Look, the ferocious waves, gal, go home, gal!

Ah! No, the waves won't swallow me, I love the bumping of the sea!

Oh! No, the waves will swallow you, look at the stormy sea!

In the waves, in the ripples, ah, struggle an anxious gal in the foams.

Gal, where are you? where are you

Where is your resonant song? Where is your slim figure?

Where, my brave gal?

Night swallows the starlit, no light any more on the beach;

Waves cover the sands, there is no gal any more, any more!

The text of this song is unfolded linearly in the virtual characters and plots through oral poetic language, lyric tendency as well as clear and concise intention.

The lyrics convey care and worry of the poet on the destiny of the girl into a solemn and stirring symphony between human and nature through an obstinate girl who lingered on the seaside, singing in the cold wind, dancing in whirls, involved in the sea, disappear in waves. At the end of the text, the mind of the writer and his emotion are combined together to form a power of soul, touching people's hearts and leaving the aftertaste.

Charm of Sea

No. 12

The text is divided into five parts and the feeling of each part converges at the end. The song is put to a climax by intense calling, endless asking and strong feeling. Zhao divided the five sections into three groups: soprano referred to the girl, chorus standing for the poet and piano signifying sea. The whole song begins with a low tempo which accelerates gradually. In the poet's chorus part, every time when he asks the gal to go home, it shifts from the reminding, urging, warning at the beginning to the anxious shouting. At last, the lyric comes to a climax when the gal is involved into sea in the fourth part. The composer adopted a diminished seventh

chord when the poet asked the girl to go back home for the fourth time, which made the atmosphere urgent and intense. A method of acoustic branch and polyphony were used when the poet asked the girl to go back home for another time by heterophony, which made the answers of the poet and the girl sang out simultaneously, producing a novel and touching effect.

The most unique characteristic of this work lies in the role of the accompaniment of piano and the relatively independent music image, especially the piano after the 4th section, the modulation and series of chromatic descending were frequently used in the description of the girl when she was involved by roaring sea. All these actions were very daring attempts in the 1920s' music circle of China.

The chorus part of *Charm of Sea* was mainly used to reflect and supplement the disadvantage of solo in the song in order to express the insurgent feelings. On the whole, it was a mature work in terms of scale and structure, melody and composing techniques, accompaniment of piano and vocal music. When coming to discussion of this work, He Lüting thought:

Zhao Yuanren's *Charm of Sea* is really worthy of researching and analyzing for the future musicians and they must benefit a lot from it. This chorus expresses the complicated changes of sentiments and dramatic development. It also shows the sentiments of the poet including fear, worry, warning and the untouchable flowing sentiment of the girl... All these would be hard for a composer to express in just one song if he had not enough self-cultivation in all aspects, professional knowledge in music and cautious arrangement.⁹³

Throughout the work, the success of Zhao Yuanren lay in that he dared to not only break through the conventional restrictions but also widely apply the Western composing techniques such as inflexion, harmony and counterpoint to works. At the same time, the work will not make people feel novel and unique rather than strange. All these promoted the composing level of Chinese chorus for a large step from its childhood and made it the highest symbol of the chorus works in the 1920s.

Though Zhao Yuanren was an amateur of music, the contribution of his *Charm of Sea* had exceeded many pieces of music created by professional composers and musicologist at that time. Zhao was not more than 35 years old when he finished it. It was also his prime time for music creation, he should produce more excellent works, but he was in deep sorrowness because his best

⁹³ He Lüting, "Preface of *Zhao Yuanren Music Collection*", *Music Research*, 1 (1988), 21.

friends and lyric writers Xu Zhimo and Liu Bannong⁹⁴ died young, he felt that his melodies could not be produced if there were no excellent lyrics. Meanwhile, the Second Sino-Japanese War⁹⁵ broke out, and he was busy fleeing with his colleagues which made it hard for him to continue his academic work. Thus, he left China went to America with his family. From then on, China lost a talent who would bring another climax in music circle of China. It is also a pity in the modern history of Chinese chorus.

6. Huang Zi and His *Everlasting Regret*

Life of Huang Zi



Huang Zi (1904-1938) was fond of music when he was a child and could sing Shen Xingong's songs at 3 years old. When he was 12 years old, he entered the Beijing Tsinghua Preparatory School founded for people who were going to study in America. He often took part in the activities organized by Christian church there and viewed himself as a sectless Christian. Affected by church music, he began to learn Western music in standard and systematic way. He also joined a wind band of school and played clarinet while he also performed as a tenor of

Huang Zi No. 13 chorus in school. In 1924, he had to change to study psychology in America because of lack of studying music quota. Two years later, he shifted to study composition and got bachelor degree in musicology in 1929. He became a teacher in Hujiang University⁹⁶ after he visited Britain, France, Germany, Holland and Italy by the way of Europe in June the same year.

In 1930, he worked at the National Conservatory of Music under the invitation of the Xiao Youmei. He worked as director of teaching affairs there and

⁹⁴ Liu Bannong (1891-1934), well-known writer, linguist and educator in modern history of China, he wrote a lot of Lyricses for Zhao Yuanren.

⁹⁵ See p. III.

⁹⁶ In Shanghai.

taught professional courses including harmony, chorus, counterpoint, instrumentation and composition in addition to the music history and solfeggio. In the winter of 1935, he promoted the Shanghai Orchestra which was totally composed of Chinese people for the first time. Huang Zi died in Shanghai in 1938 at 34 years old.

When Huang Zi worked in Shanghai, the debate on how to develop Chinese music could be heard all the time in schools. The idea of total Westernization enjoyed much support. However, Huang Zi advocated that: “We have to develop our own music. New music of China could not be neither developed by copying foreign works nor created by using pentatonic scale of Western countries. It should be created by those who share Chinese blood and soul and are capable of the Western composing techniques.”⁹⁷

As a man with the skillful Western composing techniques, Huang Zi did not only say about that but also put it into practice, trying his best to investigate and reorganize traditional music, ballads and poems in order to establish a new nationalized music by using the Western music methods. When He Lüting summarized the position of Huang Zi in the modern history of Chinese music, he said: “He was an ambitious music educator who wished to establish Chinese nationalized music by teaching his students professional Western composing theories systematically and completely”.⁹⁸ Zhao Yuanren remarked:

He absorbed the Western techniques as his second nature which could be used in turn to look
For all kinds of sentiments from the Chinese background, Chinese life and Chinese
Environment he composed songs at ease and also let audience feel comfortable...His strength
is that what he wrote remains what it was and they are so natural and singable. I once called
him the most singable composer in China.⁹⁹

In 1932, Huang Zi composed *Everlasting Regret* which was the first Cantata in China, and it became an immortal work that could be compared to *Charm of Sea* in the modern history of Chinese chorus. *Everlasting Regret* is the typical work created by combining Chinese and Western music together deliberately, and matching the form of the Western composing techniques with the spirit of traditional Chinese melody and lyrics perfectly. It is also the best expression of his advocacy of the idea that music composition should choose a road of nationalism in

⁹⁷ Xiang Yansheng, “The Leader of the Academic School—Huang Zi: the Impact of Huang Zi in Chinese Music of the 20th Century”, *China Musicology* 3 (2005), 115.

⁹⁸ Qian Renkang, “Huang Zi’s Life and Writing”, *Music Art*, 4 (1993), 15.

⁹⁹ Pu Fang, “Talking From the ‘Regret’”, *China Music* 3 (1987), 56.

music and explore national style. *Everlasting Regret* is another exceptional model work in Chinese art chorus.

Story in *Everlasting Regret*

The story of *Everlasting Regret* came from a long narrative poem *Everlasting Regret* written by Bai Jūyi¹⁰⁰. It is about a love tragedy between Emperor Xuanzong (685-762) and Yang Guifei¹⁰¹ in the Tang Dynasty.

Emperor Xuanzong was also known as Tang Minghuang. In 736, his beloved concubine Wu Huifei died and he could not rest in peace all day and night. When he heard that the wife of his son Li Mao—Yang Yuhuan was a smart beauty, he called her into the palace regardless of the ethic manners and conferred the court title *Guifei*¹⁰². She is often referred to Yang Guifei. After that, Emperor Xuanzong was craze on her and did not care about political affairs. He led an extravagant life as in the poem: “She slept till sun rose high, for the blessed night was short, from then on the monarch held no longer morning court.”

In order to show his affection for Yang Guifei, Emperor Xuanzong promoted Yang Guozhong, the elder brother of Yang Guifei, to be the Prime Minister and her several sisters were also bestowed important titles. In fact, Yang Guozhong was not qualified for his position. On the contrary, he was good at collaborating with other people in the court and messing up the rules of the government, which finally led to An Shi Rebellion¹⁰³ in 755 and endangered the country. Forced by the rebel troops, the escort of Emperor Xuanzong mutinied on the way fleeing to Sichuan, in Maweipo of Shanxi Province. They blamed the Yang family for the chaos and had her cousin Yang Guozhong and other Yang family members executed. The troops also demanded that Yang Guifei be put to death. In order to calm army and maintain his throne, Emperor Xuanzong had no choice but order her to commit suicide.

Yang Guifei was one of the four beauties in ancient China. She got the love from Emperor for her beauty and died because of it. It was not a fault to be beautiful, however, beauty would be the direct reason for the disaster of her family and even the country. The story between Emperor Xuanzhong and Yang Guifei was

¹⁰⁰ Bai Jūyi (772-846), the most famous Chinese poet of realism in the Tang Dynasty.

¹⁰¹ Yang Guifei (719-756), the Tang Dynasty court musician, singer and dancer, one of the four beauties in Chinese history.

¹⁰² Guifei: the emperor's most favorite wife.

¹⁰³ An Shi Rebellion is an important event in history of China, it was the turning point of the Tang dynasty's rise and fall, the Rebellion was from 755 to 762. An and Shi were the two surnames of the rebel leaders.

formerly a deformed love affair against the ethics. In 806, Bai Jūyi intended at first to write this story to devalue Yang Guifei, but it turned out to a long narrative lyric poem which eulogized love for some unknown reasons. It had become a classic love poem throughout history because of its real feeling and powerful appeal of art.

The original Bai Jūyi's poem was divided into three parts. The first part mainly described the love life between Emperor Xuanzong and Yang Guifei. It seemed that there were some strong comic effects permeating around, however, that offered the reasonable foil and rendering for the following love tragedy. The second part mainly described the occurrence of An Shi Rebellion caused by the pruriency of Emperor Xuanzong, the mutiny in Maweipo, the death of Yang Guifei and Emperor Xuanzong's love for her without changes. In a scene when Yang Guifei was killed in Maweipo, Bai Jūyi described the internal feeling of the characters precisely and expressed the inner struggle and desperate feeling of Emperor Xuanzong who was unwilling to kill his lover but had to do so. People came to realize that this was a life-death departure full of her blood with his tear which gave birth to the *Everlasting Regret*. After An Shi Rebellion was put down, Emperor Xuanzong returned to his palace in Chang'an, now Xi'an. He felt very sad when he saw the familiar things in daytime and could not fall asleep at night. He wished to see Yang Guifei again but could not fulfill that. What he could do was only to pin his hope on dream, but one long, long year the dead and the living were parted, her soul did not come in dreams to see the brokenhearted. Until here, the word "regret" had been explained strikingly and people shared tears unconsciously with the protagonist. In the last part, the poem conceived a vivid fairyland for Emperor Xuanzong and Yang Guifei who were separated by life and death based on the poet's imagination. This enabled the desperate Emperor Xuanzong to meet Yang Guifei again, which changed the love tragedy in real world into comedy in the charming illusory world. By saying "On high, we'd be two lovebirds in sky, on land, two trees with branches twined from spring to spring." the poet expressed the good wish for people in love.

Artistic features of *Everlasting Regret*

The situation of China had changed when Huang Zi composed *Everlasting Regret*. Japan occupied the three provinces in the Northeast China after September

18, 1931, which forced China to usher into a phase of resisting against Japan for saving the Nation. As the new period approached, Chinese chorus took on a new development trend. A nationwide singing movement under the slogan of Anti-Japanese and National Salvation was organized in 1935, and patriotic songs became dominant. Before *Everlasting Regret*, Huang Zi wrote the first Anti-Japanese chorus *Resisting the Enemy* in China and then the second *The Flags are Fluttering*. *Everlasting Regret* was created because Huang Zi realized that there were not sufficient Chinese chorus that could be taught and he hoped to promote the teaching level of chorus. Judging from the time, *Everlasting Regret* should belong to anti-Japanese songs, but in terms of its creation motivation and style, it shared the same origin with the previous choruses, so we'd make a discussion here. *Everlasting Regret* was rewritten by Wei Hanzhang¹⁰⁴ through making some changes on the original poem. The whole song was divided into 10 movements and the title of each movement was selected from some lines of Bai Jüyi's poem. Because he was very busy in teaching affairs and created it just for teaching, Huang Zi only composed seven movements. The rest three movements were all solos which were not related to chorus, therefore, he did not complete them in one time¹⁰⁵.

The seven movements composed by Huang Zi are as follows:

1. The Sounds of Heavenly Music Carried by Wind Far (Four-part mixed chorus)
2. In the Palace of Eternal Youth on the Seventh of the Seventh Moon (Three-part female chorus, soprano solo and bass solo and duet)
3. War Drums in Yuyang, Making the Earth Quake (Four-part male chorus)
5. Nothing Emperor Could Do at the Army's Refusal to Proceed (Four-part male chorus)
6. The Yang Guifei's Suicide before the Emperor's Steed (Soprano solo)
8. A Fairy Mountain in the Ocean of a Never-never Land. (Three-part female chorus)
10. The Everlasting Regret of this Vow Unfulfilled (Four-part mixed choir And bass solo)

¹⁰⁴ Wei Hanzhang (1906-1993), famous lyrics writer, Huang Zi's partner.

¹⁰⁵ Liu Xuean, "Huang Zi's Everlasting Regret", *People's Music* 10 (1956), 3.

The other three movements¹⁰⁶ finished by Lin Shengxi, Huang Zi's student, in 1972 when the first cantata had been composed for nearly 40 years. It is regarded as a charming story in the music circle of China.

Although Huang Zi did not complete all the ten movements, it does not affect the understanding of people on the whole story, since the seven finished movements have already covered all the main contents and scenes of the original work with the cohesive plot and integrate structure.

In this cantata, Huang Zi presents us a love tragedy which has affected the history of China through mixed choir, male choir, female choir, solo by the Western music technique and accompaniment of piano, strings and harp. People also admire his rich knowledge in Western music when they appreciate the artistic value of this respectable work. In the first movement, Huang Zi adopts ternary form and four-part mixed choir to describe a happy scene in the Palace. A series of dexterous staccato in the right hand of the first period of accompaniment and the interacting answers in different parts in the second period impress us with the images of the luxurious palace and the beautiful dancing posture of maids of honor in it, and draw us near to the lives of the court 1200 years ago. Then when the choir comes to the second movement, the composer uses the amplified ternary form, three-part female choir, soprano solo, bass solo and duet in order to display the vow between Emperor Xuanzong and Yang Guifei. The introductory music of the piano produces the love theme at first and then the romantic and peaceful night is presented in front of us by three-part female choir. Under this background, soprano signifying Yang Guifei and baritone for Emperor to express their reluctance to depart from each other. In the third movement, the writer combines ternary form to depict the scene that the rebel forces were approaching to the capital city by using the male bass as the leading singer first and four-part male choir next.

¹⁰⁶ The other three movements are: 4. The Rainbow and Feather Garments Dance; 7. The Bells Heard in Night Rain Me a Heart-rending Sound; 9. Weeds Choked the Emperor's West Palace.

The musical score is for a piece titled "A Fairy Mountain in the Ocean of a Never-never Land" (No. 14). It is written in 4/4 time and B-flat major. The score includes three vocal staves (S.I, S.II, A.) and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked "Andante sostenuto" for the first section and "a tempo" for the second. The piano part features dynamic markings such as "pp" (pianissimo) and "rit." (ritardando). The lyrics are in Chinese: "香雾迷蒙, 祥云掩".

By making analysis on each movement of *Everlasting Regret* we can feel Huang Zi's skillful Western composing techniques and the exquisite artistic charm by which the exact meaning of the lyrics with ethnic styles is reflected through music.

The eighth movement, a Fairy Mountain in the Ocean of a Never-never Land can best expressed Huang Zi's music idea:

The fragrant mist is hazy, and the auspicious clouds gather,
The hole in Penglai Island is vacant, the flowers are on the trees.
We laugh at him,
In red dust and crystal sea,
How many love seedlings? How many love seeds?
Vicissitudes of life, vicissitudes of life,
What's the use of lovesickness?
Do not you see through the fantasy of improbable?
There is nothing at all.

In this movement, the composer applies the binary form and three-part female choir. In the meantime, he also deliberately absorbs the tune of Qingping- diao, a Chinese ancient song and intentionally introduces polyphony with ethnic style and the Western composing techniques. All of these are innovative in the history of Chinese chorus.

The melody starts by the accompaniment of the piano and opts a pentatonic. The fairies in the Penglai Island¹⁰⁷ that are acted by the three-part female choir laugh at the infatuation between Emperor Xuanzong and Yang Guifei.

The introduction appears in treble. The string accompaniment by dividing the first violin and the second violin is clear and soft, creating a fantastic feeling of wonderland. The first form is composed of three phrases: there is only one melody in the first phrase, brief and simple. The imitation part appears in the second and third phrase and this polyphonic method not only makes up for the harmony but also it conveys image meaning. It reminds people that songs of many fairies are fluctuating in diffused mist.

In the second form each part develops continuously with fluctuation, giving us a sense of vividness. It comes to an end in the fifth chord without mediant, in the line: "Do not you see through the fantasy of improbable, there is nothing at all."

To carry on the Western composing techniques and create Chinese ethnic chorus are the unique composing track of Huang Zi reflected in *Everlasting Regret*. The poetic and picturesque artistic conception, the adept composing technique of Huang Zi and the successful attempt of combining Chinese with Western music have all brought Chinese chorus into a new nationalized area. We should especially

¹⁰⁷ Penglai Island, in Shandong Province, where fairies haunt in Chinese folklores.

mention that the introduction of polyphony in China is a daring attempt different from the predecessors. In 1992, *Everlasting Regret* was listed in Chinese music of the 20th century by the Chinese National Culture Promotion Association for its great influence and excellent artistic charm in the modern history of Chinese chorus.

The birth of *Everlasting Regret* started the precedent of creating large-scale music in the form of Chinese cantata and influenced the future creation of Chinese chorus greatly. Zhao Yuanren once called Huang Zi “The most singable composer” in his time and Huang’s *Everlasting Regret* was among the most singable songs. In addition, Huang Zi also introduced a cappella that was very popular in the religious world of Europe in the 16th century. *Mu Lian Saved His Mother* was the first cappella work composed by Huang Zi after his return from abroad. In this work, Chinese folklore was chosen as material and the ethnic music as the main tune. Huang Zi made a nationalized exploration on the art form of a cappella creatively by means of the skillful Western composing techniques he learned.

On May 9, 1938, leaving half *Chinese & Foreign Music History* and the rest three movements of *Everlasting Regret* unfinished, Huang Zi left his beloved music world. On the funeral of Huang Zi, the teachers and students of the National Conservatory of Music showed their respect to Huang Zi’s Christian belief: “Vladimir Shushlin¹⁰⁸ began with a solo of Gounod’s *Ave Maria* and then the faculty of the Conservatory sang a hymn *Lord, I Come Close to You* in order to console the soul of the talent for the generation.”¹⁰⁹

7. Questions at Issue about the Origin of Chinese Chorus

Modern chorus was brought to China by Western missionaries after the Opium War in 1840. Before that, the mainstream Chinese music appeared on the traditional music stage in the form of linear monophonic music, with various local operas and music for dialogues expressed by Quyi¹¹⁰ as representatives. The melodic performance of the traditional Chinese vocal music was consistent with the

¹⁰⁸ See p. 28.

¹⁰⁹ Qian Renkang, “Huang Zi’s Life and Writing”, *Music Art* 4 (1993), 16.

¹¹⁰ Quyi is a variety of hip-hop folk art of China, collectively, it is by the folk oral literature and song art after a long evolution of a unique art form.

melodic composing pattern which was mainly expressed in form of Qupai¹¹¹ composing. The procedure of music creation in ancient China was to select lyrics first, and match them with the tunes, reserving the fair sounding melodic pieces. The new works would be produced by refilling in new lyrics based on the reserved melodies. The so-called Qupai is just these selected melodies, the generic term of melodies which can be used independently. It is the basic and simple musical form in the traditional Chinese music and also the basis to constitute other forms of musical structures. Every tune has its own mode, tonality, singing method, word count, syntax and tonal pronunciation (平仄音). The number of tunes increased as time passed by. There were already 2094 tunes in *Comprehensive Notation for Southern and Northern Poetries* edited in 1746. Qupai was a specific expression when China melody art developed to a fairly high level. It was a special pattern of the traditional Chinese vocal music. In addition, it was also an important carrier for the spread and development of Chinese music.

Although it developed in the linear characteristics of Chinese melodies to be nearly perfect, the Qupai art seemed stiff and lack of flexibility. For listeners who understood the meaning of the texts, they could intoxicate themselves in the work while for foreigners who did not understand the texts, there were always the same melodies and only some changes in the performers and stage settings, which impressed them that Chinese music was monotonous and stereotyped.

When missionaries brought church music to China, Chinese people who had been accustomed to the monophonic melodies of China felt that they were listening to a tumultuous noise. They could not adapt to harmony, inflexion and polyphony in Western music at all. As people became familiar with Western music, they began to realize Western music and accepted chorus at last.

The big debate about the development direction of Chinese music was aroused at the beginning of the School Songs. People argued about whether to accept Western music totally by saying no to the traditional Chinese music or to continue to develop the traditional Chinese music by rejecting Western music or by absorbing the advanced Western composing and performing techniques? In the field of chorus, these debates only ended when the September 18 Incident¹¹² broke out. People reached an agreement that Chinese music should be developed by taking advantages of Western music techniques.

¹¹¹ See p. 12.

¹¹² See p. IV.

Chorus entered Chinese schools from churches and grew up prosperously in the period of the School Songs. The increasing influence of Chinese chorus urged musicians to find out the origin of Chinese chorus. Some Chinese musicians who held an objective perspective thought that it originated from church music; some believed that it began from *Spring Outing* by Li Shutong and some others held that it was from Xiao Youmei. Many other common people at that time even did not know what chorus was when the origin of Chinese chorus was under endlessly discussion. For them chorus was simply equal to unison, it became an evaluation standard of a chorus that whether the sound was regular and resounding, even today, some people still view chorus as a kind of unison.

People who took Li Shutong or Xiao Youmei as the beginning of Chinese chorus were obviously lacking in knowledge of church music and its influence in China after 1840. People who had a little common sense of Christianity would know that hymns sung by church members during their worship services in churches were unison—a monophonic music that had no parts. However, hymns sung by church-funded ensembles were mostly chorus. If we judge the relatively short history of Chinese chorus by this standard, the chorus works created before *Spring Outing* were all simple unisons. However, absolute chorus had existed in churches or church schools before the School Songs came into existence. Therefore, it conformed to the historical fact that Chinese chorus originated from church music that was brought to China after the Opium War.

During the period of the School Songs and the early National Conservatory of Music, an idea was aroused to learn Western music totally, because Chinese musicians thought that China had not polyphonic music but just melody and Chinese ethnic music was lagged behind Western music in terms of the mainstream Chinese music. As a matter of fact, as pointed by Fan Zuyin, a famous professor, composer and musicologist from China Conservatory of Music, polyphonic and monophonic music can not be classified as advanced or unadvanced in terms of artistic characteristics and both had reason and value to exist. What Chinese needed to learn from the West were their scientific system of musical disciplines and musical methods such as harmony, counterpoint, chorus, instrument ensemble, notation method and composing technology. The biggest contribution of Chinese musicians in the 20th century was that Chinese folk music was developed quickly by use of the Western music methods. In the field of Chinese chorus, Huang Zi first

deliberately introduced polyphony and processing method of harmony full of Chinese national flavors in *Everlasting Regret*, it was a significant attempt for Chinese in the early period in this field.

While Chinese chorus led by Chinese musicians such as Li Shutong, Xiao Youmei, Zhao Yuanren, Huang Zi, Xian Xinghai, He Lüting and Lü Ji, majestically entered the 1950s, some musicians cast their eyes to the traditional Chinese music again. Influenced by Western music theories on polyphony, they began to reevaluate the traditional Chinese music by their modern music knowledge what they studied from West.

Fan Zuyin is a representative for the research in this field. He was born in Yuyao County of Zhejiang Province in 1940. He studied composition in Shanghai National Conservatory of Music¹¹³, and then in China Conservatory of Music. In 1965, he began to teach in China Conservatory of Music and Shanghai National Conservatory of Music alternately. Now he is editor-in-Chief of the magazine *China Music*, President of Music Association of Chinese Ethnic Groups as well as Vice President of Chinese Traditional Music Association.

According to Fan Zuyin, He Lüting, president of Shanghai Conservatory of Music, said in the 1950s that the folk chorus in Guangxi was excellent, he hoped somebodies who wanted to devote to the research of folk chorus could make some researches on that. Inspired by this, Fan Zuyin accomplished his thesis entitled *A Research on Guangxi Folk Chorus* in the 1960s.¹¹⁴ He devoted all his life to the research of Chinese multi-part folksongs and issued many research papers on that. In 1994, he published *Survey of Chinese Multi-part Folksongs*. During his research, Fan Zuyin carried the goal of combining the excellent techniques learned from Western music with Chinese multi-part folksongs from the beginning to the end so as to create new studying techniques which belong to China only.

Why He Lüting proposed the issue of research on folk chorus in the 1950s? That was determined by the historical context. Again, according to Fan Zuyin, some Japanese musicians came to Taiwan for research in the 1920s and found that Taiwan was rich in folk chorus. In the 1930s, some Chinese musicians discovered a lot of polyphonic music in some boatman songs along the Hanjiang River¹¹⁵. Though these songs were not recorded in notation, it had drawn the attention of Chinese

¹¹³ It is the new name of the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai.

¹¹⁴ Fan Zuyin, "Preface" in *Survey of Chinese Multi-part Folksongs* (Beijing People's Music Publishing House, 1994), III.

¹¹⁵ The Hanjiang River, a tributary of the longest river-Changjiang river in Sichuan Province, West-South China. Along it, there are a lots folksongs.

musicians to Chinese folk chorus.¹¹⁶

Chinese musicians discovered the big songs of Dong ethnic group¹¹⁷ in the habitat of Dong people at the early 1950s. Musician Xue Liang wrote an article entitled *Brief Introduction to Folk Music of Dong Ethnic Group on People's Music* in December, 1953. He mentioned that there was two-part choir in the music of Dong ethnic group, making the first tentative step for the research of folksongs with multiple voices¹¹⁸. In 1958, Guizhou Publishing House published a collection of more than 60 songs from Dong ethnic group named *Big Songs of Dong Ethnic Group*. It was compiled by Chinese musicians and recorded in Western notation. This was the first album that introduced Chinese multi-part folk music and influenced Chinese music greatly.

So far, more than 20 of the 56 ethnic groups of China have been found to possess multi-part folksongs. Combination of these achievements and modern chorus of China has formed the ethnic artistic features of Chinese chorus, making it a miracle among world chorus. Based on this, some Chinese musicians attempted to overthrow the fact that the modern Chinese chorus originated from church music after 1840. They insisted that it should be derived from Chinese folksongs that had come into being before 1840. Thus, the flag of Christian hymns should be plucked off in the origin of Chinese chorus and Chinese multi-part folksongs should take the former place.

The contributions of Chinese multi-part folksongs to the development of Chinese chorus can be seen by all since it was found. However, it is not proper to take that as the origin of modern Chinese chorus. The reasons are described as follows:

First, if Chinese multi-part folksongs were the origin of Chinese chorus, why so many ethnic groups in China with folksongs of multiple parts had little influence on the mainstream Chinese melodic music before 1950s?

As we all know, the importance of notation to music is just like written words to language. In the history of human beings, the history written by words is called the history of civilization while the time before the emergence of the written history is called prehistory. The civilization history has its reliability, rigorous and trans-missibility while prehistory is mostly passed on oral language by means of

¹¹⁶ Fan Zuyin, "Preface" in *Survey of Chinese Multi-part Folksongs* (Beijing People's Music Publishing House, 1994), IV.

¹¹⁷ Dong ethnic group mainly lies in the junction of Guizhou, Hunan and Guangxi Provinces.

¹¹⁸ Xue Liang, "Brief Introduction to Folk Music of Dong Ethnic Group", *People's Music* 6 (1953), 40-44.

legends and myths, that is to say, it is not very reliable and has little historical value. It is the same with the music history as well, all the statements about music before it could be recorded by notation are all the prehistories of music, they could not be verified and can not be used as the basis for the history of music. In the long history of 5000 years, most of the ethnic groups of China lived in a remote border area where their economy was undeveloped, their transportation condition was poor and their culture level lagged behind, their economy had always been maintaining a low level self-sufficiency of agricultural society. The multi-part folksongs were created during work and daily life of common people. Due to lack of the records by notation or even basic written language, these songs emerged and perished by itself continuously among isolated mountains and water outside the musical civilization. Such folksongs had no any influence on Chinese music before the 1950s. Therefore, it was just the reflection of the reality of the traditional Chinese music without any subjective elements or prejudice when some Chinese musicians said that China had no chorus before Christian music was introduced. It is just like the situation that more than half of the residents living near a gold mine died in the famine days. The ones survived years later found that a kind of money called gold could be used to change for food on market, they began to cry out happily that they owned a gold mine and the gold came from their home at the earliest. In fact, it is true that there is a gold mine near them but the gold mine brought them no help in the history and it means nothing to them. Chinese musicians, did not realize the existence of China's polyphonic music before Chinese scholars discovered multi-part folksongs and made research on them. We can not say that there is something wrong with the feeling of those music workers, but we have to say that Chinese multi-part folksongs just were some treasure undiscovered. They just have exerted little influence through thousands of years in the history of music in China and meant nothing. Under this circumstance, we should not say that Chinese chorus originates from Chinese multi-part folksongs. Even if Chinese multi-part folksongs are swift horse, it has to wait in a queue until its own turn to enter the vision of musicians.

Second, the development of everything has continuity in its source. So does Chinese chorus. The first chorus came out of churches in the history of Chinese chorus according to the written history. Chinese multi-part folksongs just excavated in the 1950s, it was almost over 100 years later from 1840 when hymns were taught by Western missionaries on the land of China. It has been also dozens of years away from *Spring Outing* composed by Li Shutong. The research on Chinese multi-part

folksongs began in the 1950s but who can explicitly tell the situation before the 1950s by accurate words and staves? What was the situation of Chinese multi-part folksongs when a large number of the Anti-Japanese chorus works came into being in the 1930s and 1940s? What was the situation of Chinese multi-part folksongs when Li Shutong composed *Spring Outing*, Zhao Yuanren composed *Charm of Sea* and Xiao Youmei composed *Farewell to my Alma Mater*? What was the situation of Chinese multi-part folksongs when Christian hymns were printed one after another on the land of China? In regards to these issues, Fan Zuyin had done a lot of work tentatively. However, he acknowledged that something would be hardly resolved because of the lack of reliable materials. As a matter of fact, Chinese multi-part folksongs have nothing to do with the birth and development of Chinese chorus which had been popular for nearly 100 years in China.

Third, in 1990, Lü Ji pointed out in the preface written for Fan Zuyin's book *Survey of Chinese Multi-part Folksongs*:

On the whole, the multi-part music of different ethnic groups in China is still in the budding or early period. It remains still to be amateurish works in spare time of folksong singers. It can hardly be compared to the European chorus that has developed rapidly about 1000 years ago and in the Renaissance period was created mainly by professional composers.¹¹⁹

By the time when Lü Ji said it, several excellent chorus composers had grasped the Western composing techniques and came out of their budding or amateurish composing period for a long time. We can conclude that Chinese multi-part folksongs and Chinese chorus have different sources and they were different music without any relation or common origin before the 1950s.

Finally, the rise of multi-part folksongs was closely related to labor form, customs and aesthetics of different ethnic groups. As Chinese economy keeps growing in modern times, social productive forces level keeps rising, transportation condition is getting perfect, the civilization level of different ethnic groups is getting higher and higher, the communication between different ethnic groups is becoming more often, the living environment of the ethnic groups is being improved continuously, social condition that folksongs rely on is disappearing, Chinese multi-part folksongs are becoming fewer and fewer day by day. Currently,

¹¹⁹ Lü Ji, "Preface" in *Survey of Chinese Multi-part Folksongs* (Beijing People's Music Publishing House, 1994), 3.

Chinese musicians are conducting the research and record of multi-part folksongs. Actually, they are also conducting a salvage and conservation work on the endangered musical form by using of the Western chorus techniques. Although we believe Chinese multi-part folksongs had existed before church music was brought to China, we do not agree that they are the origin of Chinese mainstream chorus. It is only a tributary that flowed into the mainstream of Chinese chorus in the history from the 1950s and a beneficiary of Western chorus.

Some Chinese Folk Musical Instruments and Yangge Mentioned in the Dissertation



Erhu See Page 138



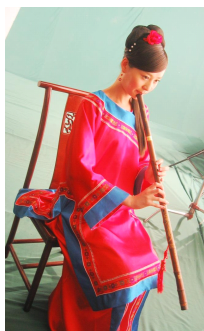
Playing the Erhu



Guqin See Page 171



Hujia See Page 170



Xiao See Page 65



Yangge See Page 110

II. Chinese Chorus in the Anti-Japanese War¹ and the Liberation War²

1. Transformation of Chinese Chorus

The development of Chinese chorus was closely related to the development of the modern History of China. The Opium War not only opened the gate of the feudal China which had been closed for more than 2000 years, but also brought on the arrival of a large number of Western missionaries, which marked the beginning of a new era of Chinese chorus. Furthermore, the birth of the School Songs paved the way for the birth of the Chinese secular chorus. Not long after that, the Revolution of 1911 broke out in China. In this bourgeois democratic revolution, the last feudal monarchy in China—the Qing Dynasty was overthrown and a provisional government of the Republic of China led by the capitalist class was established. The next year, Yuan Shikai³ usurped the leadership of the provisional government and began to challenge the new democracy system by force. On December 12, 1915, he restored the old system of the feudal monarchy. But under the objection from all the parties in China, he was the last emperor of the old system for only 83 days, and was forced to abolish the monarchy in 1916. After that, the history of China entered the Warlord Era when China was divided among military cliques including Anhui, Zhili, Fengtian, Shanxi, Yunnan and Guangxi Army⁴.

The early years of Chinese great social changes saw the rise of the School Songs. When Chinese musicians began to use the Western composing techniques to create Chinese chorus, the bourgeois democratic revolution in China had failed and China had entered an era of turbulence. Chinese musicians at that time were sad, they expected peace and stability. Thus, choral works at that time were created mostly to express their eagerness for peace and yearning for the orderly political situations by describing the harmony among human, nature and feelings in people's life. For example, chorus *Spring Outing*, which was composed under the social turmoil, depicts a harmonious picture of spring scenery and a girl to express the composer's longing for peace. Choral works like *Farewell*, *Farewell to My Alma Mater* and *A Moonlit Night on the Spring River* convey a feeling of parting. *Charm of Sea* arouses the

¹ See p. III.

² The Liberation War: in order to overthrow the Chinese Nationalist Party, the People's Liberation Army carried out the war from August, 1945 to September, 1949, the People's Republic of China was proclaimed on October 1, 1949.

³ Yuan Shikai (1859-1916), well-known politician in modern history of China, the first great President of the Republic of China.

⁴ Anhui, Zhili, etc. were the names of Provinces in China.

pathos deep inside people's heart. *Everlasting Regret* is a love tragedy full of misery feelings. If the September 18 Incident⁵ in 1931 had not happened, Chinese chorus would probably have, in theory, continued to center on the relationship between Chinese music and Western music, lyric or art songs to depict natural sceneries and express different human feelings.

Nevertheless, the developing direction of Chinese chorus was changed completely by the September 18 Incident in 1931 when Japanese occupied three provinces in the Northeast China. After the success of Meiji Reform, Japan rapidly turned to a road of militarism by invading other countries. Following the first Sino-Japanese War in 1894 in which the Chinese Fleet met complete collapse, Japan launched a war against Russia in the Northeast China in 1904. After that, Japan inherited the benefit of Russia in the Northeast China by sending troops there and taking up the place as its military base for colonial expansion. In 1927, the Northern Expedition Army led by the Chinese Nationalist Party ceased the melee among warlords and reclaimed all the leased territories and colonies of foreign countries in China. In order to maintain its privilege in China, Japan launched a war against China in the Northeast China on September 18th, 1931. At that time, the army controlled by the Chinese Nationalist Party was busy with the civil war with the Communist Party. Chiang Kai-Shek, the top leader of the Chinese Nationalist Party thought that it was essential for him to stabilize China before resisting Japanese aggression, that is, he should first win the civil war and then resist Japanese after that. Therefore, he ordered the army of two hundred thousand soldiers in the Northeast China not to resist Japanese but to retreat inside Shanhaiguan Pass⁶ for the civil war. As a result, without any organized resistance, the Chinese army with two hundred thousand soldiers gave up the three provinces in the Northeast China to the Japanese army with only ten thousand soldiers.

The loss of the Northeast China aroused anger from all Chinese people, and a large-scale Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Movement began across China. At first, some teachers and students, who knew the Western composing techniques, taking music as their weapon, composed a number of anti-Japanese songs. In the field of chorus, Huang Zi⁷ was the first musician created the anti-Japanese songs. One month after the September 18 Incident in 1931, Huang Zi, together with other teachers and

⁵ See p. IV.

⁶ The eastern starting point of the Great Wall, China is divided into two parts by it: inside China, and outside China.

⁷ See pp. 35-37.

students from the National Conservatory of Music, organized an Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Union. After the Union came to Pudong⁸ to send round the hat for the Anti-Japanese Volunteer Army in the Northeast China, Huang Zi composed the first appealing anti-Japanese chorus *Resisting the Japanese*, the text and melody written all by himself. Later on, Wei Hanzhang⁹ continued the sequel verse of the song.¹⁰ In hope of concentrating its strengths to win in the civil war, the Chinese Nationalist Party was afraid of enraging the Japanese government. Forced by the Japanese government, it banned all words related to “Resistance against Japanese” in any form, and any person who disobeyed the rule would be killed. Thus, the chorus *Resisting the Japanese* was changed into *Resisting the Enemy* under the compulsion. In 1932, Huang Zi composed *The Flags are Fluttering*, the second excellent anti-Japanese chorus following *Resisting the Enemy*. After the completion of this work, Huang Zi began to compose *Everlasting Regret* because of his teaching, but it wasn’t finished, which was largely due to Huang Zi’s patriotic enthusiasm about the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Movement. He thought that the first thing he should do in the war was to compose some anti-Japanese songs as quickly as he could. He said: “Now I’m writing anti-enemy songs, but I hope I can have the opportunity to write songs celebrating our victory in the Anti-Japanese War in the near future.”¹¹ In addition to the two anti-Japanese works, he also created some patriotic choruses like *Ballad, Remember the War, Students’ Year Song of Domestic Products, Looking into the North, Gift to the Soldiers in the Frontline, Sleeping Lion, Warsong, The September 18* and *Warm Blooded Song*. The unfinished work, *Warm Blooded Song*, created when the Anti-Japanese War broke out totally all around China, was his last work in his life. It was a forever pity in the history of Chinese music that he passed away before the victory of the Anti-Japanese War, leaving his wish “to write songs celebrating our victory in the Anti-Japanese War in the near future” unfulfilled.

In addition to Huang Zi, many amateurs in other specialties also took part in the composition of the Anti-Japanese and National Salvation songs. Musicians in the early period included Xiao Youmei¹², Zhao Yuanren¹³, Chen Hong¹⁴ and Zhou Shu’an¹⁵.

⁸ A district of Shanghai city.

⁹ See p. 39.

¹⁰ Qian Renkang, “Huang Zi’s Life and Writing”, *Music Art* 4 (1993), 16.

¹¹ Dai Penghai, “The First Anti-Japanese Nation Salvation of Chorus—Zi Huang’s *Resisting the Enemy* Came Out the 60th Anniversary”, *Music lovers* 4 (1991), 20.

¹² See pp. 25-29.

¹³ See pp. 29-35.

¹⁴ Chen Hong (1907 -?), a composer, music educator, musicologist, a professor of the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai, 1926-1930 studied in France.

¹⁵ See p. 11.

Shortly after Huang Zi created *Resisting the Enemy* and *The Flags are Fluttering*, Xiao Youmei led the students of the National Conservatory of Music to call on the whole society to send round the hat for the Anti-Japanese Volunteer Army, he composed a two-part chorus named *Join the Army*. In 1933, the anti-Japanese generals Feng Yuxiang¹⁶ and Ji Hongchang¹⁷ organized the North China Anti-Japanese Army Alliance. Excited at this news, Zhao Yuanren created a three-part chorus named *I am a Northlander* to praise the northern soldiers resisting Japanese in the North China. In 1937 when the Anti-Japanese War broke out all around China, he also adapted Nie Er's¹⁸ unison *March of the Volunteer* into a two-part chorus. In the same period, Zhou Shu'an, the first female conductor in China created *Siblings* and *Woo, woo, woo!* Another composer Chen Hong created the masses choral works such as *Battle Song* and *Go to Front*. The Left-wing musicians like Sha Mei¹⁹, Xian Xinghai²⁰ and Liu Xuean²¹ rose in the later period. Their works included *Fight Back to the Northeast China* by Sha Mei (a two-part chorus in 1937), *Thirty Millions of Refugees* (a four-part mixed chorus in 1936), *March of Youth* (a two-part chorus in 1937) and *Porter Song* (a two-part chorus in 1936) by Xian Xinghai, *Battle Song* (a two-part chorus in 1936) by Liu Xuean.

As the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Movement became popular gradually, activities of the masses singing for the Movement were also launched. In February, 1935, Liu Liangmo²², a member of the Shanghai Young Men's Christian Association, spontaneously organized a the masses singing committee in the Shanghai Young Men's Christian Association. At the first, the singing committee had no specific political intentions in selecting songs and the organizers only taught some simple, easily-sung and interesting foreign songs. They also asked the participants to spread the songs they had learned to others in order to expand the influence of the singing committee. At that moment, Nie Er and Lü Ji²³ who both were the members of the Shanghai Left-wing Dramatist Union had already created several songs for some Left-wing films. Liu Liangmo, under suggestion by the singing committee, chose these songs as teaching materials. In May, 1935, a film named *Sons and Daughters in a Time of Storm* was shown in Shanghai. The movie soundtrack *March of the Volunteers*, composed by Nie

¹⁶ See p. 18.

¹⁷ Ji Hongchang (1895-1934), well-known anti-Japanese general, Chinese national hero.

¹⁸ Nie Er (1912-1935), musician, the composer of the national anthem of the People's Republic of China.

¹⁹ Sha Mei (1909-1993), composer, music educator.

²⁰ See p. 11.

²¹ Liu Xuean (1905-1985), composer, music educator, studied in the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai from 1930.

²² Liu Liangmo (1909-1988), pioneer in the early singing activities of China.

²³ Lü Ji (1909-2002), composer, the most important leader of the Chinese Musicians Association.

Er, became an important song in the singing committee. After that, the singing committee changed from a neutral singing organization into a Left-wing salvation organization. With this change, the number of the singing committee increased from several tens of people to more than 1000 within just several months. As the anti-Japanese songs sung by the singing committee increased, so did the committee's influence. All these aroused Japanese dissatisfaction. Japanese government put much pressure on the Chinese Nationalist Party government and Settlement Authorities of different European countries in Shanghai to stop singing the anti-Japanese songs. The Chinese Nationalist Party government, who devoted to suppression over the communists and took a non-resistance policy for Japanese, together with the Shanghai Settlement Authorities, who had a neutral attitude towards the Japanese invasion, began to ban the publication of the anti-Japanese and National Salvation Song books and journals. They also dispelled the singing committee, arrested the backbones of the organization. At last, the singing committee was forced to disband under the big pressure. Liu Liangmo, the promoter of the singing committee had to leave Shanghai, confining his activities to inland. At the end of 1936, Chiang Kai-Shek, the top leader of the Chinese Nationalist Party was detained in Xi'an by Zhang Xueliang, the general of the Northeast Army and Yang Hucheng, the general of the Northwest Army. At last Chiang Kai-Shek was forced to cooperate with the Communist army led by Mao Zedong and to cease the civil war and stand together to form an United Anti-Japanese Front. After that, the anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation singing activities met another climax across the country. Under the new circumstance, the Young Men's Christian Association reorganized its former members of the singing committee in the name of the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Singing Team of Shanghai Young Men's Christian Association with He Shide²⁴ as conductor. Then He Shide was a student of the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai majored in composition. When Liu Liangmo organized the singing committee, he not only participated in the Christian ensemble but also devoted himself to the singing committee, so he was quite familiar with the committee.

Although the foundation of the Shanghai Christian Singing Committee was suppressed by the Chinese Nationalist Party who held a non-resistance policy, it received support from the Left-wing musicians led by the Communist Party. At that time, Xian Xinghai ever taught in the singing committee and Lü Ji, a Left-wing

²⁴ He Shide (1910-2000), composer, studied in the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai from 1934.

composer was invited by Liu Liangmo to give lectures for the Backbone Training Team founded by the singing committee. In a lecture attended by all the members of the singing committee, Lü Ji talked about the situation of the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Movement, he proposed that new music of China should serve for the masses and for the national liberation, which affirmed the significance of the singing committee. In 1939, Zhou Enlai²⁵, one of the most important leaders of the Communist Party, received Liu Liangmo in Jinhua, Zhejiang Province. Zhou Enlai expressed his appreciation to him for the masses singing movement, he encouraged him to continue his work.

The Shanghai Christian Singing Committee was the biggest achievement made by Christianity. Christianity in China not only introduced singing manner of church hymns to China directly but also made Chinese common people to learn and accept the singing form. The founding of the Shanghai Christian Singing Committee made the modern music be known by Chinese society, which stimulated the development of secular chorus to the most possible extent later.

From the singing activities organized by the Shanghai Young Men's Christian Association, Lü Ji saw the great significance of the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Singing Activities to the publicity of resisting Japanese. He was inspired to found an Amateur Chorus Organization with another musician, Sha Mei, who gave her applause and support to his ideas. The Left-wing Amateur Chorus Organization they founded didn't have many members at beginning, but its influence was significant. As the organization developed to its later period, many ensembles asked the Amateur Chorus Organization for new music scores. What's more, because all members of the organization also respectively took charge of at least one singing group outside and some even had close relationship with several singing groups, the Amateur Chorus Organization gradually replaced the masses singing committee, becoming a core of the leadership in the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Singing Activities²⁶.

The masses singing activities in Shanghai developed like a raging fire and this promoted the rise of the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation the Masses Singing Movement in other cities of China. In schools, organs of government and armies in Beijing, Nanjing, Tianjin, Wuhan, Guangzhou, Guilin and Hongkong, singing groups in all kinds of forms were founded. The participants in the singing activities ranged from capitalist to workers. All Chinese people who did not want to become slaves of a

²⁵ Zhou Enlai (1898-1976), famous statesman, military strategist and diplomat, the first Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China, was deeply loved and esteemed by Chinese people.

²⁶ Wu Yongyi, *People's musician—Lü Ji* (China Federation of Literature Publishing House, 2005), 42.

subjugated country participated in the movement. For a period the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Singing Activities aroused a high wave across the country.

The singing activities in the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation period included not only the masses unisons but also some anti-Japanese choruses sung by the Amateur Chorus Organization. Because these singing groups demanded for more choral works, more and more musicians were encouraged to compose the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation chorus with great enthusiasm. In the following years, a group of excellent composers came into being and many higher level the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation works emerged. For example, *800 Heroes Song* by Xia Zhiqiu²⁷, *Production Cantata*, *Yellow River Cantata*, *The September 18 Cantata* and *Sacrificed Allies Cantata* by Xian Xinghai, *Reclaim the Spring Land*, *Song of Guerillas* by He Lüting²⁸ and *The Eighth Route Army Cantata* by Zheng Lücheng²⁹. Among them, *The Eighth Route Army Cantata* was transformed into *Song of China* during the Liberation War after 1945, and was used as the warsong of *Chinese People's Liberation Army* after the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949. From this, we could see the great influence of choral works of this period.

The Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Movement spontaneously brought on the appearance of the masses singing activities in China. After the Left-wing musicians led by the Communist Party took charge of the masses singing activities, they pushed the singing movement to its peak. Almost at the same time, the Left-wing musicians divided the field of Chinese music into two groups: one was the Academic School with a pejorative connotation, including Xiao Youmei, Huang Zi, the students of the National Conservatory of Music and He Lüting who became the Left-wing musician later on, the other one was the Left-wing Salvation School led by Nie Er, Xian Xinghai, Lü Ji and Sha Mei. The reason of this split in Chinese music was that people from the National Conservatory of Music, considering from pure music point of view, regarded the salvation songs created by the Left-wing musicians as too simple and thought their works were lack of harmony and accompaniment, which didn't accord with the Western composing principle. In regard to some anti-Japanese works full of empty words and slogans, the musicians in the Academic School who had made systematic research on Western music showed their criticism as well. Frankly speaking, the criticism was pertinent and practical. At that time, only several Left-wing musicians like Lü Ji who had ever studied in the National Conservatory of Music, most of them

²⁷ Xia Zhiqiu (1912-1993), trumpet player, music educator.

²⁸ See p. 28.

²⁹ Zheng Lücheng (1914-1976), army composer, who wrote the *Warsong of the People's Liberation Army*.

were just music amateurs. Even Nie Er, the leader of the Left-wing movement, just learned composition one year and three months in the Song and Dance Troupe of Bright Moon from its founder Li Jinhui³⁰, the originator of Chinese popular song, and received no regular composition training. However, the good-willed criticism from the Academic School aroused dissatisfaction of the Left-wing musicians. Lü Ji first talked back, calling the people from the Academic School who had pointed out the disadvantages of salvation songs “liberalists” and “nostalgic advocates”. Then, he jumped to the conclusion that “the students of the National Conservatory of Music in current China were going backward, they even can not compare with the students in ancient days.”³¹

All these words of Lü Ji were out of the scope of academic debate. He was right to show his objection to the Academic School, but was wrong to show it by means of imputation. From that time on, the leaders of the Left-wing musicians began to develop a habit of putting symbol at will on anyone who disagreed with them, and this bad habit wasn't corrected until the 1980s. In the debating, the Salvation School, supported by the Communist Party, always stood on a leading position while the Academic School, suppressed by the Chinese Nationalist Party kept their debate on the academic level all the time. When the Salvation School put their debate to the political level, crying out to beat the Academic School down by classifying them as a school of the capitalist class, the Academic School chose silence. Under the aggressive pressure of the Salvation School, songs created by the Academic School (including some anti-Japanese songs) and popular songs initiated by Li Jinhui among common people were subordinate and criticized as non-mainstream music and decadent music. After that, Chinese chorus was led to a strongly-political left route and Chinese music became a tool of class conflict.

Fortunately, in the Anti-Japanese Period, the negative influence of the Left-wing Salvation School was not shown. The left route of music incidentally followed the trend of historical development because the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Songs were the focus of that period. However, this trend was in fact initially started by the Academic School since Huang Zi who created the first anti-Japanese chorus *Resisting the Enemy*. When Huang Zi was writing the chorus, Nie Er was studying composition in Li Jinhui's Song and Dance Troupe of Bright Moon, Xian Xinghai was studying in France and Lü Ji was still a student of the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai.

³⁰ Li Jinhui (1891-1967), the father of Chinese popular music.

³¹ Feng Changchun, “Divergence and Confront—About the Criticism and Controversy on the Academic School in Three to Four Decades on Behalf of the 20th Century”, *Huangzhong—Journal of Wuhan Conservatory of Music*, 2 (2007), 21.

Based on this fact, research on the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Songs should start with the research on the beaten-down Academic School.

2. Resisting the Enemy and The Flags are Fluttering

Resisting the Enemy was created one month after the September 18 Incident. Its composer Huang Zi, inspired by the unbearable scenes which Japanese brought about, composed this song in the hope of awaking the patriotic spirit of Chinese people. The song has two verses, Huang Zi wrote the first one, Wei Hanzhang continued the second. The melody was composed by Huang Zi. It was firstly sung by the students of the National Conservatory of Music, broadcasted by Shanghai Radio Station and recorded at the same time by the Victory Corporation on November 9, 1931. It was the first patriotic anti-Japanese song in China.

Who are the masters of the great mountains and rivers of China? The forty million Chinese people!

The Japanese had come to invade us, be quick to resist them and unite to make our revenge on them!

Home can be destroyed, but not our country; we can be killed, but not our will.

Let's unite! Let's try our best to kill the enemies and never give up! Let's try our best to kill the enemies and never give up!

Who are the masters of the great mountains and rivers of China? The forty million Chinese people!

Our land is invaded; we shall unite to protect our motherland.

We are angry! We are enraged! We will never stop resistance!

Let's use our wisdom and our effort! Let's protect our motherland even at cost of our life! Let's protect our motherland even at the cost of our life!

(Translated by the author)

This is a four-part mixed chorus by taking homophony as the main composing method in addition to using polyphony. The song, with its magnificent emotional power, compact rhythm and impressive momentum, expresses Chinese people's strong hatred against Japanese and their rising patriotic enthusiasm about the

Anti-Japanese movement. The work is a march song. The first part is composed in homophony with an impassioned and affirmative tone. The chorus adopt a question-and-answer pattern which makes people feel Chinese anger and determi-

Resisting the Enemy

No. 15

我 们
中 华 锦 绣 江 山 谁 是 主 人 翁?

四 万 万 同 胞。 快 一 致。
强 虏 入 寇 逞 凶 暴， 快 一 致。

nation to resist the enemy. The second part uses imitation and repeating antiphony which sounds like hundreds of people responding to a single call, expressing the firm will of Chinese people to protect their country, especially, in the sentence “Let’s try our best to kill the enemies and never give up”, an irregular rhythm is used to push the emotion to its peak, expressing the anger and hatred of

the Chinese nation to the enemies. It has a strong artistic appeal.

The song was firstly named *Resisting the Japanese* and it was the first song in China putting forward the idea of “Resistance against Japanese”. Because its obvious anti-Japanese theme went against the non-resistance policy of the Chinese Nationalist Party, the name of the choir was forced to be changed into *Resisting the Enemy*.³² With its profound meaning, beautiful, fluent and touching melody, it became one of the most excellent choruses in the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Period. It has been sung for over 70 years until today, and it is still used as the theme song in an education program *One Inch Land and One Inch Blood* in Taiwan. From this, we can see its typical representative position among the anti-Japanese songs.

The Flags are Fluttering, text was written by Wei Hanzhang, it was Huang Zi’s another anti-Japanese song after *Resisting the Enemy*. In 1932, the Chinese Nationalist Party adopted the non-resistance policy and China had no powerful leading center to resist Japanese. Japanese viewed China as a heap of loose sand and insultingly called Chinese “the sick man of the East Asia”. All these facts deeply pierced the heart of Huang Zi, the young patriotic composer. He created this chorus jointly with Wei Hanzhang in order to call on all Chinese people to unite together and protect the motherland when the motherland and families were in danger.

The Flags are Fluttering, horses running. Gun on shoulders and sword near waist, our blood is like a crazy tide.

The Flags are Fluttering, horses running. We should dedicate ourselves to the service of our motherland from today!

Hurry up to arise. We shall never be sick men being laughed at as a heap of loose sand!

Let’s unite! Be united! Let’s unite! Be united! Unite! Unite and arise! Unite!

The flags are fluttering, horses running. Gun on shoulders and sword near waist, our blood is like a crazy tide.

The Flags are Fluttering, horses running. We should dedicate ourselves to the service of our motherland from today!

Our motherland and families are in great danger! Only ourselves can save!

Let’s take revenge on enemies! Our hatred shall never die until we kill them.

Let’s unite! Be united! Let’s unite! Be united! Unite! Unite and arise! Unite!

³² Xiang Yansheng, “Early Chinese Anti-Japanese Warsongs”, *China Art News*, July 22, 2005.

The Flags are Fluttering, horses running. Gun on shoulders and sword near waist, our blood is like a crazy tide.

The Flags are Fluttering, horses running. We should dedicate ourselves to the service of our motherland from today!

(Translated by the author)

The Flags are Fluttering

N0. 16

The musical score for 'The Flags are Fluttering' is presented in a four-part mixed chorus format. It consists of five staves. The first four staves are vocal parts, each with the Chinese lyrics '旗正飘飘，马正萧萧，枪在肩，刀在腰，' (The flag is fluttering, the horse is galloping, the gun is on the shoulder, the sword is at the waist). The fifth staff is a piano accompaniment. The music is in 2/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'Allegretto'.

This work is also a four-part mixed chorus composed in 1932. It was firstly sung by the students from the National Conservatory of Music and broadcasted and recorded by Shanghai Radio Station in October, 1932. It was released in the *Music Magazine* in January, 1933³³ and was used as an episode of a film *Give Back Our Mountains and Rivers*, which was made by the Big Great Wall Pictures in September, 1932. Compared with *Resisting the Enemy*, *The Flags are Fluttering* has more grief and indignation when the motherland and families are in danger. This strong emotion was closely related to the continuous concession of the Chinese Nationalist Party government under Japanese aggression. The chorus used the b minor in a rondo form with powerful rhythm and impassioned dynamics, the adoption of minor in the march-style principal part enhances a solemn and stirring feeling of the song.

³³ Huang Zi, "The Flags are Fluttering" *Music* 1 (1933), 8.

The greatest contribution of this work to Chinese chorus is that it initiates a “crying” tone in the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Songs. The “crying” tone “Let’s unite! Be united! Unite! Unite and arise! Unite!” in the chorus had an intensive infection in a society where people’s voices were stifled. It also had a great influence on the later vocal works when the Anti-Japanese Singing Activities developed vigorously and it was a repertoire in concerts and after the resistance period.

The two works of Huang Zi mentioned above actively promoted the birth of a large number of the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation songs. It also had a great influence on the anti-Japanese works created by Xia Zhiqiu, He Lüting and others.

3. The First Female Chorus Conductor in China—Zhou Shu’an



Zhou Shu’an No.17

After the September 18 Incident, Zhou Shu’an was the first female composer and chorus *Charm of Sea* conductor in China who actively worked on the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Songs with Huang Zi.

Zhou Shu’an (1894-1974) was born in a literary family in Gulangyu Island³⁴. Her father Zhou Zhide was a Christian priest while her mother, an overseas Chinese returning from the Southeast Asia, was also a Christian too. Living in such family Zhou Shu’an had been exposed to the culture of Christianity since she was born, and showed music talent in her childhood. At that time, the only place for Zhou Shu’an to contact with music was in church. Her second eldest sister played piano in a church, so she learned staves, piano and singing from her sister. In 1907, she was admitted to the Gulangyu Women’s Normal School. In 1911, she became a teacher at that school after graduation. In order to further her music study, in 1912, she came to the Shanghai Mc Tyeire School for Girls where music education was given enough attention to. Two years later, when Tsinghua University³⁵ was going to enroll the first group of female students to go overseas at state expense, she took the examination and passed, becoming one of the first ten government-supported students to study in America.

³⁴ An Island in Fujian Province, pianos were very popular there.

³⁵ See p. 10.

In the summer of 1914, the 10 students arrived at San Francisco. Zhou Shu'an entered the college preparatory department of Bulajin College to improve her English firstly. One year later, after passing language examination, she entered the Radcliffe College for Women in Harvard University, majoring in art, music and linguistics. In 1919, she graduated and got B.A. degree of Harvard University. At the same time, she also studied in the New England Music Conservatory in Boston, majoring in vocal music. During the summer holiday, she studied conducting, composing and music teaching methods in the Music Normal Conservatory founded by the Cornell University. Also in 1919, she was engaged in advanced studies of vocal music in New York Music Conservatory and took social works as an elective course in the Columbia University. After she finished all her studies in 1920, she paid a visit to some European countries, which broadened her eyes greatly.

In 1921, Zhou Shu'an became a music teacher in the Guangdong Women's Normal College. From 1923 to 1925, she studied vocal music from a Russian opera singer and taught music in the McTyeire School for Girls at the same time. From 1925 to 1927, after she came back to hometown, she taught as a music researcher and chorus conductor in Xiamen University³⁶, so she became the first music teacher in history of Xiamen University.

In 1928, Xiao Youmei invited Zhou Shu'an as director of the vocal music Department. According to this fact, Zhou Shu'an was regarded as a precursor of the modern Chinese music and the first professional educator in vocal music in modern China. She, together with some other musicians like Xiao Youmei and Huang Zi, founded the first higher institution of music in China, the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai.

Besides, Zhou Shu'an was also the first female chorus conductor and the first female composer in China. Due to her passion for chorus, she compiled two books, *A Collection of English Polyphony Chorus* (1931) and *A Collection of Schubert's Songs* (four books in 1936), both of them were published by the Commercial Press, that made a great contribution to the development of Western chorus in the early Chinese chorus.

During the days in the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai, Zhou Shu'an always overworked with great enthusiasm. In addition to teaching major subjects like vocal music, she also worked as a chorus conductor and instructed students in Solfeggio. She once held her solo recital but most of her time was spent on the teaching of vocal music and chorus conducting. She worked as a conductor of

³⁶ On Xiamen island of Fujian Province.

different schools' ensembles for many years. She also adapted some Chinese folk songs into four-part choruses which she conducted students to sing. At the end of 1928, Shanghai, like many other European major cities, also held a chorus contest to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the death of Schubert. Zhou Shu'an made a figure in this contest because the female ensemble of the Mc Tyeire School for Girls conducted by her performed even better than the ensembles from Britain, France, Russia and Germany which had a long standing reputation and got the first prize in the contest. Although the ensembles participating in the contest couldn't represent the highest music level in the world, this result was already quite outstanding for the newly-emerging Chinese chorus. Because of this competition, she was invited to teach in the National Conservatory of Music.

After the September 18 Incident, China was in danger. Zhou Shu'an called on her ensemble of the Conservatory to perform in street to send round the hat for the Anti-Japanese movements. In October, she conducted the ensemble to perform Huang Zi's anti-Japanese song *Resisting the Enemy*. After that, she conducted to sing *Resisting the Enemy* and *The Flags are Fluttering* time and time during all endowment activities. All these activities played an important role in the wide spread of these two excellent anti-Japanese choral works in society and her students were also profoundly educated and enlightened during those performances. As the students graduated from the National Conservatory of Music one group after another, many of them, under her influence, began to compose or perform Chinese chorus works. Liao Fushu, a famous music historian in China, in his article *The First Female Chorus Conductor in the Modern China—Zhou Shu'an*, recalled:

When the chorus concert began, she came to the stage and wielded her conducting, the members of the auditoria were all cheered up at once, it sounded like tens of thousand of people crying and all mountains and valleys echoing. That really intensified the atmosphere of the concert a lot.³⁷

Like other patriots, Zhou Shu'an expressed her patriotic sentiment through music works and performance. She also created some anti-Japanese choral works like *Siblings* and *Woo, woo, woo!* Among which the former was more popular although still couldn't compare with the two anti-Japanese works created by Huang Zi. Nevertheless, some Chinese folksongs adapted by her showed extremely high artistic level. For example, the four-part choral work *Xiao*³⁸ was included in a music teaching textbooks

³⁷ Liao Fushu, "Modern China's First Female Conductor of Choir—Zhou Shu'an", *People's Music* 6 (1982), 47.

³⁸ Xiao, a vertical bamboo flute.

used at that time.

Zhou Shu'an converted to Christianity when she was very young because of the influence of her family. Because of this background, she had great interest in composition of church music in addition to chorus conducting, teaching material compiling and creation of anti-Japanese songs. In her early music activities, she conducted and composed many church works. Among them, a four-part chorus *Happy Marriage Song* widely sung in churches of China was most influential. She participated in the compilation of *Hymns of Universal Praise* as a major musician, in which, her *Happy Marriage Song* was taken in as a beautiful hymn created by Chinese. She died in 1974 in Shanghai. Nine years after her death, *Happy Marriage Song* was included in *Hymns(New Editor)* and it is still widely sung in churches today.³⁹

As a chorus conductor, composer and music educator in the early Chinese chorus, Zhou Shu'an was deeply influenced by church music in her youth and middle ages, she was active in the fields of education and religion. Her life was the best reflection of the relation between church music and Chinese chorus. Church music cultivated Zhou Shu'an into the first female chorus conductor in China, while as a musician of Chinese secular chorus, she also composed many hymns for churches. Zhou Shu'an could not become a musician in modern China if not for the help of church music, but in return, because of Zhou Shu'an, Chinese hymns became more colorful. Therefore, Zhou Shu'an could be called the most influential female in the modern history of Chinese music in the fields of both secular chorus and church music. Her outstanding music talent and untrammelled conducting enthusiasm were a beautiful and impressive stroke written on the modern history of Chinese music.

4. The July 7 Incident and the Climax of Chinese Chorus

After occupied the Northeast China in the September 18 Incident in 1931, Japan launched the July 7 Incident in 1937 and invaded the inland of China through sufficient preparation. In order to occupy China exclusively, Japan elevated the war which was confined to the Northeast China 6 years ago to a full-scale aggression in China by sending its army to China continuously. By 1936, Japanese army had surrounded Beiping (now, Beijing city) from the east, west and north. And from June, 1937, Japan had been continuously holding provoking military exercises in the suburban of Beiping called Fengtai. At the night of July 7 in 1937, the Japanese army, wanted to enter

³⁹ Yang Huaizhou, "About *Hymns(New Editor)*", *Tianfeng* 1 (1994), 44.

Wanping County in the Southwest of Beiping, made an excuse that they had lost a soldier. After being refused by the Chinese defending troops, as what they had planned, the Japanese army began to bomb the Lugou Bridge⁴⁰ and to launch attack to the Chinese defending troops inside the city. Under such circumstances, the Chinese defending troops retaliated bravely and it started the full-scale anti-Japanese movement among all Chinese people.

The July 7 Incident was also called the Lugou Bridge Incident. It was the beginning of the armed aggression of Japanese against China. Also, it was the beginning of the full-scale anti-Japanese movement among all Chinese people. The July 7 Incident aroused great reaction all over the nation, forcing the Chinese Nationalist Party army to cooperate with the Communist army to resist the Japanese army jointly.

The battle near Lugou Bridge lighted up the anti-Japanese flames among all Chinese people. The foundation of the Anti-Japanese National United Front marked the beginning of the full-scale anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation movement and a new historical era of China. As a part of the Anti-Japanese Movement, Chinese chorus also reached its climax after this incident.

Xia Zhiqiu whose original name was Xia Hanxing (1912-1993) was born in Wuhan city, Hubei Province. His father Xia Boqin was a teacher in Hankou St. John Elementary School while holding a concurrent post as an organist in St. John Church. Xia Zhiqiu grew up in a poor family. He lost his mother when he was 3 year old and began to learn to play organ when he was five by sitting on the legs of his father. At 8 years old, he became interested in a trumpet and was gradually addicted to playing it. He learned the playing techniques diligently and tirelessly all by himself. By the time he graduated from university, he had already been able to play and repair all kinds of brass and woodwind instruments. In addition, he composed many works for the school orchestra. Besides, he had ever founded a mixed chorus outside the university and had ever conducted the Wuhan Yamei Orchestra which was the first small-scale orchestra in Wuhan.

In 1936, his music talent was recognized by an industrialist and he thus got financial support to study in the Composition Department of the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai. He studied composition and piano under instructions of many famous teachers like Xiao Youmei, Huang Zi, Wu Bochao⁴¹ and Li Weining.

⁴⁰ In the Southwest of Beijing, Fengtai District, on the river of Lugou.

⁴¹ See p. 28.

The July 7 Incident in 1937 stopped the hard-studying road of Xia Zhiqiu. He returned to his hometown Wuhan with other people who also escaped from the war. Wuhan at that time was already the center of the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Movement. Xia Hanxing immediately joined the rising the masses anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation movement. He organized two chorus along the both sides of the Changjiang River, taking anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation songs as their subject songs. The singing groups often performed in factories, schools, stations and wharfs for purpose of propaganda. In December, 1937, he founded the National Singing Association in Wuhan jointly with some Left-wing musicians and he served as director. He also reorganized Wuhan Chorus and served as both leader and conductor.

In November, 1937, he read *Anti-Japanese Chorus* created by Guang Weiran⁴². Greatly encouraged by the text, he composed a mixed chorus *The Final Victory Belongs to Us*, which was his first masterpiece in the early days of the Anti-Japanese War. In the same year, he composed a three-part chorus *Warsong of Young Women* written by Guang Weiran too. *800 Heroes Song* was an anti-Japanese work which made him famous. On August 13, 1937, Japanese army began to attack Shanghai where the first large-scale campaign between China and Japan called Songhu Campaign happened. Japanese army planned to occupy Shanghai within 3 days, but they were greatly frustrated with no success in three months, what's worse, with more than half million casualties. On October 26, the Chinese army began to withdraw from Shanghai, leaving 452 soldiers (so-called 800 heroes, an exaggerated number to deceive Japanese) led by Colonel Xie Jinyuan⁴³ to stay at Sihang Ware-house to cover the five hundred thousand army. The 452 soldiers, even when they were surrounded by the Japanese army, still fought alone against the strong enemy bravely and finally made a breakthrough after 4 days and nights, successfully fulfilling the task of covering.

The braveness of the so-called 800 heroes led by Xie Jinyuan greatly inspired Gui Taosheng⁴⁴. One day in December, he completed the text for *800 Heroes Song* which was described as follows:

China will not perish, China will not perish, look at our national hero Colonel Xie Jinyuan.

China will not perish, China will not perish, look at those 800 heroes who are

⁴² Guang Weiran (1913-2002), famous modern poet, literary critic.

⁴³ Xie Jinyuan (1905-1941), famous general in the Anti-Japanese War, was killed by traitors after "Songhu Campaign".

⁴⁴ Gui Taosheng (1906-1977), famous lyricist.

fighting alone in the eastern battle field.

etc.

(Translated by the author)

800 Heroes Song

No. 18

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes vocal staves with lyrics in Chinese and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "中国不会亡, 中国" (China will not be defeated, China). The piano accompaniment includes triplets and dynamic markings such as *sf* (sforzando) and *p* (piano). The second system continues the vocal melody with lyrics: "不会亡, 你看那八百壮士孤军奋守东战场。四方都是" (Will not be defeated, look at those 800 brave soldiers fighting alone on the eastern battlefield. Everywhere is). The piano accompaniment continues with dynamic markings like *f* (forte) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The score concludes with a final piano accompaniment section.

After the text was completed, Gui Taosheng sent it to Xia Zhiqiu who was also encouraged by the patriotic behavior of the 800 heroes. Xia Zhiqiu composed it in one

night. Several days later, Zhou Xiaoyan⁴⁵ who was a famous soprano firstly sang the song with piano accompaniment by Xia Zhiqiu. In 1938, Xia Zhiqiu adapted this work into a chorus before the Wuhan Ensemble was going to perform overseas. Since then, it became an immortal masterpiece of chorus. The influence of *800 Heroes Song* was so great that the Commercial Press published a songbook named *800 Heroes song* in 1939, a separate edition was also published in Singapore in 1940⁴⁶, and the chorus was chosen as the theme song of a documentary *800 Heroes* and a Taiwan feature film also named *800 Heroes*.

800 Heroes Song is a four-part mixed chorus with accompaniment. Although there imitation of Huang Zi's anti-Japanese works, it has its own characteristics. A trilogy with recapitulation is adopted in the work. The song is in a heroic, firm and tumultuous tone, which praises the brave and moving behavior of the 800 heroes. It also connects the national spirit with the destiny of China together, which enables this solemn and stirring song to hearten the spirit of all Chinese people. During the time of the national tribulation, the song was widely spread to every corner of China and became a sonorous clarion that encouraged spirit of all patriotic people and soldiers. In 1938, with the national presentation of the documentary *800 Heroes*, the theme song *800 Heroes Song* was also widely sung by Chinese people at home and abroad, like overseas Chinese in the Southeast Asia, Europe and America. All these made the chorus which spread fast and influenced the widest area during the period of the Anti-Japanese War. In 1993, it was commented as one of famous works of Chinese musicians in the 20th century.

5. Xian Xinghai and His Works

Xian Xinghai (1905 -1945) was born in Macao. It is said that he was born on a fishing boat on sea in an evening when much star was in sky, so his mother named him Xinghai, in which Xing means star and hai means sea. His father died before he was born, so he and his mother lived a very hard life. They depended on his mother's salary and his grandfather's help. When he was 7 years old, his grandfather died, and then he went to Singapore with his mother. He studied English in a school founded by Britons, and also learned to sing hymns in a local Chinese church. He returned to China at 13

⁴⁵ Zhou Xiaoyan (1917-), a well-known singer and educator in China.

⁴⁶ Fang Huisheng, Wen Youren, "The Composer of *800 Heroes Song*—Xia Zhiqiu, to Commemorate the 65th Anniversary of the Outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War and Xia Zhiqiu's 90 Birthday", *Chinese Spring and Autumn* 8 (2002), 35.



years old and was forced to enter a charity school founded by the Young Men's Christian Association attached to the Lingnan University in Guangzhou because he could not afford tuition fees. Due to his music talent, he was selected as a member in school brass band during elementary school years. Soon after that, he became the head and conductor of the brass band. The tight relation with church and especially the powerful and heroic army songs and marches he

Xian Xinghai No. 19 performed during the years in the school brass band had a far-reaching impact on his creation of music later on.

In the spring of 1926, he sold his beloved violin and on the financial support of his friend, came to Beijing to take an entrance examination of the Music School of Peking University. After being enrolled, he made a living as an assistant in library. In 1928, he studied in the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai, majoring in violin and piano. However, he was forced to leave school because of his participation in a student strike. In 1929, he went to study in France. In February, 1930, he studied violin and music theory in Paris. In 1931, he was admitted to be a member of the composition class in Paris Conservatory of Music. During the years in France, he earned a hard living by working in restaurants and barbershops. Because of hunger, he fell in fainted several times and was nearly sent to a morgue by French policemen. He once stopped at the gate of the Conservatory, listening to the indoor music. He was so excited by the music that when he saw a Chinese coming out from the Conservatory, he stepped forward to greet him and made a self-introduction regardless of the other's feeling. Xian Xinghai was quite lucky because the person he encountered was Ma Sicong⁴⁷ who became a great musician later. Ma Sicong had heard of Xian Xinghai before but he had never thought that Xian Xinghai was in so difficult situation. He introduced Xian Xinghai to his French adviser. The adviser was touched by the perseverance of Xian Xinghai and helped him to get an exemption of 400 franc per month's tuition fee, which made his life a little easier. In 1934, he passed examination and began to study composition and conducting in the advanced composition class. For decades, there had been no Chinese student in that class at all, and he was the first one. There also was a story about him. When he came to take the entrance examination of the advanced composition class, he was stopped outside the gate by French janitor because of his

⁴⁷ Ma Sicong (1912-1987), violinist, composer, music educator, the first president of the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, because being persecuted during the Cultural Revolution in China, he smuggled into the United States, and died in Philadelphia of America in 1987.

ragged clothes and nearly missed the exam. After the examination, the examinant announced on behalf of all the members of the jury: “We decided to award a honorable mention to you. According to the tradition of the Conservatory, you can ask for material award.” Xian Xinghai, who was in a quite difficult time, only said two words: “Bread ticket”.⁴⁸

In the summer of 1935, Xian Xinghai stopped his study and returned to China to participate in the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Movement. At that time, under the mobilization of Lü Ji, many singing groups in Shanghai were preparing for a large-scale the masses singing concert. Xian Xinghai, who had just come back to China, was one of enthusiastic audiences. He was also touched by the large-scale the masses singing activity. It was said by Xian Xinghai that he met Lü Ji by introduction of one of his friends. In the first time they met, he was unexpectedly given a task by Lü Ji to compose a work named *The 10th Anniversary Song* for the May 30 Movement because Lü Ji was too busy at that time. So his first Nation Salvation song after returning to China was finished under the influence of Lü Ji. In the following days, he created a lot of anti-Japanese songs like *Guerrilla*, *Go Behind the Enemy* and *On the Taihang Mountain*⁴⁹. Xian Xinghai once joined the Shanghai Student Association to make propaganda for Nation Salvation in suburbs, but the Chinese Nationalist Party authority sent constabulary to that spot, so the two sides broke out a fight. At that moment, a young poet named Sai Ke handed a poem to Xian Xinghai. Xian Xinghai read the poem twice and composed a matching melody within just 5 minutes. “Put the gun muzzle outside, keep in step with each other, make no damage to common people, do not fight with our own men...” This *Nation Salvation Warsong* was sung by students at the scene. Then, common people at the spot and even soldiers of the constabulary joined, many people wept while they were singing the song. In the winter of 1938, he came to the red capital of the Communist Party—Yan’an because he was quite dissatisfied with the non-resistance policy of the Chinese Nationalist Party. He worked as dean of the Music Department of Lu Xun Arts College and also taught in Yan’an Women’s University. The condition of Yan’an was very difficult at that time. However, the Communist authority gave him fairly high level of courteous reception: his allowance was 3 times as much as that of the Commander-in-Chief of the Communist army. The one and a half years in Yan’an was his creating summit. Without piano in

⁴⁸ Yu Li-ping, “People’s Musician, Xian Xinghai’s Short but Magnificent Life”, *Guangdong Communist Party History* 6 (2008), 7.

⁴⁹ A major mountain ranges in the Eastern China, a geographical boundaries, an Anti-Japanese base area of the Communist.

Yan'an, he completed most of his works in his life like *March of Army and Civilian*, *Production Movement Cantata*, *Yellow River Cantata* and the *The September 18 Cantata*, among which *Yellow River Cantata* was the one which made him famous in the Chinese music circle.

In May, 1940, he went to the Soviet Union to participate in the post production and incidental music for a large-scale documentary *Yan'an and the Eighth Route Army*. Xian Xinghai lived a hard life in the Soviet Union. The next year, because the war between the Soviet Union and Germany broke out, the production of the documentary stopped. He planned to return to China by taking the private plane of Lin Biao⁵⁰, a famous anti-Japanese general, which was promised by Lin. However, Lin broke his promise when boarding plane for fearing that there would be much trouble when they entered China. Helplessly, Xian Xinghai chose to return to China by the way through Mongolia. On the way, he was stopped at Almaty of Kazakhstan when he passed the border. In Almaty, he once fell in a faint when he was waiting to buy food in a queue. Luckily, a young lady from the Soviet Union helped him to pass through the difficulty. And later, they got married. Under the condition of short supply during the war, he finished many works like *Liberation of the Nation*, the symphony *Yellow River Cantata*, the second symphony *Sacred War*, the second suite *Song of Herdsman*, the fourth suite *Red All Over the River*, *Life in China* and *Chinese Rhapsody*, among them *Life in China* reflected his longing for his motherland. But his life was so tough that he was always malnourished and he suffered from many diseases resulting from hunger and cold. Although after the war, accompanied by his wife, he came back to Moscow for medical treatment, it was already too late. In October, 1945, he died in Kremlin Hospital at the age of only 40.

Among the productive musicians of the Salvation School, only Xian Xinghai and Ren Guang⁵¹ had ever studied in Europe. Ren Guang was killed also at the age of 40 by the Chinese Nationalist Party army during the Southern Anhui Incident in January, 1941, in which the Chinese Nationalist Party army attempted to annihilate the New Fourth Army led by the Communist Party. In his lifetime, Ren Guang had never dabbled in chorus. Therefore, only Xian Xinghai from the Salvation School learned both the essence of Western music and Chinese folk music in the chorus circle of China.

Altogether, Xian Xinghai created more than 200 popular songs, 4 cantatas, 2 operas

⁵⁰ Lin Biao (1907-1971), modern Chinese military strategist, Marshal and vice chairman of the People's Republic of China, Served as the Central Committee, Defense Minister, intended to defect to the Soviet Union in 1971, but his aircraft crashed in Mongolia.

⁵¹ Ren Guang (1900-1941), musician, went to France and studied in the Music Department of the University of Lyon in 1919.

(one unfinished), 2 symphonies, 4 symphonic suites, 1 symphonic poem, 1 orchestral rhapsody, some instrumental solo works and other art songs. He also wrote many articles on music. In the field of chorus, his important contribution was that he opened a new area of creating cantata with significant national characteristics, such as the resistance of Chinese people toward Japanese army.

Go Behind the Enemy and *On the Taihang Mountain* are two choruses composed by Xian Xinghai. *On the Tai hang Mountain* is a two-part chorus created in July, 1938. The whole chorus adopted binary form, in the first part form, melody forms an effect like the sound of the song resounding among the mountains. In the second part form, melody of a march is adopted and rhythm is very powerful and flexible, portraying images of Chinese guerrilla that were fighting against the enemies in forests and mountains. In the second phrase of the second part form, rhythms are syncopation above the treble, expressing the courageous and resolute determination of guerrilla to kill enemies. The melody is expanded when the texts are repeated which also expresses the determination of guerrilla, when the lyric is repeated, which puts the whole chorus to its climax.

Go Behind the Enemy was created in 1938 too. It is originally a two-part chorus with march style but usually sung as a unison during its spreading. Its melody is straight and vigorous with amazing tempo by using a short sound pattern as the dominant motivation, it describes an image of guerrilla attacked enemy, showed clearly and briefly the optimistic and heroic, smart and brave characteristics of guerrilla.

6. *Yellow River Cantata*

Among all the choral works after the July 7 Incident, the four cantatas created by Xian Xinghai, *Production Cantata*, *Yellow River Cantata*, *The September 18 Cantata* and *Sacrificed Allies Cantata* are most notable and have a far-reaching influence on the creation of chorus in China later on. The four large-scale choral works, on one hand, are all realistic in materials and contents have the same way of expression, that is, to make the work close to the masses, on the other hand, they have their own characteristics by using different means of artistic techniques to show different subjects and contents.

Production Cantata was created in March, 1939. It shows 4 scenes: *Spring Ploughing*, *Sowing Seeds and Participating in the War*, *Autumn Harvest and Assault*, *Bumper Harvest*. It reflected the lives of people during production and the Anti-Japanese War in the Communist liberated areas. With a strong folk flavor, it used a

combined form of singing, dancing and stage performance. Till now, the two works *In February* and *Thorn of the Sore Date* are widely sung as children chorus.

The September 18 Cantata was created to commemorate the 8th anniversary of the September 18 Incident. It is a narrative cantata in which the symphonic and rondo form, many movements of different styles inserted into it, showing that Chinese people are retrospecting the Anti-Japanese War while celebrating the victory and they are determined to resist Japanese to the end. The female solo and chorus named *Night-song for the September 18 Incident* adopts a technique called the plate type change learnt from plays and drama materials, which makes this part have a dramatic effect. In addition, the orchestra accompaniments of *The September 18 Cantata* and *Production Cantata* are quite unique in rhythm application of ethnic percussion instrument and Chinese music style.

Sacrificed Allies Cantata was created in March, 1940. It was a cantata created in the form of popular chorus for the Shanxi Sacrifice and the Anti-Japanese Suicide Squad⁵². The music, with a distinctive local color, has 6 movements including unison, solo and chorus, etc.

Yellow River Cantata was accomplished in 1939. It was rearranged and revised in 1941 in the Soviet Union. It is a milestone in history of Chinese music and a model for modern chorus in China.

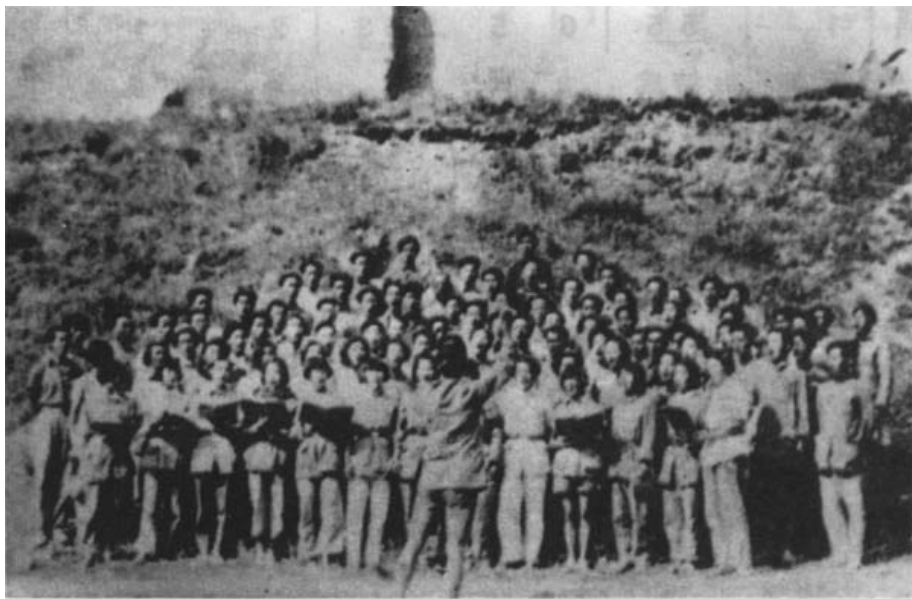
In November, 1938 when Wuhan was taken up by Japanese, an anti-Japanese performance team led by a poet Guang Weiran was leaving Hukou in Yichuan County of Shanxi Province for an anti-Japanese base called Lüliang Mountain. On their way, they had to cross the Yellow River. They saw the breathtaking gorges and torrents, raging waves, reefs and waterfalls, witnessed the scenes of the Yellow River boatmen struggling with fierce winds and waves, and listened to the long-lasting, resounding, deep and powerful chanteys of boatmen. Having experienced all this, Guang Weiran thought of Chinese people who were invaded by foreign enemies but fighting back bravely. He was greatly inspired. In January, 1939, he arrived in Yan'an and began to write a poem titled the Yellow River. On New Year's Eve party, he declaimed the poem. Xian Xinghai was extremely excited after listened and he expressed his willingness to compose the poem. Later, Xian Xinghai, in a shabby earth kiln in Yan'an and in his illness, worked for 6 consecutive days to finish the composition. On May 11, 1939, Xian Xinghai, dressed up in grey military uniform, leg wrappings and straw sandals, conducted *Yellow River Cantata* in the evening party for the anniversary celebration of

⁵² Yan Ke, "Comrade Xinghai and His *Sacrificed Allies Cantata*", *Music Research* 3 (1984), 24.

Lu Xun Arts College. That caused a great sensation among audiences and the chorus was widely spread throughout China quickly.⁵³

This cantata is the most outstanding and influential one among all Xian Xinghai's works. It agglomerated the splendid talent and creativity of Xian Xinghai. The work is viewed as a music epic that describes the liberation movement of Chinese people. It also influences the creation of other types of music deeply.

The entire work is composed of 8 movements and each with its own independence. A large number of folk materials are absorbed into the work and the text is very simple and straight forward. These two characteristics are the major characteristics of this epic cantata which has a distinctive national feature. The composer adopts the poetry recitation with incidental music in each movement. This method enables each independent movement to be connected with each other and to form a sharp contrast among these movements in terms of content, singing pattern and music image. In terms of music arrangement, the theme is expressed in overture, the



Xian Xinghai was conducting the *Yellow River Cantata* in 1939 No. 20

development of unity in this entire work is realized by repeating between the beginning and the end. Movements develop alternatively and the final movement comes to a conclusion.

In addition to use folk material (eg. in the movement *Yellow River Chantey*), a lot of other melodies with plenty of ethnic characteristics are created in *Yellow River*

⁵³ Wang Jianzhu, "Born in the Flames of the Anti-Japanese *Yellow River Cantata*", *The History of the Communist Party of the P.R. China* 15 (2009), 51.

Cantata like in the movements *Ballad of the Yellow River*, *Antiphonal by the Riverside* and *Protect the Yellow River*. This cantata successfully show the heroic spirit of Chinese people to overcome all enemies.

Movement 1: *Yellow River Chantey*

The first movement is a four-part mixed chorus. It uses folk melody of boatmen song as the basic tone and the unique expressive force of chorus, describing a scene in which boatmen are fighting against terrifying waves with their majestic spirit. This movement, with chorus echoing solo, shows boatmen song in the meandering Yellow River area and a moving scene of boatmen fighting against wind and wave and their pleasure after disembarkation, which has an intense feeling of life and artistic appeal.

Yellow River Chantey

No. 21

The musical score for "Yellow River Chantey" (No. 21) is a four-part mixed chorus. The vocal parts are arranged in four staves: Soprano (女高音), Alto (女低音), Tenor (男高音), and Bass (男低音). The piano accompaniment is at the bottom. The music is in 2/4 time and G major. The lyrics are in Chinese, describing boatmen fighting waves. The score includes dynamic markings like "ff" (fortissimo) and "f" (forte). The lyrics are: 划哟!划哟!划哟!划哟,冲上前!划哟,冲上前!划哟,冲上前!划哟,冲上前!

Musical score for Movement 2: *Yellow River Song*. The score is written for a vocal soloist (baritone) and piano. The tempo is marked "Meno mosso" and the key signature is one sharp (F#). The vocal part features lyrics in Chinese: "划哟, 冲上前! 划哟, 冲上前! 划哟! 冲上前! 冲上前! 划哟! 划哟, 冲上前! 划哟, 冲上前! 划哟! 冲上前! 冲上前! 划哟! 遮满天!". The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings like "f" (forte) and "ff" (fortissimo).

Movement 2: *Yellow River Song*.

This movement is a baritone solo with a bold and unrestrained praises. The song is composed binary form. The first part form praises the heroic posture of the Yellow River with theme which has a wide voice and far-reaching feeling. The second part form is the further praise of the Yellow River, in order to eulogize beautiful sceneries of China.

Movement 3: *The Water of the Yellow River Comes From the Heaven*.

This movement is a poem recitation which is a new attempt and creation of chorus. This incidental recitation is accompanied by Chinese instrument. The work accuses the disaster suffered by Chinese people and praises heroes of that era. The profound meaning of the work constitutes this "epic of the Yellow River".

Movement 4: *The Ballad of the Yellow River*

This movement is a unison. It is a popular folk song with a characteristic of telling stories. It tells the lives of hard-working people who lived on both sides of the

Yellow River and their strong affliction and hatred against the Japanese invader. The melody of this movement which expresses the composer's love for the hard-working people of the country.

The work is divided ternary form. The first part form starts with a wave-type pattern in a wide, fluent and calm melody, describing the beautiful sceneries of the Yellow River, the peaceful life of the common people and their love for the country, the clear and friendly melody shows the memory of life. The second part form has a heavy emotion and the tone gradually changes into a grieved and indignant accusation from depression. The four words "rape, wanton, fire and kill" are marked with forte dynamics in order to express the hatred of people who are suffering from the disaster. The third part is the recurrence of the first part after making some changes on it. The emotion is led to a higher level by recurrence. It reflects that the former good days are all destroyed by enemies and there are only the miserable scenes left in which "families are broken up by the war" though the Yellow River is still flowing day and night like before. The melody leads people who are in great distress to ponder and to think. An intense artistic effect is realized by dealing with various emotions with techniques like contrast and apposition through the work. This movement is extremely widely spread by solo, usually listed in concerts.

Movement 5: *Antiphonal by the Riverside*

This movement is a male antiphonal. It depicts that two poor people who are forced by enemies to leave their hometown are telling their feelings to each other when they met by the riverside of the Yellow River. Finally, they are determined to resist enemies together.

The song is originated from music material of Shanxi folk songs and created in the form of ballad in the Northern Shanxi folksongs. It starts with the conversation by using recitation and uses the folk-tone inflexion to depict the characters of the two villagers and their misfortune. Then the two tones are combined together to form a two-part chorus. Finally, the melody is repeated and rhythm is accelerated with strength which reflects their confidence in the future victory and the determination to "go back to their hometown and fight against enemy".

Movement 6: *Lament to the Yellow River*

This movement is a soprano solo. It depicted a village woman who lost her husband and children and had been raped by enemies, came to the bank of the Yellow River at night when there is heavy rain and wind. She is sobbing out her hatred and complaint to the Yellow River.

The whole song is divided ternary form. The first section is sobbing out her miserable experience. The rhythm is slow and the emotion is depressed. The minor mode descending is adopted which makes the miserable emotion more deep and lingering. The second section is crying and accusation of the woman. When the work comes to the part of “fierce wind, do not shout! Black clouds, do not dodge! The water of the Yellow River, do not cry”, the lonesome sound of wind and the whimper of waves of the Yellow River are added to the horror-struck female vocal accompaniment, impressing audiences with a feeling that they are just at the riverside of the Yellow River where there are only fierce wind, cold water, black clouds and deep night, listening to the heart-wrenching crying of the woman. The third section expressed the desperation and anger of the woman. The voice register is raised again, the sound strengthened and the tempo faster. The final sentence “you should pay the blood debt to me” is prolonged by 12 bars, which expresses to the largest extent the determination of sufferers to revenge.

Movement 7: *Protect the Yellow River*

It is a unison and antiphon in the form of march. It shows that people, with hatred, come to the battle field of the Anti-Japanese War. Encouraging and fluctuating song expresses the unstoppable power of the Chinese army vividly by antiphon.

The melody of this work adopts Heibei province folk song *Deploying Troops* as its basic material. In addition, it also absorbs the rhythm of folk percussion and the expressing pattern of folk music: an intense and powerful effect is realized by the uses of repetition, gradual development, rhythm variation.

In the antiphon part, especially in the three-part the cushion *Longge longge long* which is often used in folk songs is inserted to each voice part in order to avoid repetition. All the antiphon is full of vitality and it is also very vivid.

Movement 8: *Roar! The Yellow River*

Roar! The Yellow River

No. 22

The musical score is for a piece titled "Roar! The Yellow River" (No. 22). It begins with a piano introduction marked "Allegretto molto". The piano part features a powerful, ascending melodic line in the right hand, starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic and reaching a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The score then transitions to a four-part mixed chorus (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) with the lyrics "怒吼吧, 黄河! 怒吼吧, 黄河! 怒吼吧, 黄河!". The chorus parts are marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a "riten." (ritardando) marking. The piano part continues to support the chorus with chords and moving lines. The score concludes with a final piano section featuring a powerful, ascending melodic line in the right hand, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic.

It is a four-part mixed chorus. It uses parts one by one to come in, the forte tone is repeated and the dynamics become heavier and heavier. Then a firm and powerful tune is used at the end of the work. The strength was enhanced, rhythm accelerated and emotion changed. A sentence in the epilogue "Cry out the alarm of resistance to all the laboring people all over the world!" is repeated 5 times, with each time faster and stronger than the last time. The sound of war-drum and trumpet call is high, with its

wave progressing forward with an unstoppable trend, which makes audiences all touched and encouraged.

Yellow River Cantata is the most typical choral work of applying the Western chorus composing techniques to the ethnic chorus in the modern China. It endows Chinese chorus with militancy, and at the same time, uses folk songs skillfully into it, enabling the qualitative leap of Chinese chorus during the sinicization of chorus and offering a shining example for the large-scale chorus in the modern China.”⁵⁴

Influenced by this work, Chinese cantata sprang up like mushrooms after rain. Although they also had some influence at that time, their artistic levels and forces could not exceed *Yellow River Cantata*. As it was, *Yellow River Cantata* was the realization of Xian Xinghai’s aspiration to create music with Chinese ethnic characteristics which Xian Xinghai had set as a goal since he was young. Ever since the birth of modern chorus in China, there had been debates about whether taking a Western road or taking a Chinese ethnic chorus road. After a long-period discussion by Xiao Youmei and Huang Zi, Xian Xinghai, with his work *Yellow River Cantata*, presented his answer to it.

7. He Lüting and His Choral Works



He Lüting NO. 23

He Lüting (1903-1999) was born in a farmer family in Shaoyang of Hunan Province. In his childhood, his interest was to listen to the Shaoyang Opera sung by his father, the mountain song by children, elegies for dead during the night watch and the flower drum song performed by folk actors in the center of town. Unconsciously but deeply influenced by these rustic and fresh folk music, he put much emphasis on something unique of Chinese nation style in his later creation.

In the spring of 1923, Changsha Yueyun School opened a new art-course. He took examination, passed by ranking the No. 1. In school, he majored in piano, violin, harmony and also got to know about Western classic music. In the winter of 1924, he as the first in graduation

⁵⁴ Zhou Guangping, “*Yellow River Cantata* in the Musical Form of the Enlightenmen”, *Journal of Xinghai Conservatory of Music* 4 (1999), 16.

examination, was allowed to teach music and art in the Shanghai Music Training School. He also taught courses in another middle school. During this period, he began to compose songs.

In February, 1931, he was admitted to the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai and studied harmony, counterpoint and composition from Huang Zi. He was also one of “the four famous disciples” of Huang Zi. At the night of January 28, 1932, Japanese began to attack Zhabei of Shanghai, which is known as the January 28 Incident. Because of the war, the Shanghai Music Training School declared to suspend classes and He Lüting had to drop out of school. He left Shanghai for Wuhan, taught music in the Wuchang Art School, the Wuhan Middle Normal School and the Hubei Industrial School. During the period, he translated *Harmony, Its Theory and Practice* written by Ebenzer Prout (London, 1889) into Chinese as teaching material. It was the first translated work that harmonics theory of Europe had been completely and systematically introduced. After it was published in 1936, it became an important reading on harmony for musicians from the 1930s to 1940s. In September, 1933, He Lüting returned to Shanghai again and continued his study from Huang Zi and C.T. Aksakoff. In May, 1934, A.N. Tcherepnin who was a famous Russian composer and pianist held a competition called Seeking for Piano Music with Chinese Style in



Buffalo Boy's Flute

N0. 24

Shanghai. He Lüting participated in the competition with three pieces of piano. His work named *Buffalo Boy's Flute* was the only one that won the first prize. Thus, He Lüting became a pioneer in nationalization of piano music unexpectedly. In January,

1935, A.N. Tcherepnin took *Buffalo Boy's Flute* to a concert in Beijing. Later on, he introduced this work to audiences from all countries through concerts, radio and lectures during his traveling performance in Europe and America. *Buffalo Boy's Flute* was also specially introduced in an article named *Musicians of Modern China* in the *Music Quarterly* published in America. In addition, A.N. Tcherepnin also took He Lüting's works including 2 piano works *Buffalo Boy's Flute* and *Missing the Former Days* (changed into *Missing* later) and several solo works to Tokyo for Ryuginsha which is a Publishing House to publish. Therefore, He Lüting's international name Luting Ho was widely spread in foreign countries. He Lüting, with his work *Buffalo Boy's Flute*, for the first time opened a door for Chinese piano to be introduced to the music circle of the world.

In 1934, recommended by Nie Er, He Lüting was employed by a film company as a film music composer. He created music and songs for more than 20 movies like *Sons and Daughters in a Time of Storm*, *Urban Scene*, *Cross roads* and *Street Angel* at an average speed of 6 pieces of film music every year, leading the Chinese film music into a road of professional creation.

After the August 13 Incident⁵⁵ broke out in 1937, he worked as art leader successively in the first Performing Team of Shanghai Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation, Chongqing School, Yan'an Lu Xun Arts College and Yan'an Central Orchestra. The choral works he created in this period like *Song of Guerilla* and *Reclaim the Spring Land* were spread overseas during the Anti-Japanese War.

Although He Lüting was a Left-wing musician, he was a firm supporter of the Academic School. In the debate between the Salvation School and the Academic School, he firmly supported the Academic School, holding the view that music should first be music, once he said:

These emerging songs (refers to the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation songs) are actually short ballads, and their structures are messy. As for some songs, they are more like revolution poems and slogans matched with arabic numerals than music. Compared with Western music, they can only be regarded as the music in the Greece and Roman time before the mensural notation appeared.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ On August 13, 1937, the Japanese Army suddenly attacked to Shanghai, the Chinese military began to resist, and opened the curtain of the Battle of Shanghai.

⁵⁶ Feng Changchun, "Differences and confrontation—about the Criticism and Controversy on the Academic School in Three to Four Decades on Behalf of the 20th Century", *Huangzhong—Journal of Wuhan Conservatory of Music* 2 (2007), 23.

Because of his view of the Academic School, he was regarded as an eccentric person in the eyes of the Salvation School, when the Cultural Revolution broke out in 1966, his words became a evidence of “attacking revolution music works which expressed emotions of workers, peasants and soldiers”⁵⁷. What’s worse, in the Cultural Revolution, he was judged as an anti-Communist and anti-Socialist and was put into prison for 5 years because the lyric in his anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation song named *Song of Guerrilla* “No matter rich or poor, all the forty million Chinese people get equipped, no matter what is your party, all people come to resist” was regarded as the evidence of not differentiating class stand point. During his years in prison, He Lüting, still stuck to his academic views and wrote more than eight hundred thousand words of plea materials to retort the accusation which was imposed on him by force. Later, he was set free under help of his elder brother who used his former relationship with Mao Zedong, the top leader of the Communist party.

In the 76 years with music, He Lüting composed many works: he composed 3 cantatas, 25 choruses, 6 operas (two of them were created jointly with others), 5 pieces of incidental music for drama, nearly 200 songs, 5 pieces of piano, 7 pieces of orchestral and string music, 27 pieces of film music and several solo instrumental works. He also published *He Lüting Selected Music Papers*. In China, he was considered as a composer, musicologist and music educator with great influence.

He Lüting’s choral works, *Song of Guerrilla* is his most famous and most popular work. The work was created in 1937 and was adapted into a four-part mixed chorus in 1938. It was a popular song with march style and light melody.

We are all dead shots
Each bullet kills an enemy
We are all pilots
No matter how high mountain is and how deep river is
etc.

(Translated by the author)

The first 8 bars of the song constitutes the first period and the later 8 bars the second. The first period of rhythm, was imitates the characteristics of share drum, giving audiences a feeling of marching guerrillas. The rhythm of the second period has

⁵⁷ He Lüting, “Chinese Music Status and Our Understanding of Musical Art,” in the *He Lüting Collection* I, ed. The Editorial Board of *He Lüting Collection*(Shanghai Music Publishing, (1999), 64 -72.

some changes, in melody and a tone which is like allegretto is used, depicting the humorous and optimistic characters of guerrillas and their scorn on enemies. The second part form has a striking contrast with the first period in term of rhythm changes, melody processing and mode color. That had given people a feeling of freshness.

Song of Guerrilla

No. 25

1. 我们 都是 神 枪手, 每一 颗
2. 哪 怕 日 本 强 盗 凶, 我 们 的

子 弹 消 灭 一 个 仇 敌; 我 们 都 是 飞 行 军, 哪 怕 那 山 高 的 水 又 深。 在 让
队 伍 打 起 仗 来 真 英 雄; 哪 怕 敌 人 枪 炮 狠, 找 不 到 我 们 的 踪 和 影。

子 弹 消 灭 一 个 仇 敌; 我 们 都 是 飞 行 军, 哪 怕 那 山 高 的 水 又 深。 在 让
队 伍 打 起 仗 来 真 英 雄; 哪 怕 敌 人 枪 炮 狠, 找 不 到 我 们 的 踪 和 影。

山 高 的 水 又 深。
我 们 的 踪 和 影。

The musical form, melody and harmony of *Song of Guerrilla* are all very simple. However, its replete enthusiasm, intense national pride and lively music images makes people deeply feel high spirit in resisting, confidence in victory and optimistic spirit of Chinese guerrillas in that extremely miserable period when enemy is stronger than our army. It is a shining pearl among the treasure house of Chinese music.

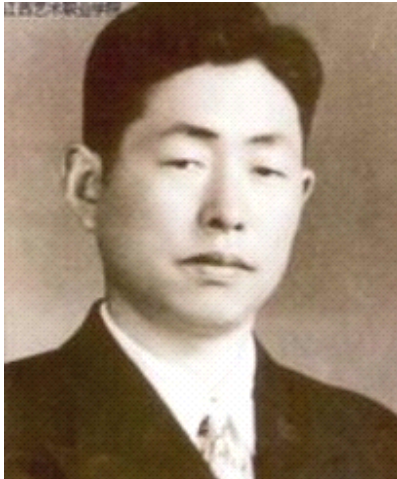
Reclaim the Spring Land was created in 1940. It is a four-part mixed chorus which shows a picture that Chinese people and soldiers in the north Hunan jointly reclaim land and resist Japanese. The song adopts a mode from Hunan flower drum song and absorbs elements from folksong with style fresh and pleasant melody. Through tonality changes between major and minor and delicate arrangement of various voice parts, the music becomes more abundant and colorful. This accounts for its place as one of the most classic a cappella works in the early period of China.

The art of He Lüting's musical works is immortal. Although the Left-wings who carried a different view on music wanted to blacken him as a representative of capitalist class music, it was He Lüting who finally won. Thus, he was called the ever-standing banner in the music circle of China. He is loved by Chinese people and the love for him is originated from the powerful artistic vitality of his music. Till today, many of his works are still sung in many ensembles and people still can feel the great encouragement and enjoyment of beauty from those beautiful melodies.

8. Zheng Lücheng and His Work *the Eighth Route Army Cantata*

In terms of the Anti-Japanese chorus, Zheng Lücheng is the one worth mentioning. Zheng Lücheng (1918-1976) was born in a poor family of the North Korea in 1918. He came to study in China in 1933 and participated in the Anti-Japanese War after his study ended. At the same time, he studied music by himself and took part in the Anti-Japanese and Salvation Singing Activities. After the July 7 Incident, he made acquaintance with Xian Xinghai in an anti-Japanese propaganda, getting to know about the situation in Yan'an anti-Japanese base led by the Communist Party. In October, 1937, He came to Yan'an, the location of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, the so-called "red capital" by foreigners at that time. He studied in the Shanbei Public College for one year, the next year, the music department of Lu Xun Arts College where Lü Ji was the dean of the department. In 1938, after graduation, he worked as music director in Yan'an Anti-Japanese University. Then he taught as a music professor in Lu Xun Arts College and in the following days, he welcomed his

first creation peak.



Zheng Lüchen

No. 26

Zheng Lücheng created more than 300 vocal works in his life. During the Anti-Japanese War, his choral works included *In the Deep Forest* and *The Eighth Route Army Cantata*, etc. *The Eighth Route Army Cantata* was the most famous among them. It was created in the winter of 1939 when Xian Xinghai's *Yellow River Cantata* was also just released. Influenced by *Yellow River Cantata*, he came up with a thought to compose a cantata on theme of *The Eighth Route Army*. He told his thought to a lyric writer Gong Mu whom he met when he worked as music director in Yan'an Anti-Japanese University and asked him to help write the text then he started to compose. The text by Gong Mu was wonderful and the melody composed by Zheng Lücheng was powerful. After the work was completed, Zheng Lücheng conducted a performing team to play the work in the Central Assembly Hall of Yan'an for premiere. After that, the cantata was widely spread through out Yan'an and every base area led by the Communist Party⁵⁸.

The Eighth Route Army Cantata is composed of eight movements that stand for the *Eighth Route Army*. The eight movements are: *Warsong of the Eighth Route Army*, *March of the Eighth Route Army*, *The Happy Eighth Route Army*, *The Eighth Route Army* and *The New Fourth Army* (two anti-Japanese armies led by the Communist Party), *The Song of Cavalry*, *The Song of Artillery*, *The Soldiers and People are a Family*, *Night Song for the Sentinel*. Their types are four-part male chorus, two-part male antiphon, two-part male chorus and male solo. In 1940, *Warsong of the Eighth Route Army* (a four-part male chorus) and *March of the Eighth Route Army* (a two-part male antiphon) were published in *Journal of the Eighth Route Army*. In 1945, the Anti-Japanese War ended and the Liberation War began, correspondingly, the Eighth Route Army was changed into the People's Liberation Army. By that time, *Warsong of the Eighth Route Army* had accomplished its historical mission and *March of the Eighth Route Army* was changed into *March of the People's Liberation Army* which was still sung in the army. In 1988, this song was determined as the *Warsong of the People's Liberation Army* by the Central Committee of the Military Commission of the Communist Party of China.

⁵⁸ Yan Liangkun: "The Artistic Achievements of Zheng Lücheng Choral Works", *People's Music* 4 (1985), 29.



Youngth Soldiers are singing *Warsong of the People's Liberation Army* No. 27

When Tang Ke, a famous composer, talked about the popularity of *The Eighth Route Army Cantata* among Chinese armies, he said:

The text and melody were not confined to reality of the Eighth Route Army at that time. The text created an image of a large army instead of a small troop. It is for this reason that this song is still adaptable to the new situation and popular in the powerful and modernized People's Liberation Army who had been equipped with new weapon and new military uniforms after the Anti-Japanese War⁵⁹, the Liberation War⁶⁰ and the Korean War^{61, 62}.

On August 15, 1945, the Anti-Japanese War which had lasted for 8 years ended up with the victory of China. Zheng Lücheng missed his country very much, he returned to Korea with his family and other Korean comrades. In 1950, the Korean War broke out. Zheng Lücheng came back to China again to continue his music creation and joined Chinese nationality. After a short period of the country construction, the ultra-left political campaigns were launched one by one: the brainwashing of intellectuals, the expanded clearance of counter-revolutionist who held a right-leaning idea, the movement of rectifying incorrect work styles and another Anti-rightist Movement in 1951. The reflection of all these movements in the music circle was that many innocent musicians were seized, abused and ill-treated. Everyone felt insecure at that time.

⁵⁹ See p. III.

⁶⁰ See p. 51.

⁶¹ A war between the governments of North Korea and South Korea, from June 25, 1950 to July 27, 1953, the United States, China, the Soviet Union, and other 15 countries involved in the war with varying degrees.

⁶² Wang Yong, Wang Peng, "He Composed the Warsongs of China and North Korea—the Outstanding Composer: Zheng Lücheng", *Over the Party History* 5 (2001), 37.

Chorus composers at that time were extremely conservative in order not to be judged as guilty, not to be seized and not to be criticized. Revolution songs became the most correct material for chorus at that time and poems which praised the army and leaders of the Communist party and Mao Zedong became a vogue. Under this political climate, Zheng Lücheng joined the trend without exception. During the period from 1958 to 1971, he selected more than 30 Mao Zedong's poems to compose into choral works. But even meticulous to this extent, he was still criticized by the government officials who were in charge of culture field. Thus, his work never got a chance to be performed. When the extreme left Cultural Revolution broke out in 1966, He had not creating inspirations. In October, 1976, the Cultural Revolution which lasted for 10 years came to an end. The creating passion of Zheng Lücheng which had been depressed for nearly 20 years was aroused again. When he tried his best to retrieve the losses in the past and began to compose new works, he died from cerebral apoplexy on December 7, 1976, leaving endless regret in the music circle of China.

9. Lü Ji and His Work *Nirvana of the Phoenix*



Lü Ji No. 28

Lü Ji(1909-2002) was born in an intellectual family in Xiangtan of Hunan Province. His father died when his mother was pregnant in the fourth or fifth month. A bamboo flute his father once used became Lü Ji's companion in his spare time when he was a child. In 1923, Lü Ji entered the Changsha Changjun Middle School. He got to know Western music because the teachers at that school taught singing using Western methods. In September, 1930, he entered the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai, learning piano from a Russian teacher Aksakoff. In April, 1931, he dropped out of the Conservatory due to short of money. In July of the same year, he entered the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai again and studied singing first with a Russian teacher Slavianoff and then with Zhou Shu'an. He also joined the church ensemble led by Zhou Shu'an. On January 18, 1932, the Japanese army launched the attack towards Shanghai and the Conservatory couldn't continue its normal order any more, Lü Ji left the Conservatory, and decided to look for the Communist party and to participate in the anti-Japanese activities. With the

companion of his friends, Lü Ji came to Wuhan and participated in the establishment of the Wuhan Branch of China Left-wing Dramatists Union under the support of the Communist. In it, he worked as leader. Later, after the person in charge of the Wuhan Communist Party was arrested, Lü Ji returned to Shanghai and made acquaintance with Tian Han⁶³ who was also a communist. He worked in the Shanghai Left-wing Dramatists Union. In February, 1934, he entered the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai for the third time, continued his study of vocal music under Zhou Shu'an's guidance. At the same time, he also studied piano for further improvement. A leader from the Communist Party who worked in the Left-wing Anti-Imperialist Union, he leaked information about Lü Ji. In May, 1934, the Shanghai authority came to the National Conservatory of Music to arrest him. Fortunately, he was not at Conservatory. However, because of this incident, Lü Ji left the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai for the third time.

In February, 1935, Lü Ji joined the Communist Party. After that, he was invited by Liu Liangmo, leader of the the masses singing committee founded by the Shanghai Young Men's Christian Association to work as director of the singing committee, to train some backbones for it. During this period, he realized the significant role that the singing committee played in the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Movement, then he came up with an idea to establish an amateur chorus organization. The idea got the support from Sha Mei who was an old member of the Left-wing Dramatists Union. At the end of June, Lü Ji and Sha Mei founded the Amateur Chorus Organization together. The Amateur Chorus Organization became a center of the Nation Salvation Singing Movement soon after its foundation. Later, Lü Ji also founded the Music Research Association. In January, 1937, he helped the Beiping Student Union found the Student United Chorus. In a word, he had been actively participating in the Left-wing music and the Nation Salvation singing activities before he arrived in Yan'an.

In 1938, Lü Ji came to Yan'an which was the capital of the Communist Party after he was seriously ill. He was the first professional musician in Yan'an and also participated in the establishment of Yan'an Lu Xun Arts College. From then on, he began his career as leader in the field of Chinese music. He once, in succession, worked as dean of the music department, director of teaching affair and vice president in Yan'an Lu Xun Arts College. After the victory in the Anti-Japanese War, he worked as head of the Northeast Music Working Team and president of the Northeast Lu Xun Arts

⁶³ Tian Han (1898-1968), the founder of modern Chinese Drama and the lyrics author of *the National Anthem of the People's Republic of China*.

College. In 1949 just before the People's Republic of China was founded, he was selected as president of the National Musicians' Association and then he worked as vice president of the Central Conservatory of Music. He was also elected as president of the Chinese Musician Association in 1953, 1960 and 1979 (namely, the first term, second term and third term). From 1985 on, he worked as the honorary president of the association and a honorary member of the International Music Council.

Although the choral works of Lü Ji were not so many, he had influenced Chinese chorus significantly throughout his life. Lü Ji had his own unique understanding towards the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Music created after the September 18 Incident. For example, in the 1930s, when the Academic School criticized the Left-wing amateurs who had just learned the numbered musical notation. Lü Ji presented an interesting view, he said: "the birth of a new music... always arouses unmerciful scorn from the traditional power... Composers who are conquered by traditional ideas always carry a laughable perspective that they think a piece of song can not be called as a song if with out the Western composing textbooks."⁶⁴ According to Lü Ji, music is not an art that should be systematically learnt and the techniques and principles handed down by education are useless. Actually, if we know exactly about Lü Ji's growing life, we won't surprise at his opinion on music. In September, 1928, Lü Ji instead of an ill teacher to teach music in the Yangzhou Middle School. At the New Year's Evening party, he performed a piano solo without any practice, which naturally ended up with a failure. Maybe in his sub-consciousness, he thought piano did not need practice or maybe he just was scornful of those who could only perform beautiful music through practice day by day, regarding them as doctrinaires. The result was that he had to resign after the semester ended because the school did not agree with him to teach there, that had done harm to his fame.⁶⁵

However, another fact of Lü Ji told us that his perspective on music was just lip-born, if he really thought that the music on textbook was not essential, he wouldn't have entered the National Conservatory of Music for three times. But the total time he spent in the Conservatory no more than 2 years. Therefore, it is not strange that he could not understand music than the Academic School members who fully studied the Western music techniques. It would be indisputable that if Lü Ji had confined his perspective just to his personal academic perspective, because it concerned only with

⁶⁴ Zhang Hui, "Struggles between Lü and He and Some Thinking about Them", *Weifang College of Education* 3 (2007), 22.

⁶⁵ Wu Yongyi, *People's musician—Lü Ji* (China Federation of Literature Publishing House, 2005), 43.

understanding. However, as leader of the Left-wing Salvation School, he considered all people who had different views as capitalist class, which was extremely harmful to Chinese music. The development of Chinese music afterwards exactly demonstrated this point.

Every coin has two sides. In spite of his social status in the music circle of China and his perspective on music, Lü Ji was very talented in terms of music. If he was not born in that troublous time, if he had completed his courses in the National Conservatory of Music and if he had got a chance to study abroad like Xian Xinghai, his achievements in Chinese music would be immeasurable. Anyway, Lü Ji's contribution to the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Movement, the New Music Movement in a narrow sense was enormous. From the organization of the amateur chorus in 1935 to becoming the first musician in Yan'an, even in a fairly long period after the establishment of the People's Republic of China, Lü Ji had been playing a significant and irreplaceable role in the development and direction-choosing of Chinese chorus. He was an unavoidable person in the modern history of Chinese chorus. This point will be further expounded in the following parts. Here, we are going to discuss his representative works during the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Period.

Judging from Lü Ji's vocal music works which has been published so far, the period from the mid-1930s to the 1940s was a peak of his creation because his major representative works was mainly composed in this period. His earliest choral work *Song of the Campaign* (a four-part chorus) was created in 1935 when the singing movement among people developed vigorously. He also created *We Should Fight* (a two-part chorus), *All the Able-Bodied Men Go up the Line* (a four-part chorus), *Nirvana of the Phoenix* (cantata) and *Youth Team* during the Anti-Japanese War after the July 7 Incident. Among them, *Nirvana of the Phoenix* had the greatest influence in history of Chinese chorus. It was this work that laid the foundation for his historical status in the field of Chinese chorus.

Nirvana of the Phoenix is Lü Ji's cantata created at the end of 1941. It is based on a long poem also named *Nirvana of the Phoenix* written by Guo Moruo who was a famous Chinese writer and the Left-wing culture activist. The original poem is quite a long legend about a couple of god Phoenixes in ancient Arabian country with the male called *Feng* while the female called *Huang*. 500 years after they were born, they collected incense wood by mouths to burn themselves. They died but then they would revive from the ashes. In this process, their lives were sublimed and became strikingly beautiful, and they became immortal. Nirvana is a term in the Buddhist scriptures that

can also be called Parinirvana which means “die”. It is a simple and romantic legend to which similar stories might be found in every ethnic group. But here, the author used the rebirth of phoenixes to make a metaphor that a weak China which was greatly bullied by foreign enemies would definitely die, but a powerful and rich China would come into being from the perished ruins. This was really a fantastic idea but how to embody the deep meaning of the original work in music was a problem faced by the composer. When Lü Ji recalled the creating process of this large-scale work, he confessed that:

It was unsuitable to adopt either the melody of popular music or the melody of folk music. It also should not adopt completely the Europe music method. It should be a large-scale vocal music work full of romantic color and strong realistic emotion which includes chorus, part singing and solo (it should be in an important position). Some creativity was needed in the tone. In one word, adapting a long poem into a piece of music had many difficulties.⁶⁶

However, Lü Ji successfully completed this cantata by taking advantage of artistic skills he learned from textbooks. He divided the whole poem into 5 movements, namely, *Overture*, *Song of Feng*, *Song of Huang*, *Birds Song* and *Phoenix Regeneration Song*. In the *Overture*, the composer depicted the sadness of the Phoenixes before self-immolation and the moving and tragic scene when the Phoenixes went to die firmly, which makes people lament and get worried about the destiny of the Phoenixes. And then the composer introduces the next movement naturally.

Song of Feng and *Song of Huang* are the two most primary sections of the cantata. They are also the core of the text. In order to express the deep meaning of the text in terms of both mind and artistic image, Lü Ji adopted male chorus in the beginning and the end and tenor solo to depict the generous mind of *Feng*. He also expressed the dissatisfaction of *Feng* with the reality by using style of disclosure and fluctuating melody, which laid down a psychological foundation for the later separation of *Feng* out of the prison-like dirty world. In *Song of Huang*, Lü Ji adopted female chorus as the introduction and soprano solo to depict the feeling of *Huang*. Different from *Feng* whose mind flew between the sky and the earth before the self-immolation, Huang paid more attention to the passed 500 years of youth and felt sad about the failure at the end of her life. This is an aria about life. The composer expresses the inner feeling of *Huang* properly by using sad and euphemistic melody which is full of deep emotion, which can arouse resonance of emotion among people.

⁶⁶ Wu Yongyi, *People's musician—Lü Ji* (China Federation of Literature Publishing House, 2005), 96.

Birds Song depicts a group of despicable and ordinary birds who were very happy and playful when seeing the self-immolation of the Phoenixes by using solo and many parts chorus. Among them, the hawk, peacock, parrot, white crane and owl stood for five attitudes of different social classes. As it were, they were all happy to see the death of the Phoenixes and were eager to get some benefit from the death of them. Here, the composer uses five voice parts to stand for the five kinds of birds and this constitutes a five-part chorus. Accompanied by humorous melody, a foolish and comical black humor scene is presented in front of audiences.

Phoenix Re-gensis Song, a joyful end of the chorus, shows the re-gensis of the Phoenix after death. Lü Ji started with bass and tenor, male chorus is used to express a good news of the re-gensis of the universe and the Phoenix. Finally, the duo which stands for two Phoenixes is adopted in order to depict their enthusiasm, true love, happiness and harmony after their re-gensis from the ruins of death. The effect of music properly expresses that they are flying and singing freely and happily in a new world after the re-gensis. With this, this cantata became the only second to *Yellow River Cantata* in terms of thoughts and artistry during the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Movement comes to its end.

10. Other Choral Works in the Period of the Anti-Japanese War

Ma Ke (1918-1976) was born in Xuzhou of Jiangsu Province. His father was a pious Christian and he became a Christian when he was a child under the influence of his father. His name Ma Ke also originated from the writer of *St Mark's Gospel of Bible*, Mark, which showed his father's wish that when he grown up, he could evangelize in the name of the lord like St. Mark. Unfortunately, his father died when Ma Ke was 5 years old. He was once interested in Chemistry after losing the instruction of his father and entered the Department of Chemistry of Henan University⁶⁷ after he graduated from high school.

The Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Movement developed vigorously across the country around the July 7 Incident. Ma Ke, influenced by church music since he was a child, was also touched by the the masses singing movement and began to pursue music from the heart. He stopped studying Chemistry and began to study how to compose patriotic anti-Japanese music. At the beginning of studying, he made acquaintance with Xian Xinghai, under Xian Xinghai's influence he created some

⁶⁷ In Kaifeng city, Henan Province.

choral works. His vocal music works created during the Anti-Japanese War, *Lüliang Mountain*⁶⁸ *Cantata* was the most famous one. Created in 1939, it was composed of six movements: *Lüliang Mountain Tribute*, *Lüliang Eclogue*, *At the Bottom of Lüliang Mountain*, *General Mobilization of Ordinary People*, *Cry from Lüliang Mountain* and *Protect Lüliang Mountain*. The work had a strong folk flavor. Combining many singing forms like chorus and solo together, the composer presented a magnificent picture of people's life and resistance against Japanese in the liberated areas through the description of lives and wars of Lüliang people led by the Communist Party. Although Ma Ke did not, as his father once expected, choose a road to evangelize like St. Mark, many choral works he created during the Anti-Japanese War, the Liberation War and the following construction period of the new China were widespread with a singing mode originated from church music. This sing manner accompanied generations of Chinese people, maybe it is a kind of comfort to the soul of his dead father.

During the Anti-Japanese War, there was another excellent choral work named *Because of Motherland*. The composer of this work was Jiang Dingxian (1912-2000) who was one of the "four disciples" of Huang Zi. Jiang Dingxian was born in an intellectual family in the suburb of Wuhan, Hubei Province. His father participated in the Revolution of 1911. He grew a tendency to sympathize with revolution when he was young. He began to like music when he was studying at school under the enlightenment of his music teacher. In 1928, he came to Shanghai to learn music regularly. He first studied in the Department of Music of Shanghai Art University and then in the Department of Music of Shanghai Conservatory of Art. In 1930, he entered the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai and studied theoretical composition systematically under the guide of Huang Zi. In addition, he also studied piano from Russian professors. Thus, he had many accomplishments both in composition and piano. When he was still a student, he composed a chorus a three-part chorus named *Night of Spring*. Later on, he composed many choral works like *The Anti-Japanese Chorus*, *Because of Motherland* and *Cry of Deer* among which *Because of Motherland* had the most significant influence. In 1934, together with He Lüting, he participated in the competition called Seeking for Chinese Style Piano Music in Shanghai which was held by A.N. Tcherepnin, a famous Russian composer and pianist. He got the second prize for his work *Lullaby*.

Because of Motherland, created in 1940, is a four-part mixed chorus. The beginning and ending are composed in homophony while the middle part is composed

⁶⁸ Mountains in Western Shanxi Province, an anti-Japanese base area.

in polyphony, all of which form a striking contrast in the texture of chorus. Most the anti-Japanese songs at that time had a simple structure just one-part form and the harmony used in them is thin and weak. The musical form and texture of this work,

Because of Motherland

No. 29

高 音

上中音

下中音

低 音

钢 琴

我 们 要 奋 斗,

为 了 祖 国 的 缘 故,

我 们 要 奋 斗, 为 了 祖 国 的

我 们 要 战 争!

缘 故, 我 们 要 战 争!

is innovative. It adopts the rondo form: part A describes the passion in the Anti-Japanese War, like the text: “We have to fight against enemy because of motherland.” The music is powerful and distinctive. Part B depicts an angry and sad emotion with great appeals because “we have no freedom”. The whole work indicates a firm determination to render service to repay kindness of motherland with exciting soul and

romantic spirit. In addition, the vivid music also expresses the eagerness of Chinese people to liberate their country, which also has a strong artistic appeal.

There are also many other works which had great influence in that period. For example, *Resist Japanese to the End* by Li Weining, three cantatas *Assault after the Autumn Harvest*, *Mongolian Horse* and *Good Days* by Du Shijia, *Fight to the Northeast* by Xiang Yu, *Children Cantata* by Tian Ya, *Shanxi-Chahaer-Hebei People's Quartette* by Zhang Feideng, a joint work *The Northwest Protection Cantata* by the Department of Music of Lu Xun Arts College, *Youth Cantata* by Jin Ziguang and *Spring Ploughing Cantata* by Lu Su⁶⁹.

During the period from the September 18 Incident in 1931 to the end of the Anti-Japanese War, the total number of the anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation choruses reached as many as about thousands. The characteristic of those choral works during that period is that it has a large number but low quality. In 2003, musician Wang Ruipu and some other musicians collected the anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation songs from society in order to compile a book *Anti-Japanese Warsongs Integration* to commemorate the 58th anniversary of the victory in the Anti-Japanese War. They finally collected more than 6000 songs among which several hundreds were choral works⁷⁰. However, the anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation songs were mainly songs for the masses, their artistic levels of lyric writers and composers also differentiated greatly. Many of them, under an intense of anti-Japanese passion, like the Academic School said, actually had just learned what numbered musical notation was but created a large amount of songs which were not music in the eyes of professional composers. Although these songs played an active role in encouraging people to resist Japanese, the artistic quality and contents of those works were far away from real music. Therefore, when *A Collection of Anti-Japanese Warsongs* took into book, more than 3000 songs were cut out. Many of the rest were also reluctantly absorbed into the book. Even though the artistic level of choral works was not very high at that time, there were also some excellent works. For example, *Resisting the Enemy* and *The Flags are Fluttering* by Huang Zi, *Yellow River Cantata* by Xian Xinghai, *Song of Guerrilla* by He Lüting, *The Eighth Route Army Cantata* by Zheng Lücheng and *Nirvana of the Phoenix* by Lü Ji. Among them, the works of Huang Zi opened the door of anti-Japanese choruses while *Yellow River Cantata* by Xian Xinghai opened up a new area of Chinese cantata and

⁶⁹ Li Weining, Du Shijia, Xiang Yu, Tian Ya, Zhang Feideng, Jin Ziguang and Lu Su all were the left-wing musicians.

⁷⁰ Wang Ruipu, *The Anti-Japanese Warsongs Integration* (Huashan Arts Publishing House, 2003), 15.

Song of Guerrilla by He Lüting was simple and easy to sing, starting a happy and light-hearted style of chorus under the Anti-Japanese War. In terms of hand-down of these songs, Huang Zi's choral works are still unfamiliar to today's musicians of China, because he was ignored by the Left-wing musicians for a long time since he was viewed as a member of the Academic School which should be beaten down by the Salvation School though he always kept silent about the debate between the two schools. On the contrary, few excellent choral works created by the Left-wing musicians which had occupied an important position on the chorus stage of China.

11. About the Academic School during the Anti-Japanese War

When Japanese occupied the three provinces in the northeast China after the September 18 Incident in 1931, China was divided into three parts, namely, occupied areas dominated by Japanese invaders, the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled area and the border areas or base areas controlled by the Communist Party. The Academic School which was isolated by the Salvation School mainly referred to the teachers and students in music schools or conservatory located in the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled area and Japanese occupied areas, among which Xiao Youmei and Huang Zi from the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai were the major representatives. The Salvation School referred to those Left-wing musicians who did not learn the Western music systematically and carried a theory that music was a special weapon. The most famous representatives of the Salvation school included Nie Er, Xian Xinghai and Lü Ji. While summarizing the characteristics of music route of the Left-wing members, we can find that it always divide schools according to different views in the debates and to beat down the opposite school. Based on this practice, the Salvation school used music as a weapon against their enemy, in the process of composition, it was more important for them to learn the scientific outlook of Marxism-Leninism than to grasp the music technical theories, music should serve politics and resistance against enemies, music should take songs for the masses as its primary part. The language of music should be simple and easily understood and should also contain the instigation of political conflict. After the September 18 Incident, especially after the July 7 Incident in 1937 when Chinese people were faced with great danger of national subjugation, the extreme proposition of the Salvation School followed the historical trend that they expressed a inner voice of all Chinese people. However, after enemies were wiped out, they made some chaos, because a subject that had to be wiped out should be produced since music

was seen as a weapon and the best subject should be the one who carried an opposite view. Thus, the left-leaning Salvation School chose a direction which became more and more left-leaning. In the 1960s and 1970s, Chinese chorus walked into a dead end. At that time, not only the Academic School was beaten down but also the Salvation School itself was replaced by some new born People, more left school which had taken over the power. When both schools of chorus were beaten down, Chinese chorus disappeared. It was a dark period for Chinese chorus in the period from 1966 to 1976.

However, in the 1930s, the Salvation School did not realize the risk of the road which was chosen by them. They criticized that the Academic School was the representative of enemy classes, the advocate of music techniques and art just because the Academic School was in the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled area or the occupied areas. They also criticized that the works of Academic School were out of time, politics, life and people, they thought that the Academic School were lack of enthusiasm about the destiny of the nation and the Anti-Japanese War, just satisfied with self-appreciation in the tower of ivory.

It is not so hard for us to understand the scorn of the Salvation School on music techniques. As we mentioned earlier, a major characteristic of the Salvation School was that their music levels were not high. We can take the three soul characters of the Salvation School as examples. Nie Er had never taken any education on music in formal way. Although he once took two examinations of the Conservatory of Art of Peking University and the National Training School of Music in Shanghai, he failed both. Xian Xinghai once studied in the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai, but he was forced to leave because of involvement in student strikes. Then he went to France to study but he dropped out for some reasons. Lü Ji entered the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai for three times, but each time with just a short period, the longest one lasted for eight months while the shortest one lasted for no more than four months. Contrarily, Xiao Youmei—a representative of the Academic School was the first Chinese educator who got the Western doctor's PhD. Huang Zi got his bachelor's degree in America. Zhou Shu'an once studied in America, Cheng Hong⁷¹ in France, Li Weining⁷² in Austria, and Zhao Meibo⁷³ in Belgium. Besides them, almost all the high level foreign music professionals in China were in the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai. In front of these heavyweights both in

⁷¹ See p. 53.

⁷² See p. 28.

⁷³ Zhao Meibo (1907-), vocalist, music educator, graduated from the Royal Conservatory of Music in Brussels, Belgium, returned to China in 1936, and was appointed Head of the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai.

qualification and competence, the Salvation School were no better than “music beginners”.

There is a proverb in China, “a teacher who has taught you even just for one day should be treated like father in one’s life”, which means that one should respect his teacher like the way to his father. However, the Salvation School divided the schools according to their views, they would fight to the end even with their parents under the circumstance of different views. This characteristic could be best illustrated by personal experiences of Nie Er, Xian Xinghai and Lü Ji. In 1931, Nie Er who was out of work was enrolled shortly after he arrived in Shanghai from Yuannan by the Singing and Dancing School of Hualiang Movie Co., Ltd, which was the Song and Dance Troupe of Bright Moon organized by Li Jinhui. Nie Er once wrote in his diary about his music level when he just arrived in the Singing and Dancing School: “What did I know about staves before I joined the school (referred to the Singing and Dancing School)? All I could do was only to know 12345 of several tones (the numbered musical notation).”⁷⁴ In addition, Nie Er also had difficulties in his Mandarin. However, Li Jinhui paid more special attentions to him after he arrived at the Singing and Dancing School, he not only trained Nie Er pronunciation but also taught him composition, at last, he promoted Nie Er as a backbone of the school. Before 1932, the school performed vigorously both home and abroad. But as the times changed, Li Jinhui gradually impressed people with a feeling that he was at wit’s end and he seemed not to be able to catch up with the trend of society. The performances programmed by him were not welcomed by society for a period. At that time, Nie Er had already involved in Shanghai Left-wing Dramatists Union led by the Communist Party. After Li Jinhui’s school had experienced two unsuccessful performances in Nanjing and Wuhan in 1932, Nie Er released his satire and criticism which was nearly vituperation on *ArtofMovie* by using a pen name called Black Angel. In an article published in *Short Comment on Chinese Songs and dances*, Nie Er wrote:

As far as Chinese songs and dances are concerned, we have to mention the originator Li Jinhui. He has painstakingly led a group of young people to perform both in China and overseas with their soft skill for several decades. I really admire them! Beauty, sexuality and out poured enthusiasm were their achievements learned from foreign countries... We need hard skill with sword and gun instead this kind of soft skill! ...If people still sing and dance only for the sake of songs and dances in the following days, Chinese songs and dances will never walk on the road of art. Even after they sing and

⁷⁴ Koji Saito (Japan) (translated by Li Zhuang), *NieEr*(Shanghai Music Publishing, 2003), 45.

dance for another decade, the result will still turn out to be a disappointment!”⁷⁵

During the depressed days of the Singing and Dancing School, Nie Er who was one of the backbones of it should have done something to help his teacher and the school, find out the problems in order to revive the school again. However, Nie Er did not do anything, instead, he released his sarcasm and jeer on his teacher and the school, depending on which he had lived a life. All these put the school to the edge of collapse. After Nie Er fired at the school embarrassedly, the school was forced to disband. The situation of Nie Er also became worse after he left the school because he lost his economic source. After a period of bearing cold and hunger and living on money borrowed from his friends in addition to failures to enter the Conservatory of Art of Peking University and the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai, he began to use the knowledge learned from Li Jinhui to compose songs for some Left-wing films, which made him famous.

Xian Xinghai also had a similar experience during his early study years. In 1928, Xian Xinghai transferred from the Department of Music of Beiping Technical Art School to the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai to continue his study. Xiao Youmei as president of the Conservatory, because Xian was his fellow villager and student, especially arranged a work of word transcription for him when most of students were in difficult situation. The work provided him with an opportunity to earn some money while studying. In order to help Xian Xinghai, Xiao Youmei took him to take examination held by the Shanghai Municipal Council. Because of Xian Xinghai's lack of competence, he was not enrolled. In the summer holiday of 1929, some students wanted to stay at the Conservatory and to use piano of the Conservatory. At that time, the school couldn't make ends meet, so the two months' cost of rent, water and electricity and sanitation management in the summer holiday was really a great pressure to the Conservatory. Thus, the Conservatory asked them who wanted to stay at the Conservatory to pay eight Yuan for the cost. This requirement aroused protest among the students. Under the instigation of Li Enke, director of Student Affairs and Wang Ruixian, a music teacher, both of them wanted to replace the position of Xiao Youmei, Xian Xinghai and other students went to the Ministry of Education in Nanjing from Shanghai twice to accuse Xiao Youmei. Xiao Youmei had to resign, and the National Conservatory of Music was closed. Not long after that, the Ministry of Education of Nanjing government rebuilt the National Conservatory of Music in

⁷⁵ Black Angel (Nie Er), “Short Comment on Chinese Songs and Dances”, *Music Lover* 3 (1980), 12.

Shanghai according to *Constituent Act of Training Schools* and persuaded Xiao Youmei to undertake president of the Conservatory. The teachers and students who had participated in the student strike, instead of getting their goals achieved, were listed as persona non grata, Xian Xinghai was one of them.

The Left-wing musicians had their ways of logical reasoning on the academic debates. The music route was to judge the relationship just from point of views: all the things done by those people or organizations who disagreed with them were incorrect and even when those people were right, they still could find reasons for their “incorrectness”, all the things done by those people or organizations who shared the same views with them were correct, even though they were wrong, they still could find reasons for their “correctness”. Later, even Nie Er confessed that he was incorrect and extreme in criticism against the popular songs and dances of Li Jinhui. However, the Left-wing members still actively affirmed his act after he finished *March of the Volunteers*, even when the popular songs of Li Jinhui became prosperous again during the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21th century, there were still a large number of people who thought that the extreme act of Nie Er had done no harm to Li Jinhui and Chinese music. In regard to the student strike where there was no political appeal, the Left-wing members also elevated it to a higher level that it was a movement to resist the Chinese Nationalist Party and Xiao Youmei who persecuted students with advanced ideas.

Lü Ji was viewed as a successor of Nie Er. After the death of Nie Er, the Salvation School led by him took the Academic school as a representative of capitalist class. This action which divided the property of music by class lasted until the late period of the 20th century, it restricted the development of Chinese music greatly, especially the development of chorus.

Here, we do not intend to negate the tremendous contributions done by the leaders of the Left-wing who were apotheosized for a long period in the field of Chinese music in the early period of Chinese music. We just want to restore the truth of some events which had been distorted for a long time and to discuss the influence of the inborn narrowness of the Salvation School on the development of Chinese chorus. After the Salvation School denounced the popular songs started by Li Jinhui as decadent music and they blackened the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai as a capitalist class, only the anti-Japanese music with a strong political nature was left on the music stage of China. If we say that it was excusable for the Salvation School to beat down the popular songs of Li Jinhui because his popular songs were out of the

trend of that time, it was too farfetched for them to find excuses to beat down the Academic School. They criticized that the works of the Academic School were “out of time and politics”, while in fact, the Academic School was just the one who actually kept up with the trend. Just one month after the September 18 Incident in 1931, *Resisting the Enemy* was created by Huang Zi, *The Flags are Fluttering* was also created by Huang Zi one year later. Later on, people like Xiao Youmei and Zhou Shu'an also created many Nation Salvation songs. However, the main members of the Salvation School at that time were still studying. In March, 1933 when the Chinese Nationalist Party army fought against the Japanese army who were invading the inland of China from Xifengkou and Gubeikou of the Great Wall, Huang Zi came to Hangzhou with some other 40 people who were from the National Conservatory of Music and held two concerts to support the war and to call on Chinese people to resist. At that time, because *Resisting the Enemy* and *The Flags are Fluttering* were arranged as the final programs, Huang Zi, as a professor with the highest music level in China, undertook the task as the announcer and commentator during the performance. After taking out the transportation expenditure, Huang Zi donated all the money to the “Backup Association”. However, the Amateur Chorus Organization founded by Lü Ji who was a Left-wing member appeared only two years later after that.

Totally different from the criticism of the Salvation School that the Academic School was lack of the enthusiasm towards the destiny of China and the Anti-Japanese War, Xiao Youmei affirmed the singing movement among people organized by the Salvation School when it was developing vigorously. He once wrote in an article that:

People from other music Conservatory like He Shide, Lü Zhanqing (Lü Ji) and Hu Ran who has ever studied in the National Conservatory of Music organized numerous chorus with a momentum like bamboo shoots after spring rain. This was really the best phenomena in the recent music world.⁷⁶

Xiao Youmei the pioneer in the field of higher music education in China and the leader of the Academic School once hung a piece of couplet in Chinese on the wall of his piano room, which means that a clear conscience laughs at the false accusation. This sentence can best show the situation when the National Conservatory of Music founded by him which was the representative of Academic School were criticized by the Salvation School. At that time, the National Conservatory of Music externally was regarded by the Salvation School as a capitalist class which represented the Chinese

⁷⁶ Xiao Youmei, “The Music Achievements in the Past Ten Years” in the *Xiao Youmei Music Collection I*, ed. Luo Qin (Shanghai Music Publishing House, 1990), 182.

Nationalist Party, but internally was paid little attention by the Chinese Nationalist Party.

Even the monthly expenditure which was just 5000 Yuan was behind in payment and usually less than the stipulated figure. For example, the expenditure in October, November, and December in 1931 wasn't given at all; the school only got 40% of the money in January the next year, 30% in February and March, 50% from April to June. Thus, it was very difficult in terms of finance for the National Conservatory of Music.⁷⁷

The status of finance did not get better until Wang Shijie, who was the husband of Xiao Youmei's younger sister, became the minister of the Ministry of Education. However, the Conservatory buildings were bombed by the Japanese army and the Conservatory was forced to be divided into three parts in the French Concession in order to avoid being destroyed by Japanese at one time.

When the Salvation School was composing the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation songs, they got a strong support from the Communist Party, especially the musicians in Yan'an, who had no danger to worry about. However, the Academic School had no organizations to depend on. They had to shun persecution of the Chinese Nationalist Party government and also guard against the threat from Japanese so that they wouldn't get arrested. When Nie Er met danger while composing the Anti-Japanese songs, the Communist Party sent him to Japan and then to Russia for studying in order to shun the danger (unfortunately, Nie Er died shortly after he arrived in Japan). The teachers and students from the National Conservatory of Music could only be at the mercy of destiny while composing the Anti-Japanese songs. After Shanghai was occupied by Japanese in November, 1937, Huang Zi was listed as the one who should be arrested by Japanese because of his composition of *Resisting the Enemy*. He lived alone in the French concession and had nowhere to go. Who can know what his destiny would be after the concession was occupied if he didn't die in May, 1938?

Even in such a difficult situation, the leaders of the Academic School still sustained the swaying National Conservatory of Music and successfully saved it from closing. They insisted to culture high level music personnel for the music circle of China. In 1936, after General Zhang Xueliang⁷⁸ and Yang Hucheng⁷⁹ launched the

⁷⁷ Xiang Yansheng, "Master of Modern Music Education in China—Music Educator: Xiao Youmei," in the *Modern Music Educators in China*, ed. Yuan Tao (Chun Feng Art Publishing House, 1994), 206.

⁷⁸ Zhang Xueliang (1901-2001), the deputy Commander of the Chinese Nationalist Party Armed Forces.

⁷⁹ Yang Hucheng (1893-1949), famous anti-Japanese general, national hero.

Xi'an Incident⁸⁰, the Chinese Nationalist Party was forced to form an Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation United Front with the Communist Party under both the internal and external pressure. In December, 1937, Xiao Youmei submitted a document to the Ministry of Education of the Chinese Nationalist Party. In the document, Xiao Youmei indicated that under the circumstance full of danger resulted from Japanese invasion, the guidelines for education should change to "the masses education" from the "elite education" before, in order to quickly cultivate more musicians who could serve for the Anti-Japanese War. The plan of Xiao Youmei was not approved. However, it reflected that his education idea did not conflict with the proposition of the "Salvation School" at all. This also showed that the censure of the Salvation School was baseless.

School, after all the school. The Academic School also had to undertake the mission of cultivating music talents for China while focusing on the Anti-Japanese and Nation Salvation Movement. After the Nation Salvation songs like *Resisting the Enemy* and *The Flags are Fluttering* were created, Huang Zi also created many patriotic songs like *Warsong* and *Poem for the National Day*. In 1935, he created *Fantasia of Cityscape* which was the beginning melody of the Left-wing film named *Cityscape*. Simultaneously, he composed some two-part choruses like *Autumn Travel Song*, *Original Story*, *Melody of the Lotus Gatherer* and *To the Graduated Classmates* and three-part choruses like *Autumn is Coming* and *Lullaby* for the music textbook of the Fuxing Middle School, just because of it, the Academic School was criticized as lack of enthusiasm about the country's destiny and the Anti-Japanese War by the Salvation School. In the last year of his life, Huang Zi resigned from his position of the Director of Teaching Affair in July, 1937 because he noticed that there was no proper teaching material at that time, he tried his best to compile two textbooks named *Harmonics* and *Chinese & Foreign Music History*. This was another evidence that was used by the Salvation School to attack the Academic School that they were "lack of enthusiasm in the country's destiny and the Anti-Japanese War, satisfied with the self-appreciation in the tower of ivory."⁸¹

⁸⁰ The Xi'an Incident: December 12, 1936, general Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng detained the commander in chief of the Chinese Nationalist Party and forced him against Japan.

⁸¹ Feng Changchun, "Divergence and Confront", Huangzhong—Journal of Wuhan Conservatory of Music, China, 2 (2007), 23.

III. Chinese Chorus after the Yan'an Rectification Movement

Having experienced the 8 years arduous Anti-Japanese War from 1937, China achieved comprehensive victory in August, 1945. The Anti-Japanese United Front¹ established jointly by the Chinese Nationalist Party and the Communist Party of China in 1936 began to break down after a period of cooperation which seemed in harmony but actually at variance. At that time, China was divided into two opposite political areas, namely, the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled areas and the Communist-liberated area. There were 4.3 million well-equipped soldiers of the Chinese Nationalist Party supported by U.S. and some Western countries, but they had lost the public's support due to corruption of the government and the Civil War. In contrast, there were only 1.2 million soldiers in the Communist-liberated areas, they got support from the public and the Soviet Union, but their disadvantages were their weapons were extremely lagged behind. On June 26, 1946, the troops of the Chinese Nationalist Party began to attack the Communist-liberated areas fiercely with the help of U.S. and some European countries. Since then, the Civil War broke out all over the country, which was called the Liberation War by historians. In the first year of the Civil War, the Communist troops took self-defense. In the second year, they turned into strategic offense. Both sides entered the final decisive strategic engagement in the third year. The Army of the Chinese Nationalist Party was not beaten down by the stronger Japanese forces during 8 years of the Anti-Japanese War, however, its main forces in the Northeast China, North China and East China were wiped out by the People's Liberation Army led by the Communist Party in the Civil War through three successive campaigns including the Liaoshen Campaign², the Huaihai Campaign³ and the Pingjin Campaign⁴ from September, 1948 to January, 1949. And then the PLA⁵ began their strategic pursuit and attack against the remnants of the troops of the Chinese Nationalist Party like autumn winds overblowing away withered leaves. On the 1st of October, 1949, the People's Republic of China led by the Communist Party was founded in Beijing while the Republic of China led by the Chinese Nationalist Party retreated to Taiwan after their defeat. From then on, two governments have coexisted in China, and putting

¹ See pp. 105-106.

² The Liaoshen Campaign, broke out in the Northeast China from Sep. 12, 1948 to Nov. 2, 1948, the whole Campaign lasted 52 days, there were 470,000 soldiers of the Chinese Nationalist Party were wiped out.

³ The Huaihai Campaign, broke out in the East China from Nov. 6, 1948 to Jan. 10, 1949, the whole Campaign lasted 65 days, there were 555,000 soldiers of the Chinese Nationalist Party were wiped out.

⁴ The Pingjin Campaign, broke out in the North China from Nov. 29, 1948 to Jan. 31, 1949, the whole Campaign lasted 64 days, there were 521,000 soldiers of the Chinese Nationalist Party were wiped out.

⁵ PLA, the People's Liberation Army, belongs to the Communist Party.

China into a separating situation. Because of the opposition between the two parties, chorus during this period were correspondingly divided into two music groups: the mainland group and Taiwan group.

1. Choral Works in the Liberated Areas

Although the Liberation War led by the Communist Party went on smoothly, both the quantity and quality of the choral works in this period were debased, compared with those in the Anti-Japanese War. The main reason may lie in the further extremalization of the left deviationist ideology.

The Left-wing ideas originated from the Soviet Union according to the history of the Communist Party. Before 1935, the leadership of the Communist Party and the command of Red Army, the predecessor of PLA, were always indirectly in the hand of the Communist International led by the Soviet Union. During the fifth anti-encirclement Campaign⁶ from the autumn of 1933 to the autumn of 1934, Red Army, influenced by the left deviation closed-doorism of Li De (Otto Braun, 1907-1974), the military advisor from the Soviet Union, did not break through the encirclement consisted by the troops of the Chinese Nationalist Party and were forced to conduct 7,500 km great strategic retreat, known as the Long March in the history. In January, 1935, the Central Committee of the Communist Party held an important conference in Zunyi⁷, known as “Zunyi Conference” in the history. The conference confirmed the leadership of Mao Zedong and banned the military command of Li De as an agent of the Comintern in Red Army. The left deviationist ideology began to be corrected, and Red Army had been steadily developed. In February, 1938, Yan’an Lu Xun Arts College was founded in Yan’an⁸, a Department of Music was set up in the College as well. During the first and second stages of teaching, the Department carried out an aperiodic educational system called “Three times three system” according to the practical conditions, namely, to study in the College for three months, to practice among the masses for three months and then to study in the College for the last three months. Later on, the educational system was found to have many drawbacks and was changed into a “One year program”, namely, to study for one year intensively, at last, to study for three years, “Three years program” was carried on.

⁶ The Anti-encirclement Campaign: there were 5 times that Red Army were surrounded by the troops of the Chinese Nationalist Party, therefore there were also 5 anti-encirclement Campaigns in the earlier period of the Communist Party. Red Army won the first 4 anti-encirclement Campaigns, but lost the last one.

⁷ Zunyi, a small city in Guizhou Province.

⁸ Yan’an, the capital of the Communist-liberated Area from 1935 to 1948 in Shanxi Province.

The root of ideas of “Left” deviation still existed in the Communist Party although they were cleared up temporarily within the Party and Army through the Zunyi Conference. The leftist ideology began to present itself again in the party after the situation became better. In 1942 when the Anti-Japanese War was approaching to its last phase, the Yan’an Rectification Movement, the first ideology movement initiated in the areas controlled by the Communist Party was launched. People who had little knowledge about teaching, the “Three years program” of the Music Department was mistakenly criticized as ivory-towered improvement that divorced from the masses. In fact, there was indeed some tendency for pursuit of large-scale works deliberately in Music Department, which received severe criticism since it was easy to magnify a problem to be a question of principle or ideology in such a sensitive period of the movement. The Yan’an Rectification Movement began with an influential speech of Mao Zedong delivered to the circles of literature and art, namely, *The Speech at the Yan’an Forum on Literature and Art* which was viewed as *Bible* or absolute authority by Chinese literature and art societies. In the speech, Mao Zedong said: “that literature and art should serve as a powerful weapon to unite people, to educate people, to attack the enemy and to wipe out the enemy.”⁹ To a large extent, the idea of “music as a weapon” proposed by the Salvation School was affirmed. In the following part, Mao Zedong added that before 1942, workers in the field of literature and art (including music) neither knew their working objects nor understood those objects, the objects were workers, peasants and soldiers as well as cadres. The word “knew” referred to they were unfamiliar with their working objects, while the words “understood” meant they did not understand the language of their working objects. Thus, the workers in the literature and art circles should be encouraged to unite common people. At the end of the forum, Mao Zedong clearly pointed out that literature and art were affiliated to politics and in return politics exerted great influence on literature and art. To be honest, the speech of Mao Zedong had its reasonability and property in that period when the political and social life of China was going to be changed soon. At that time, music workers who went to Yan’an were not for music but for revolution. In their minds, they took it for granted that music should serve revolution and politics, and musicians should be an assistant of politics. Therefore, they had no dissent against the relationship between music creation and politics.

⁹ Mao Zedong, *Speech in the Yan’an Forum on Literature* (People’s Literature Publishing House, 1967), 63.

However, this speech had historical limitation and one-sidedness. Political music was definitely not the whole connotation of music but only a small part, although music could serve politics. When people constrained their eyes to the “weapon theory” in the music circle, the moralization of their minds began to interfere and hinder the developmental law of music works and to weaken their aesthetics on music art. If the influence of the Left-wing Salvation School was just confined to a certain extent before this speech, then music creation in the Liberated Area was regarded as subservient to politics totally after the Forum. Some bad influences were so far-reaching that even after the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, they still played a destructive role on the healthy and development of Chinese music. The most direct and obvious example was that Zhou Yang, then president of Lu Xun Arts College, released his severe criticism in *Ethnic Music*, saying that the choral works created during 1940-42 were “choruses without principles” that were isolated from the masses. In order to closely follow the spirit of Mao Zedong’s speech, the music workers in Yan’an Lu Xun Arts College, whose theoretical level was not high enough, began their self-criticism under the frame of *The Speech at the Yan’an Forum on Literature and Art*. The consequences were that the irrational criticism on the normal education system was accepted, the “Three years program” was cancelled and the Left-leaning route of pragmatism restored. The Salvation School had used this route to criticize the Academic School paying more attention on theory than practice several years ago. Thus, the students from the Music Department of Yan’an Lu Xun Arts College were led to social practice before they fully grasped the music theories and musical principles. Later on, a mass dancing and singing movement that borrowed from transplantation of rice seedlings was launched, that is, the New Yangge Movement¹⁰. This movement reversed the development direction of the music across all the Communist-liberated Areas.

The Yan’an Rectification Movement and the New Yangge Movement did not promote the development of Chinese chorus to a higher level, instead, the development direction of chorus became obscure or unclear, sooner it sank into a silent period. It was not until the beginning of the Liberation War that the choral music came to life and became active along the chorus track formed during the Anti-Japanese War period. There was no creativity in terms of choral during this period. Only the content of the Anti-Japanese War was replaced by that of the Liberation War. The artistic level decreased greatly due to the conservative art ideology. Under the influence of Mao’s speech at Yan’an Forum on Literature and Art, the music education of that time

¹⁰ Yangge: a kind of collective songs and dances in Chinese Villages.

attached great importance to practice rather than theory, which led to many musicians' low level of music theories. They had mistakenly thought that their enthusiasm and experiences of lives could make up for the lack of music techniques, so as to produce great works. Although their works were also enjoyed by soldiers and the masses, they were incomparable with those created during the Anti-Japanese War both in quantity and artistic quality. Except the musicians trained by the National Conservatory of Music and Yan'an Lu Xun Arts College before the Yan'an Rectification Movement, students who were from the Music Department of Yan'an Lu Xun Arts College after 1942 produced almost no excellent choral works. Among the chorus and large-scale vocal works in *Appreciation of 365 Pieces of Famous Songs in Ancient and Contemporary China (Volume of Vocal Music)* compiled by He Xide¹¹, seven pieces belonged to the Anti-Japanese War (1937-1945) while only one piece *Victory Rush*¹² composed by Shen Yawei belonged to the Liberation War. Judged from Shen Yawei's growing experience, he was a representative who made up for the lack of creative techniques with enthusiasm. Shen Yawei was born in 1920, he just received education of folk music in the elementary and middle school. Shen was engaged in street propaganda for national salvation from May, 1938 and joined the cultural team of the New Fourth Army¹³ the next year where he studied some basic music theories and some knowledge about conducting and composition from He Shide¹⁴. After the People's Republic of China was founded, Shen Yawei realized that only political enthusiasm with workers, peasants and soldiers could not take place of the advanced music theories and techniques of artistic creation, thus, he decided to make up for his music knowledge by entering Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. There he studied music theories and composition from 1954 to 1958 in his middle age. *Victory Rush* selected by He Xide was one work from the large-scale vocal suite *Huaihai Campaign Song Cycle*. Touched by the atmosphere of the Campaign, Shen Yawei with his colleagues selected 10 excellent songs that were composed during the Campaign and connected them together by employing recitation text to form a large-scale vocal music suite. Obviously, this large-scale vocal music unified suite did not get rid of the influence of *Yellow River Cantata*. As a work of the greatest influence in the Liberation War, *Huaihai Campaign Song cycle* can not be compared with *Yellow River Cantata* of the Anti-Japanese War period in terms of the artistic level. As mentioned above, from

¹¹ He Xide (1929-), musician, collected and studied numerous lyrics of Chinese music.

¹² He Xide, *Appreciation of 365 Pieces of Famous Songs in Ancient and Contemporary China (Volume of Vocal Music)*, (People's Literature Publishing House, 2005), 213.

¹³ The New Fourth Army led by the Communist Party.

¹⁴ See p. 55.

the proportion of choral works in the Liberation War in *Appreciation of 365 Pieces of Famous Songs in Ancient and Contemporary China (Volume of Vocal Music)*, we can infer their level and position in the history of Chinese chorus.

Victory Rush

N0. 30

捷 报 捷 报, 歼 灭 了 黄 伯 韬! 捷 报 捷

捷 报 捷 报, 歼 灭 了 黄 伯 韬!

报, 歼 灭 了 黄 伯 韬! 再 接 再 厉, 再 接 再 厉,

捷 报 捷 报, 歼 灭 了 黄 伯 韬!

再 接 再 厉, 再 接 再 厉, 再 接 再 厉, 胜 利 接 胜 利!

同 志 们 哪, 一 年 左 右 要 把 国 民 党 的

反 动 统 治 根 本 打 倒!

Any weapon could kill or wound the enemy while encouraging the weapon-holder. During the Liberation War, apart from such kind of songs as *Huaihai Campaign Song cycle*, there were many other songs to praise the leaders of the Communist Party and the masses. Among them, the four-part mixed chorus *The East is Red* adapted by He Lüting for the coming of the 7th Communist Party Congress in May, 1945 was the most influential one. Originally, it was composed by Li Youyuan, a folk singer in

Shanbei¹⁵ who refilled new text based on the melody of a local folksong *Ride a White Horse*.

The east is red, the sun is rising;
China has brought forth a Mao Zedong.
He works for the people's welfare.
Hurrah, He is the people's great savior.

When this song was spread to Yan'an, Gong Mu¹⁶ added the following two sections, completing the text today.

Chairman Mao loves his people,
He is our guide,
To build a new China,
Hurrah, he leads us forward!

The Communist Party is like the sun,
Wherever it shines, it is all bright.
Wherever the Communist Party appears,
Hurrah, there the people are liberated!

The work was originally written to express the gratitude of the liberated peasants towards the Communist Party and its leaders. Li Huanzhi¹⁷ adapted the work for the second time. When people from the whole country began the personal worship towards Mao Zedong, this song was heard at every corner of China through radio waves, making it a symbol of the “god” creation movement. *The East is Red* rose in the late period of the Anti-Japanese War according to the time when it was created, but it had a relevant continuity with the choral works of the Liberation War period both in terms of style and time sequence.

The large-scale chorus *Workers Cantata* composed by Liu Chi was also an excellent representative work that was used to praise the masses during that period. Liu Chi was born in 1921. He began to play drum from folk artisans in his childhood. In 1939, he was enrolled as a member of the 3rd phase of the Music Department of Yan'an Lu Xun Arts College and studied composition and conducting from Xian Xinghai. Liu was among those who were cultivated in Yan'an Lu Xun Arts College when the

¹⁵ Shanbei, the North Shanxi Province, its folksongs are very famous in China.

¹⁶ Gong Mu (1910-1998), poet, educator.

¹⁷ See p. 28.

College was criticized as “to elevate by closing the door” during the Yan’an Rectification Movement.

Workers Cantata still continued to use the pattern of *Yellow River Cantata* by Xian Xinghai. The work included seven movements, namely, *All for the Victory*, *Railroad Workers’ Song*, *Coal Miners’ Song*, *Women Workers’ Song*, *Workers’ Work Day and Night*, *Workers March*, *Construct the Country*. *Workers Cantata* seemed more mature in terms of unity, consistency and the changes of chorus texture compared with other cantatas created during the same period. Unfortunately, this kind of works could get neither chance to be performed nor sufficient audiences since all musicians at that time were scattered among the masses in response to the call of Mao Zedong. Therefore, the work was not sung and performed extensively, and had not aroused enough influence at that time.

Leap Forward to the Dabie Mountain from Thousand Km Away Cantata created by Shi Yuemeng¹⁸ who went to Yan’an Lu Xun Arts College in February, 1939, where he studied conducting and composition from Xian Xinghai. *Move to the Southwest China Cantata* jointly written by Chen Daying¹⁹ was also a famous choral work in this period, they carried on some features of the composing method in *Yellow River Cantata*.

There were also some other the masses choral works with unique characteristics at that time like *Spring Plough* and *New Democracy March* composed by Li Huanzhi, *Woodcutting Song* by Zheng Lücheng, *Spear with Red Tassel* by Xiang Yu²⁰, *Youth of the New China* by He Lüting and the new choral opera *White-haired Girl* composed by Ma Ke²¹ and Li Huangzhi. Among them, *White-haired Girl* was performed in April, 1945, it was the first successful attempt to introduce chorus into Chinese opera.

2. Choral Works in the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled Areas

In contrast with the Liberated Area, most musicians in the areas occupied by the Chinese Nationalist Party were still engaged in their teaching work regularly in the music Conservatory, few musicians who engaged in creation of the masses choral works. This was probably that the speech of Mao Zedong delivered in Yan’an could not

¹⁸ Shi Yuemeng (1915-2008), composer, conductor, the third and the fourth Vice-Chairman of Chinese Musicians Association.

¹⁹ Chen Daying (1921-), composer.

²⁰ Xiang Yu (1912-1968), composer, studied in the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai from 1932 to 1937.

²¹ See pp. 95-96.

reach as far as the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled areas. Since the Chinese Nationalist Party became the initiator of the Civil War, they undoubtedly suppressed some political songs that were used to resist the Civil War and urge for peace and some chorus groups that were inclined to the Communist Party. Except that, the choral music in the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled areas developed evenly. Compared to the single weapon-typed political choral works in the liberated areas, the polyphonic choral works created in Chinese Nationalist Party occupied areas can be divided into the following categories:

Choral Works Based on Ancient Poems

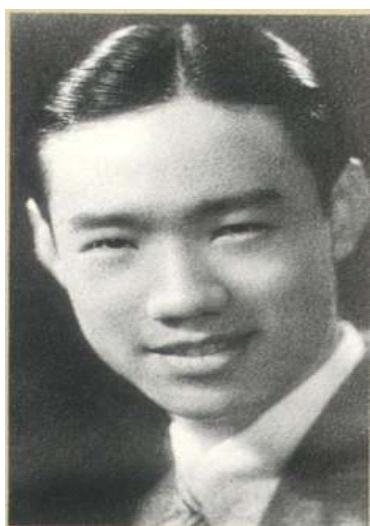
Red All Over the River

N0. 31

The musical score for "Red All Over the River" (No. 31) is presented in a four-part vocal setting. The vocal parts are labeled: 女高音 (Soprano), 女低音 (Alto), 男高音 (Tenor), and 男低音 (Bass). The lyrics are in Chinese: "不向百" (Bù xiàng bǎi), "怒发" (nù fà), "冲冠凭栏处" (chōng guān píng lán chù). The piano accompaniment includes chords and a melodic line with sixteenth notes. Dynamics include sf (sforzando), p (piano), and ten. (tension).

In the Chinese Nationalist Party controlled areas, people began to create art choral works by using ancient poems before the Anti-Japanese War. Among such works, *A Moonlit Night on the Spring River* composed by Xiao Youmei based on the Zhang Ruoxu's²² poem, was a prominent one in that period.

During the Anti-Japanese War, Zheng Zhisheng²³ created a four-part mixed chorus based on the poem *Red All over the River* written by Yue Fei, a famous general in the Song Dynasty (960-1279). The performance of this work was very successful



Tan Xiaolin NO. 32

before Zheng's death. Zheng Zhisheng was a gifted musician in modern history of Chinese music. He entered the Guangzhou Sacred Heart Middle School founded by Catholic Church at eleven years old and music attracted his attention there. Then he went to France to study composition. Unfortunately, he died young, at the age of 38, in 1941. In 1943, Lao Zhicheng²⁴ created a chorus *Song of Righteousness* written by Wen Tianxiang, a famous General and poet in the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279).

Born in 1911, Tan Xiaolin entered the National Music Team of the Senior Section of the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai and majored in lute in 1931. In 1937, he went to theory class to study composition from Huang Zi. After Huang Zi passed away, by following the step of Huang Zi, he entered Berlin Academy of Music at first and then the School of Music of Yale University where he studied music theory and composition for four years from Paul Hindemith (1895-1963), a German composer and conductor who immigrated to America and taught in Yale University after 1940. In 1946, he went back to China and worked as the professor and director of the Department of Theory and Composition of the National Conservatory of Music. During his teaching years, he cultivated many well-known musicians in the future like Qu Xixian²⁵ and Luo Zhongrong²⁶. Tan died in 1948 when he was 37 years old. He was also a talent who died young like a flash in the pan among Chinese contemporary musicians.

²² Zhang Ruoxu (660-720), famous poet in the Tang Dynasty.

²³ Zheng Zhisheng (1903-1941), composer, conductor, studied composition in Lyon Conservatory of Music from 1928 to 1932.

²⁴ Lao Zhicheng (1910-), pianist, composer, educator.

²⁵ Qu Xixian (1919-2008), famous female composer.

²⁶ Luo Zhongrong(1924-), famous composer and music theorist.

Tan Xiaolin was an outstanding Chinese instrumentalist. He began to play Erhu, one kind of two-stringed Chinese folk instrument when he was 3 years old. He could play some other folk instruments like lute when he was 7 years old. Tan Xiaolin's chamber music enjoyed a higher evaluation in the music circle. After Tan's death, his American advisor once commented on him like this:

In my opinion, the music circle of China has lost an extremely talented and intellectual musician..., he had great attainments in Western music culture and composing techniques, which enabled him to develop his talent to his maximum. If provided him a chance, he would become an excellent innovator in the field of music in his country, and he would be a brilliant communicator between Chinese music and Western music.²⁷

As Tan Xiaolin worked in China for less than two years, he created only a few vocal works, but his contribution to Chinese choral was prominent as a composer. Influenced by Huang Zi, he adapted some poems into choral works by using modern composing techniques. Among them, a cappella *Song of Righteousness*, and four-part mixed chorus *Night on River* were all representative works. These works of Tan's blended the ethnic style in Chinese tradition with the Western harmony and tonality naturally, that made his works full of personal characteristics.

In addition, the four-part mixed chorus *The Deer Bleating* composed by Jiang Dingxian and the four-part mixed chorus *The Weeds* composed by Chen Tianhe²⁸ were all created according to the text from the ancient classic *The Book of poems*.

Choral Works Based on Historical Materials and Legends

In the early days of the Anti-Japanese and National Salvation Movement, Huang Zi created *Everlasting Regret* in order to meet the demand of teaching. That had started creating large-scale choral works based on Chinese historical materials or legends in the form of cantata. Following Huang Zi, Lu Huabai, Wu Bochao and Chen Tianhe created some eye-catching works in this field.

Lu Huabai was born in Jingmen of Hubei Province in 1914. In 1931, he entered Wuchang²⁹ Art School where he studied art and music and also began to compose chorus works. He taught in Wuchang and Guilin³⁰ after graduated. During the Anti-

²⁷ Paul Hindemith, Yang Yushi, "Preface about 'Tan Xiaolin'" 3 (*Music Art*, 1980), 14.

²⁸ Chen Tianhe (1911-1955), composer, studied in the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai from 1930.

²⁹ Wuchang, a district of Wuhan city, Hubei Province, its history is more than 1800 years.

³⁰ Guilin, the capital of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in China.

Japanese War, he created the cantata *At the Miluo River*³¹ in order to commemorate Qu Yuan³². He became a professor in the Fujian Music School in 1943 and created the cantata. *The Great Yu*³³ *Controlling Floods* by using a historical legend as material.

Song of Righteousness

N0. 33

S. 天 地 有 正 气, 杂 然 赋 流 形.

A. 天 地 有 正 气, 杂 然 赋 流

T. 天 地 有 正 气, 杂 然 赋 流

B. 天 地 有 正 气, 杂 然 赋 流

下 则 为 河 岳, 上 则 为 日 星.

形. 下 则 为 河 岳, 上 则 为 日 星.

形. 下 则 为 河 岳, 上 则 为 日 星.

形. 下 则 为 河 岳, 上 则 为 日 星.

Wu Bochao was born in Wujin of Jiangsu Province in 1903. He went the Music Education Institute of Peking University in 1922 where he studied music theory and composition from Xiao Youmei. He went to Belgium in 1931 and returned to China two years later. In 1938, in order to encourage people to resist Japanese, Wu created a chorus *Chinese* according to the stories of Qi Jiguang and Yu Dayou, two famous

³¹ The Miluo River, in Jiangxi Province.

³² Qu Yuan (340-278 B.C.), famous patriotic poet and Minister in the Warring States (474-221 B.C.), he died in Miluo river when his country was occupied by other country (there were 7 countries in that time in China).

³³ The Great Yu, legendary water expert of ancient China.

generals who resisted against the Japanese invaders in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). The song was extensively performed after being completed and had great influence both in China and abroad.

Chen Tianhe was born in Yongjia of Zhejiang Province in 1911, died in Hebei Province in 1955 at the age of 44. He was also a gifted composer who died at an early age. He entered the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai and studied composition from Huang Zi in 1930, he was one of the four famous disciples of Huang Zi. In 1942, he created the cantata *Farewell in Heliang*³⁴ in order to praise Su Wu who was detained by Hun³⁵ and did not surrender by herding sheep for 19 years. The work had great influence on history of Chinese chorus.

Choral Works Adapted from the Folksongs or Created by Rewriting Text Based on Melodies of Folksongs

The East is Red was a successful political music adapted from Shanbei³⁶ folk song in the liberated areas. Different from the liberated areas, the political songs were prohibited, but the choruses adapted according to folksongs or folk music became a new fashion in the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled areas. Among the adaptations, Lu Huabai adapted the female chorus *Three-line Praise* and *Reap the Wheat* based on folksongs. Xie Chenggong³⁷ successfully adapted the Uighur folk song *Elamuhan*³⁸ into a chorus. In *Hymns of Universal Praise* published in 1936, 12 hymns were created by choosing melodies of folksongs and rewriting the texts.

Jiang Wenye was also an outstanding prolific composer in the 1930-40s in China. His life was full of dramatic changes and misfortunes. In 1910, he was born in Danshui County of Taibei City, the earliest preaching location of Christianity in Taiwan Province of China. He moved to Xiamen City, Fujian Province with his family at six years old. During the days in Xiamen, his family kept a close relation with missionaries, and the Young Men's Christian Association became the place where he received his music enlightenment. In 1923, Jiang Wenye went to a small town in Japan to attend secondary school with his elder brother, later he studied in the Tokyo Engineering and Commerce Advanced School where his major was electrical engineering. At the same time he also started to attend evening classes in the Tokyo Music School (today part of

³⁴ Heliang, a small village in Sichuan Province.

³⁵ Hun, an ancient nomadic Nation in the North of China.

³⁶ See p. 113.

³⁷ Xie Chenggong, composer, famous folksong expert.

³⁸ Elamuhan, a name of Uighur girl.

the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music). In 1933, he entered Tokyo Conservatory of Music to study composition and began to compose music. Many of his works won awards in Japan for many years.

In 1938, attracted by the long history and brilliant culture of his homeland, Jiang Wenye left Japan for China and settled down in Beijing. He was appointed professor of the Music Department of Beiping Normal College (Beijing Normal University now). Because of his experience in Japan, Jiang produced some Pro-Japanese and enslaved works in his early days after he came back China, so he was not welcomed by both the Communist Party and the Chinese Nationalist Party, that put him in a very passive dilemma. Owing to his works, Jiang Wenye was put in jail by the Chinese Nationalist Party for ten months after the Anti-Japanese War.

Jiang Wenye's choral works based on Chinese ancient melodies were mostly used in rehearsals when he was the conductor of the Beiping Broadcast Chorus in 1939. After he was set free, he began to avoid realistic life and hid himself in church because he was shocked greatly after all of his experiences. At that time, he created four Catholic songs for church Mass by using ancient Chinese tunes. For example, *Ave Maria* was created by using the melody of *Red all over the river* and *Stabat Mater* was by adopting the melody of *Three Refrains on a Song of Yangguan*³⁹. In regard to his church music and hymns, the instructor of Belgian Music Association of Catholic Union in China commented that "Jiang Wenye's religious music could make us remind Handel...the lofty sky worshipping properties of this Chinese composer has far exceeded that of the predecessors."⁴⁰

Jiang Wenye also created choral works like *Fishermans Joy*, *Fengyang Flower-drum Dance*⁴¹ and *Wild Geese Landing on the Sand* by using polyphonic texture on melodies of folksongs. These works were very popular at that time. Certainly, he also created some choral works that were viewed as "progressive" by the Communist Party. In February, 1942, he adapted *Re-gensis Song* in the *Nirvana of the Phoenix*⁴² into a chorus. However, he was still a marginal figure after the People's Republic of China was founded. In 1957, because of his early works, he was criticized as a "rightist". He was destroyed both physically and mentally by that and was paralyzed in bed after he was rehabilitated in 1978. On October 24 of 1983, he died in Beijing after a life full of

³⁹ Yangguan, a pass on the South Silk Road, in Gansu Province.

⁴⁰ Pu Fang, "Research on Musical Styles of the Religious Works of Jiang Wenye", *Journal of Nanjing Institute of the Arts (music and performing version)* 3 (2000), 18.

⁴¹ A kind of folksong and dance which was popular in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, Fengyang, in Anhui Province.

⁴² See p. 93-95.

ups and downs.

Christian Music in the Chinese Nationalist Party-occupied Areas

The fact that Jiang Wenye created Catholic songs based on Chinese folksongs after the Liberation War actually inherited the tradition that Chinese musicians used to create hymns before 1913. This tradition did not stop during the wars. The creation of Christian hymns reached a peak around the Anti-Japanese War. Chen Sizhi, as a representative figure among the first generation of composers in Taiwan, had done a lot of work in this field. Chen was born in a Christian family in 1911 and remained a pious Christian throughout his life. In 1924, he learned piano from Mrs. Margaret Gauld and Ms. Isabel Taylor⁴³. He entered the Tokyo Seminary in Japan to study composition in 1934. Two years later, he created his first work *The Lamb of God* in Japan. It was the first large-scale oratorio composed by a Chinese composer. He returned to Taiwan in 1942. In Taiwan, he created the religious chorus *God Loves the World* and *As a Deer Longing for Water*, the later was extensively sung in churches both in China and abroad. However, Taiwan was still a colony of Japan before 1945, strictly speaking, the religious choral works of Chen Sizhi should be classified into the occupied areas instead of the Chinese Nationalist Party- ruled areas.

In *Hymns of Universal Praise* published one year before the outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War, there are 62 hymns created by musicians such as Yang Yinliu (1899-1984), a famous religious musicologist Zhou Shu'an (1894-1974), from the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai, the first female conductor in China, Yang Jiaren (1912-1966) and Ma Geshun (1914-) who were both famous conductors in China, Li Baozhen (1907-1972), a music educator and conductor, American missionary Fan Tianxiang (Bliss Wiant)⁴⁴. All these hymns had greatly influenced the following creations of Chinese religious music.

Choral Works Showing Dissatisfaction Towards the Ruling Authority and Desires for Peace

In the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled areas, there were also some choral works in other subjects apart from the choral works mentioned above, such as, *Eulogizing*

⁴³ Mrs. Margaret Gauld and Ms. Isabel Taylor: Two american missionaries in Taiwan.

⁴⁴ Fan Tianxiang (Bliss Wiant, 1895-1975), came to China for teaching music in 1923 with his family.

Song For the Martyrs composed by Wu Bochao, female chorus *Twilight* based on the Chinese version of Goethe's poem translated by Guo Moruo⁴⁵ and *Raise the Red Lanterns* composed by Tan Xiaolin. However, these works did not produce great influence at that time.

The choral works which were used to show dissatisfaction towards the ruling authority and desire for peace once became an important part among the choral works around the Liberation War. In 1944, the Japanese troops launched the "Mainland Transportation Line Campaign" against the Chinese Nationalist Party Army. The Chinese Nationalist Party forces suffered a crushing defeat, losing a large amount of territories and pushing people in the occupied areas into deep affliction. Shu Mo⁴⁶ and Fei Ke⁴⁷ created the chorus *Cold Season in a Year* for this reason. This chorus including *Endless Long March*, *Tears of the General*, *Spring is Here Again*, *A Distant Gaze at Homeland* and *Funeral at the Butchery*, they were connected together by reciting poem. The work depicted the miserable scenes of common people who lived in the occupied areas under the oppression of the Japanese Army. Among them, *The Endless Long March* showed the sadness and complaints of Chinese mass towards the Chinese Nationalist Party—the ruling authority for its incapability in the War of Resistance against Japan.

To people's surprise, after the victory of the Anti-Japanese War, the Chinese Nationalist Party tore up the treaty of the Anti-Japanese National United Front that was jointly made with the Communist Party and launched the Civil War in China. The hardship of people spurred the dissatisfaction of some musicians in the Chinese Nationalist Party-controlled areas against the Chinese Nationalist Party. Ma Sicong was a representative among them.

Ma Sicong was born in Haifeng County of Guangdong Province in 1912. In 1923, he went to France with his eldest brother and studied music in the Music Conservatory of Nancy. In 1928, he studied to play violon in Paris Conservatory of Music, he was the first Chinese student in the Conservatory. In 1930, he began to study composition. In France, he made acquaintance with Xian Xinghai and gave a helpful hand to him when he was in great difficulties.⁴⁸ Ma returned to China in 1931. In 1932, he established a private conservatory in Guangzhou at 20 years old with his colleague Chen Hong, and took the position of president. He actively participated in the Anti-

⁴⁵ Guo Moruo, a famous Chinese writer and the Left-wing culture activist.

⁴⁶ Shu Mo, composer, graduated from the Central University (in Nanjing) in 1935.

⁴⁷ Fei Ke (1917-1968), composer, dramatist.

⁴⁸ See p. 71.

Japanese and National Salvation Movement and created many patriotic anti-Japanese songs after 1937. Guangzhou was occupied by Japanese in October, 1938. He went to Hong Kong to continue creating anti-Japanese songs. In addition, he also organized and guided some ensembles to make propaganda activities against Japanese through broadcasting stations.



Ma Sicong

N0. 34

After experienced the Anti-Japanese War and witnessed the country was being destroyed, Ma Sicong was extremely eager for peace and democracy. However, when the Anti-Japanese War came to an end, the Chinese Nationalist Party launched the Civil War under the support of U.S. and other Western countries, this made Ma Sicong very angry and distressed. Thus, he composed a grand chorus *Democracy* jointly with Duanmu Hongliang⁴⁹ in 1946. In this chorus, Chiang Kai-Shek, the leader of the Chinese Nationalist Party who had put China into the Civil War, was described as the *Tyrant of the East*, which reflected anger of those literature and art workers in the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled areas. In 1947, Ma Sicong collaborated with poet Jin Fan⁵⁰ composed the grand chorus *Motherland*. This work showed people's yearning for a democratic and free New China. It was widely received when performed in cities like Guangzhou, Hangzhou, Shanghai, Beiping(now Beijing) and even Nanjing, the capital of the Chinese Nationalist Party government. In 1948, Ma Sicong also composed a grand chorus *Spring* jointly with Jin Fan again in order to express eagerness for peace of the forty million people in China. These three works were mostly created in the form of cantata while the music language mainly adopted

⁴⁹ Duanmu Hongliang (1912-1996), famous writer, novelist.

⁵⁰ Jin Fan (1916-), poet.

melodiess from Chinese folk music. Obviously, they were greatly influenced by *Yellow River Cantata*. However, they were not totally confined to the form of *Yellow River Cantata*. In addition, the monologue recitation was cancelled, it was regretful that the combination between lyrics and melodies was not perfect as *Yellow River Cantata*, because Ma went abroad at an earlier age, his Chinese was a little poor, it was the defects of the works.

Tyrant of the East

N0. 35

女高音

女中音

男高音

男低音

东 方 的 暴 君, 东 方 的 暴 君, 统 治 我 们 六 千 年

这个狂暴的家 伙 呀, 我 们 都 叫 他 万 岁 爷。

这个狂暴的家 伙 呀, 我 们 叫 他 万 岁 爷 这 个 家 伙

他 金 口 玉 牙, 他 要 怎 么 就 怎 么。

他 金 口 玉 牙, 他 要 怎 么 就 怎 么。

他 金 口 玉 牙, 他 要 怎 么 就 怎 么。

The defeat of the Chinese Nationalist Party was being shown gradually as the war went on. At that time, corruption was rampant in the Chinese Nationalist Party-

ruled areas and economic order was in a great mess. As a result of corruption of the government, officials took advantage of financial fluctuations to change their money into foreign currency and gold. In addition to consumption in the war, the currency devaluated dramatically. In order to make up for the deficit resulting from war and corruption, the Chinese Nationalist Party released a large amount of paper currency, which led to the increasing sharp depreciation of the currency and rapid rise of commodity price. People were in great pains. In 1948, Lu Huabai created *Crowded Purchase Cantata*, a choral work that was used to express the dissatisfaction of people in the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled areas towards the chaotic economic order, and some people viewed this song as the funeral march for the Chinese Nationalist Party authority led by Chiang Kai-shek who was about to be destroyed in the near future⁵¹. The Chinese chorus history is a mirror of the modern history of China. During the period from 1946 to 1949, the powerful of the authority of the Chinese Nationalist Party was eliminated by the weak Communist armies within three years. The reason can be shown in the choral works in the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled areas and the Communist liberated areas. Some of chorus works in the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled areas paid no attention to Chiang Kai-shek authority, some reflected dissatisfaction of musicians against the authority. On the contrary, in the Communist liberated areas, chorus works always cooperated with the politics and served for the political purposes as well. The music workers in the liberated areas could sacrifice art and scientific disciplines even musician themselves' lives for the sake of politics. From the contents of their choral works, we can conclude that people who lived in the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled areas had abandoned their government, while people in the liberated areas united with one mind just like the unison widely sung by them—*Unity is Strength*. During the Liberation War, a group in which the party and people united together beat down a group which was leaderless without any cohesion, anyone who is confused with the final result of the War would find some reasons from those choral works in this period.

However, in regard to art itself, it was partial for the liberated areas just to define choral music as political chorus. That not only restricted the healthy and comprehensive development of chorus in the liberated areas, but also laid some hidden troubles for the development of choral music after a new country was founded. For this reason, the overall level of choral music in the liberated areas in this period was lower than that in the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled areas, the combination of the unison in

⁵¹ Ding Weiping, "Lu Huabai: An Old Musician Who Should not be Forgotten", *Art Exploration* 4 (2008), 21.

the liberated areas and many-part choruses in the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled areas were the true colors of Chinese chorus.

Motherland

N0. 36

庄严 光辉

男高音独唱

女高音

女低音

男高音

男低音

钢琴

f

太 哪 阳 滚 过 大 海 的 绿

p

波， 照 着 中 国 美 丽 的 山

f

太 哪 阳 太 哪 阳 啊！

f

孩子, 孩子, 老太婆, 穷公务员, 码头工人, 穷公务员, 人力车夫, 人力车夫

小市民, 他们来了, 他们来了, 他们踉踉跄跄地

小市民, 小市民, 他们来了, 他们来了, 他们踉踉跄跄地

小市民, 他们来了, 他们来了, 他们踉踉跄跄地

他们来了, 他们来了, 他们踉踉跄跄地

cresc. poco a poco

3. Accomplishments of Chinese Choral Music Achieved under the Influence of Western Chorus

After the closed door of China was opened forcibly by the British forces who owned powerful warships and weapons in 1840, Western chorus was brought to China along with Christian churches, church schools, Western culture as well as Western thoughts from all directions. In the meantime, Chinese were also blown by the new thoughts from Western to wake up from the arrogant dream which had lasted for thousands of years. During this period, some lucky guys either entered church schools or went overseas to receive Western education and study Western music. Finally a new

era of the Chinese modern chorus was opened by taking advantage of Western music. Making an overview of all of the musicians who had left great influence in the history of Chinese chorus, we can see that all of them have benefited a lot from Western music:

Shen Xingong went to study in Japan where he studied Western music indirectly in the early age of the last century. He started the School Song in China. His life was influenced by Christianity mostly. He often composed works by using melodies selected from Christian hymns and taught his students to sing at school. He kept a close relation with clergies throughout his life and converted to Christianity in his later years.

Li Shutong studied in Japan and grasped the Western composing techniques. His *Spring Outing* was the first Chinese secular chorus with Western choral characteristics. Although he converted to Buddhism later on, but he had made intensive research on the Christian songs. Apart from that, he also composed Buddhist songs and many other choral works by selecting melodies of Christian hymns.

Xiao Youmei began to enjoy music when he was influenced by his Catholic neighbor. He studied Western music in Japan and Europe. He founded the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai after he came back to China. It was the most important fruit ripened in the nutrition of Western music.

Zhao Yuanren received formal education of Western music in U.S. when he was young. He brought what he learned to China and composed *Charm of the Sea*, promoting Chinese chorus to the first climax.

Huang Zi used to take part in the activities organized by Christian churches when he studied in the preparatory department. He also viewed himself as a Christian without a specific sect. Christianity exercised the most definitive influence on him, so as that Christian hymns could be heard at his funeral.

Zhou Shu'an was born to a Christian family. Her enlightenment of music was completed in church. Later on, she went to the United States where she studied Western music systematically and became the first female chorus conductor and female composer in China.

Influenced by his father, who was an organist in church, Xia Zhiqiu began to play organ when he was very young. He entered the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai founded by the oversea Chinese students and was nurtured by Western music there.

Xian Xinghai once studied to sing hymns in a Christian-funded school. He also joined in the orchestra of the school. He once studied in the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai and then went to France to study Western music. He was the one

who understood Western music the most among all the Left-wing musicians.

What He Lüting played first in the school were Western instruments, piano and violin. He also entered the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai and became the favorite disciple of Huang Zi, the representative figure of the Academic School. He was the second generation under the influence of Western music.

Like He Lüting, Jiang Dingxian and Chen Tianhe studied in the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai, all of them were the fruits of the second generation produced under the influence of Western music.

Ma Ke was born in a Christian family. He was influenced by Christianity so much that even his name was from a figure in *Bible*—Mark (the Chinese equivalence is Ma Ke). The role of Christian hymns in his music enlightenment was self-evident.

Lü Ji founded the Music Department in Yan'an Lu Xun Arts College. Both he and the Music Department were the second generation of fruits ripened with the help of Western music.

Zheng Zhisheng was interested in music when he was studying in church school at his early age. Later on, he went to study in France where he learned directly in the cradle of Western music.

Tan Xiaolin studied in the National Conservatory of Music at first and then went to study Western music in Germany and the United States..

Wu Bochao went to Belgium to study Western music..

Jiang Wenye got his music enlightenment from Church school and received education of Western music in Japan.

Chen Sizhi was born in a Christian family and went to study in Japan. He devoted all his life to Christian music after he came back to China.

Western music not only blew the fruits of Chinese chorus into ripeness but also influenced various strata of Chinese society. Led by Sun Yat-sen⁵², the Xinhai Revolution of 1911⁵³ overthrew the last feudal dynasty in China, the Qing government, and the National government was established in Guangzhou—the capital city of the government of the Chinese Nationalist Party. In its parliament, Christians accounted for about 25%. The proportion of Christians among the local government officials in Guangzhou reached as much as 65%. Because of this, Sun's government was viewed as a Christian government. And Sun Yat-sen himself was also a Christian. After Chiang

⁵² Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925), the founder of the Chinese Nationalist Party who was elected Provisional President of the Republic of China in 1911, now he is called as the "father of the Republic of China".

⁵³ A bourgeois democratic revolution in 1911, the revolution overthrew the Qing government and the implementation of Chinese feudal imperial system for 2000 years, resulted in the establishment of the first democratic republic in Asia—the Republic of China.

Kai-shek took over the Chinese Nationalist Party, except the Chen brothers, the other three of the four biggest families Chiang, Song, Kung⁵⁴ who dominated Chinese political and economical situation were all Christians. When Chiang Kai-shek was going to marry Soong Meiling⁵⁵, the Song family had only one requirement, that is, Chiang must convert to Christianity. Therefore, Chiang Kai-shek studied *Bible* carefully and converted to Christianity, and stuck to his belief throughout his life. When Christianity developed rapidly in China, Chinese chorus also came into being and developed vigorously during that period. On the whole, the spread of Christianity was not affected although the ultra-nationalistic and non-Christian movement took place in the 1920s ' China.

However, we can not expect that anything should develop smoothly, so did the development of Christianity in China. The September 18 Incident was a symbol that indicated the decay of Christianity in China. The Anti-Japanese and National Salvation Movement became a primary critical event for Chinese people after 1931 when Japanese army invaded to the Northeast China. Although some Chinese Christians participated in the movement, Christianity itself was also an invader and could not lead Chinese people to resist another invader like itself. What's worse, in 1934 when Huang Zi finished *Resisting the Enemy* and *The Flags Are Fluttering*, the Vatican became the first to recognize the "Manchukuo"⁵⁶, a puppet government founded by Japanese in China. In addition, it also put the Northeast China out of its China preaching area, instead, a special the Northeast preaching area was established. This stood imperceptibly in Japanese's standpoint and confirmed the aggression of Japan against China. The attitude of the Vatican greatly hurt feelings of Chinese people towards Catholic Church and also influenced the attitude of Chinese people towards Christianity. After outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War in China in 1937, the Vatican representative stationed in China issued an order to all Chinese Catholics that requested them to maintain neutral stance during the War, a life-death War for the Chinese people. This was without doubt to say that Chinese people could convert to Catholics only after they became slaves of a conquered country. Henceforth, the Catholic was viewed as traitor. In regard to missionaries who were from the countries like the United States and the Britain, they also had the same attitude as their governments, i.e. to seemingly maintain neutrality during the Anti-Japanese War, in fact, they wished that the Chinese

⁵⁴ Chiang, Song, Kung and Chen were the four biggest families in the Public of China, the four families controlled the Government of the Republic of China.

⁵⁵ Soong Meiling (1897-2003), the Chiang Kai-shek's third wife, the first Lady of the Republic of China.

⁵⁶ Manchukuo (1931-1945), a puppet regime established by Japanese in China in 1932, including Jilin, Liaoning and Heilongjiang Provinces.

government could cede the Northeast China to Japan in order to reach a compromise between the two countries. Under such circumstances Chiang Kai-shek government did not resist the Japanese invaders, the Catholic requested Chinese people to be slaves of a conquered country, the American and British governments just stood by. In this case, the Communist Party of China, who had always been insisting on resisting the Japanese invaders became the “Moses” who led Chinese people to walk out of “Egypt”. The atheist communists had always regarded religion as spiritual opium that cheated the masses. The behaviors of Christians in China at that time strengthened this opinion. Thus, the influence of Christianity came to its decline phase from the acme after the Communist Party got the leadership. Subsequently, Christianity in China began to prepare for the complete transformation of the future life.

When the Anti-Japanese War came to an end, Catholic and Protestant in China began to support the Chiang Kai-shek government to launch the Civil War under an order from the Vatican and the administrations of America and Britain. They wished to wipe out the atheist Communists through the Civil War. However, the incompetent performance of the Chiang Kai-shek government had lost the public support in China, while the Communist Party won the victory of the Civil War quickly.

Actually, Christianity had a chance to survive in China before the Communist Party took the power. At that time, the major leaders of the Communist Party did not intend to be hostile to U.S. for the differences in ideologies, instead, they wished to maintain a good relation with the United States and conduct their economic construction with the help of American experiences after their triumph. Early before the Liberation War broke out, Mao Zedong, the top leader of the Communist Party, was not inclined to fully depend on the Soviet Union, because he was dissatisfied with Moscow since he had been suppressed by the agents of the Soviet Union in the Communist Party like Li De, Li Lisan, Bo Gu and Wang Ming⁵⁷. For this reason, Mao once asked Zhou Enlai⁵⁸ to express the following intention to America: although the socialist society of the Soviet Union and the future communist society were viewed as the best social systems around the world in the eyes of communists, and it was also the objective of China, yet China was not able to build such a society quickly because of its weak economy and poverty. Thus, China should build up a country by learning from U.S. was better at present. Obviously, these words expressed an intensive wish of the Communist Party to keep a good relation with U.S.. China led by the Communist Party

⁵⁷ Li De, Li Lisan, Bo Gu and Wang Ming, who were the agents of the the Soviet Union in the army of Chinese Communist Party.

⁵⁸ See p. 56.

would appear in the world in another profile if U.S. could judge the development trend of revolution in China correctly at that time like it does nowadays. However, America did not accept the goodwill of the Communist Party of China at all because of its ideological prejudice. Instead, it fully supported the Chinese Nationalist Party to launch the Civil War. Just before the Communist Party gained victory, America took advantage of church members in China to resist the Communist Party. What's more, the U.S. government dispatched a large number of missionaries to China during 1948 and 1949 in order to strengthen the leadership of churches against the communist power. After the Communist Party gained the leadership in the end of 1949, U.S. began to blockade China. At the same time, the Vatican instructed Chinese Catholics that every Chinese Catholic believer should resist the newly-born people's political power. As a result, all these facts provoked the anger of the Communists at last. From the second half of 1951, the New Chinese government began to take measures like disbanding churches and expelling foreign missionaries because foreign churches had influenced its economic construction and social stability of the new China. Meanwhile, as for those churches that supported the Communist Party, the Party carried out a church transformation based on the "Three-self Principles", namely, self-governance, self-support and self-propagation. By then, the link of Chinese churches to foreign churches was cut off completely, the influence of Christianity in China began to decline all the way so that it disappeared during decade in the Cultural Revolution of China starting from 1966.

After over 120 years' ups and downs from 1840 to 1966, Christianity was wiped out in China temporarily. However, the fruits left in China by Christianity in terms of chorus did not perish with it. On the contrary, they were still the main forces among Chinese chorus after the founding of the new China. In the 1980s, Christianity and hymns regained their position and influence in a brand-new look, and the fruits produced by Western music in the field of Chinese chorus, such as Xiao Youmei, Huang Zi and He Lüting also obtained a deserved appraisal.

IV. Chinese Chorus in the Early Days of the People's Republic of China

1. Influence of Academic Criticism on Chinese Choral Works in the Early Days of the New China

The Communist Party had occupied the most part of the mainland after the second half of 1949 through the Liaoshen Campaign, Huaihai Campaign and Pingjin Campaign, the Chinese Nationalist Party government was driven to Taiwan—a small island in the Pacific Ocean. Because of ideological hostility, information exchange was cut off between the two governments. The history of Chinese chorus we will talk about in the following is actually only the chorus of the People's Republic of China.

The two music groups, the Salvation School in the Communist area and the Academic School in the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled area jointed together after the Chinese Nationalist Party Government retreated from the mainland. How to unite and manage the two groups was put forward into the schedule at that time. On July 23, 1949, musicians led by the Communist Party founded the Association of Chinese Music Workers which was called the Chinese Music Association. Lü Ji, the core figure of the Salvation School who had relatively weak foundation in music but possessed extremely conservative thoughts, was appointed as president of the Association, while He Lüting and Ma Sicong, two representative figures of the Academic School who had substantial foundation in music and opening minds, were appointed as vice presidents. The Chinese Music Association was the highest leading organization in terms of music in the new China. The collocation of leadership of the Association had determined the development pattern of music which would be dominated by the Salvation School in the future. However, Lü Ji's narrow music perspectives and conservative music guiding principle in the undemocratic Chinese Music Association directly controlled the developing orientation of Chinese music.

Undoubtedly, Lü Ji played an important role in promoting the development of the National Salvation Songs during the Anti-Japanese War. His outlook on music corresponded with the characteristics of that period indeed. However, the limitations began to emerge obviously when Lü Ji applied those music characteristics that were summarized during the wars to guide new music development in peaceful period as a general music laws. In addition to these limitations, the sectarian closed-doorism

which was formed to resist the Academic School in Yan'an began to harm the development of Chinese music, especially the Chinese choral music.

The narrow-mindedness about music outlook of Lü Ji had been shown before the Chinese Music Association was founded. In 1948, in his article *A Few Questions About Studying Techniques and Studying Western Music*, he wrote that vocal music should be taken as a major art of music in the new China, not the musical instruments. At the same time, as a music politician, he divided music into the bourgeois individualism Music and the masses music led by the Communist Party. He said:

We have to realize that the age of piano and violin has gone, it was an old view of the bourgeois individualism epoch. But now it is a new era of the masses. The new music is also in the age of the masses music. The masses music should take vocal music as the major part rather than the musical instruments especially the Western solo instruments including piano and violin.¹

It is not difficult for us to see that Lü Ji has regarded music simply as the masses vocal music while instrumental music could be negligible under his leadership in the new China.

Lü Ji overlooked music techniques in a superficial and irresponsible attitude and labeled music art with the bourgeois and the proletariat at will, which had greatly restricted the development of chorus in the early days after the founding of the new China. There was no doubt that it would arouse dissatisfaction of the Academic School who had rich knowledge in basic music theory. In 1953, He Lüting made a speech *Comments on Music Creation and Criticism* at an enlarged meeting held by the National Committee of the Chinese Music Association. In this speech, he stated his viewpoints about Lü Ji's political division of music. He thought that the general political theory could not replace the specific music theory and techniques. Music was an art which should be practiced with proper techniques. Whether you admitted these techniques or not, the level of techniques played a major and decisive role in music. From this point of view, he criticized those "musicians" who had never studied music systematically and had no knowledge in music techniques but only had political enthusiasm, he classified them ironically as the "2/4 Beats School" who just knew the beats of a march and the "Arabic Numerals School" who just had a rough idea about the numbered musical notation.² In fact, He Lüting's words continued the views of the Academic School during the Anti-Japanese War. His view revealed the problems in

¹ Lü Ji, "A Few Questions about Studying Techniques and Studying Western", *People's Music* 1 (1984), 3.

² He Lüting, "Comments on Music Creation and Criticism", *People's Music* 3 (1954), 5.

music of the new China. However, it also irritated some active figures who kept a high profile of “musician” with political enthusiasm but actually were not qualified for the name of musician, and this also touched the sore spot of Lü Ji. In March, 1954, in order to attract those people who despised music techniques like Lü Ji to debate against He Lüting. The speech was fully published in the most authoritative music magazine *People's Music* which was taken charge by Lü Ji. In February, 1955, *People's Music* released an editorial entitled *Fight Against Capitalist Class*. The article, from a commanding perspective without calling out He Lüting's name, but obviously criticized him whom Lü Ji was not satisfied with. This debate was labeled as the conflicts between the proletariat and the capitalist, the materialism and the idealism. So far, we can see clearly that this conflict was a consistent expression of the leading idea of the Salvation School after the September 18 Incident, that is, to classify schools by academic views and then classify classes by schools. It was also an important reason why the development of Chinese music in the new China was lagged behind seriously after 1949. However, this editorial written under the instruction of Lü Ji attributed the cause to the corrosion and hindrance of various bourgeois idealist thoughts. In regard to the reason why those works created by the “2/4 Beats School” or “Arabic Numerals School” did not have high level in quality, they defended irrationally that it was not the problems that the composers had low skills but they were lack of profound experience and their level of political thoughts was not enough high. At last, the editorial called on all the music workers in the country to reinforce the criticism on the bourgeois idealism ideas in the musical circle. Thus, a common academic debate was elevated to a political criticism. Chinese chorus difficulty walked through the first several years after 1949 under the extremely strong control of the Chinese Music Association.

2. Chinese Chorus in the Early Years after the Founding of the People's Republic of China

During the early days after the founding of the P. R. China, the Academic School from the Chinese Nationalist Party-ruled area and the Salvation School from the liberated area gathered together, making the team of musicians unprecedentedly large. However, due to the limitations and restrictions of Lü Ji's music outlook that more attention should be paid to the vocal music than the instrumental music and the class ideas should be applied into music, Chinese chorus in this period not only had little creativity and breakthrough in terms of form and artistic level, but also could not go

beyond the scope before the founding of the new China. Despite this, compared to the whole choral music after the new China was founded, the choral works of this period were the most influential.

Original Single Movement Chorus

During the Anti-Japanese War and the Liberation War, the short and simple masses choral works played an important cohesive role in uniting people and uplifting their spirits. Thus, in the early days of the People's Republic of China, more attention was paid to the vocal music than the instrumental music, single movement works that were similar to the style of the masses chorus naturally became the key content encouraged by the Chinese Music Association.

Relatively speaking, the choral works created in this period were a little more complex than the masses choruses in the early time but also strictly showed the masses music characteristics according to Lü Ji's class music outlook. In this aspect, the earliest work with some influence in this period was *The Victorious Advance under the Banner of Mao Zedong* composed by Liu Xing, a musician of the "2/4 Beats School". In addition to some ethnic flavor, the work had an apparent style of march and inherited the typical "2/4 Beats" characteristic.

The mixed chorus *The Heroes Conquered Dadu River* based on the text written by Wei Feng³ in 1952. It was composed by Luo Zongxian⁴ and Shi Yuemeng⁵. On May 23, 1951, Tibet was liberated peacefully. In order to guarantee material supplies to Tibet, the People's Liberation Army undertook the task to transport the materials from inland to Tibet. The Tibet Support Team was stopped by the Dadu River in Western part of Sichuan Province. At last, the People's Liberation Army successfully fulfilled their mission after overcame great difficulties with the help of local Tibetans. The text writer Wei Feng was in the team. Touched by the team that crossed the river, he wrote down *The Heroes Conquered Dadu River*. Similarly, moved by the text, Luo Zongxian and Shi Yuemeng composed it that brought extensive influence during the early days after the new China was founded.

The Heroes Conquered Dadu River was a mixed chorus sung with a soloist. Here, the composers absorbed some folksong materials from Sichuan and Hubei provinces and combined Chuanjiang Haozi—the work chantey of boatmen on the

³ Wei Feng, dramatist, the former vice president of People's Liberation Army Conservatory of Arts.

⁴ Luo Zongxian (1925-1968), composer, educator.

⁵ See p. 114.

Chuanjiang River⁶. In addition, it also had exchanges between a soloist and a chorus by means of asking and answering. It depicted the great deeds of the People's Liberation Army who transported the materials to the other side of the river by using cowskin raft regardless of danger and difficulty. The work ended up with rhythmical working song and a cheerful call of a soldier.

The cantata *Song on the River* was finished by Zheng Lücheng almost at the same time with *The Heroes Conquered Dadu River*⁷. It came out when Zheng Lücheng was experiencing life in Sichuan Province with a lyric writer Fang Ping. Using the Chuanjiang Haozi as the basic material, it also employed the method of combination of soloist and chorus. It was an excellent chorus work of this period.

The mixed chorus *Forest, the Green Sea* was created by Chen Tianhe in order to praise the forests of the Northeast China. The melody was beautiful and the composing skills were natural.

The short and simple masses songs of the Anti-Japanese War still influenced the choral works after the P.R. China was founded. A female chorus *At the River outside the Village* was composed by Tang He⁸ in 1956. With binary form, it also adopted folksongs, dances and dramas of Shanxi province. It depicted a picture that a group of girls were washing clothes for the Liberation Army at river. It conformed to the political environment at that time although there was a strong sense of propaganda.

Original Choral Works Reflecting the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea

During the early days after the P. R. China was founded by the Communist Party, a big event which influenced the destiny of the new China happened, that was the Korean War (1950-1953), which was called the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea in China. On June 25, 1950, the Korean War broke out. Two days later, the American government announced to intervene in the internal affairs of the North Korea by sending military forces there. The fire of war expanded to the border areas near the Northeast China quickly and there was a great possibility that the war was introduced to China. Before the Korea War, the leaders of the new China had taken the national construction and liberation of Taiwan as their primary tasks. when the Korea

⁶ The Chuanjiang River, a tributary of the Changjiang River in Sichuan Province. Changjiang River is the longest river in China, the third longest river in the world.

⁷ *Dadu River* is another tributary of the Changjiang River in Sichuan Province, it is a military vital importance in history of China.

⁸ Tang He (1922-), composer, former executive director of the Chinese Musicians Association.

War broke out, Chinese government, under the requirement of Kim II Sung (Jin Richeng)—the top leader of the North Korea, and Stalin—the leader of the Soviet Union, paused the ready-made goals of the national construction and liberating Taiwan and made a strategic decision to resist American and help the North Korea in order to protect China. On October 19, the Chinese People's Volunteers which were composed of the Northeast Border Guards entered the North Korea after crossing the Yalu River⁹ and fought directly against the U.S. troops. Chinese musicians created a large amount of choral works in order to serve for the war from October, 1950 to July, 1953 when the American army was forced to sign an armistice. There were many influential choral works such as *Yalu River* by Ma Sicong, *Feihu Mountain Cantata* by Zhang Wengang¹⁰, *An Immortal Soldier Huang Jiguang* by Shi Yuemeng and *Hero Yang Gensi* by Zhang Rui¹¹. Huang Jiguang, Yang Gensi were all heroes of the Chinese People's Volunteers, their stories were well-known under the background of the War to Resist U.S., Aggression and Aid Korea.

Feihu Mountain Cantata created by Zhang Wengang was prominent among this kind of works. Finished in 1951, it depicted that Korean people brought water and food for Chinese soldiers fighting at war front regardless the danger. At that time, the Chinese People's volunteers were fighting against the American troops in Feihu Mountain in Korea. It expressed a deep friendship between Korean and Chinese people which was formed during the war against their common enemies. The work was divided into five parts. A story was inserted into the work. The contents of story like this: a Korean woman hid his child in a cave in order to bring food to the Chinese volunteers and the child was lost and found again. It was a large-scale story chorus with a style similar to cantata. The whole work gave prominence to the sincere emotion among people and toughness under such a war environment. The music had strong artistic appeal, it received good comments from the music circle at first. However, as the paternalism of Lü Ji in the Chinese Music Association affected Chinese music more and more frequently, his class perspective of music began to ferment in the musical circle of China. Lü Ji who claimed himself as a proletarian musician held that the proletarian music did not pay particular attention to human kindness. Under this circumstance, *Feihu Mountain Cantata* experienced reputation at first and unfair criticism from music politicians later on. The reason was that those music politicians thought the works paid too much attention to human sympathy or

⁹ A border river between China and North Korea in the North-east China.

¹⁰ Zhang Wengang (1919-1990), composer. Feihu Mountain is a placename in North Korea.

¹¹ Zhang Rui (1926-), composer, Erhu (a kind of Chinese folk string instruments) performer.

kindness and the story in the work seemed untrue. After that, the creative enthusiasm of some composers was struck and the creating momentum of excellent works was also snuffed out.

On the whole, the choral works created during the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea basically inherited the tradition in the period of the revolutionary wars. During the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea, although a lot of choral works reflecting the war came out, those works which had real creativity and artistic quality were not large in number. Even though there were some particular excellent works, they could not get due attention because of the music perspective of Lü Ji, therefore almost no works with strong vitality was handed down upon in this respect.

Original Choral Works Reflecting the History of the Communist Party

In 1953, the debate between He Lüting and Lü Ji about music perspectives became more and more intense. As a result, Lü Ji elevated the debate by taking advantage of his power to conflicts between the proletariat and the bourgeois, or between the materialism and the idealism so as to perish the sound that had different musical ideas. In a world where class perspective scattered here and there, everyone who was talking about the way to create works must conform to the perspective of Lü Ji. Thus, a group of large-scale choral works praising the early wartime of the Communist Party came into being.

In 1956, Qu Xixian¹², a rising star in the chorus circle of the new China, produced *Grand Chorus of Red Army Base Area* by taking Red Army as the background. The work is a cantata with a great influence at that time. It also embodied Lü Ji's concept of music. The work depicted the long time arduous struggle of the people who lived in Red Army base area in Jiangxi province from the beginning rebellion to the final liberation, in addition to the love and loyalty of the local people towards Red Army. The work consisted of seven movements, and was successfully treated through techniques like mixed chorus, children unison, male unison, etc. The emergence of this work started the creation of a large number of choral works that took Red Army as a subject. As a symbol of the specific era, this kind of works had great influence in the history of Chinese chorus, they were also well-received by audience.

¹² Qu Xixian (1919-2008), lady composer, graduated from the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai in 1948.

Shi Yuemeng composed the large-scale chorus *Long March Cantata* almost at the same time as *Grand Chorus of Red Army Base Area*.

The cantata *Hero Kulisenko* created by Li Qun¹³ was a special work among those similar works. It depicted the heroic spirit of Kulisenko, a pilot from the Soviet Union, who sacrificed his life in assisting Chinese people against Japanese during the Anti-Japanese War. Under the background that China and the Soviet Union maintained a good relation in the early years after the founding of the new China, this work, from the spirit of internationalism, praised the friendship between China and the Soviet Union during their honeymoon period.

Adapted Choral Works Based on Ethnic Tunes

Here, the adapted choral works mainly refer to those works that are based on the melodies of folksongs. This type of works appeared before 1949. After the Yan'an Rectification Movement, the Music Department of Yan'an Lu Xun Arts College asked students to go into the society. A large number of folksongs were collected or adapted. After the new China was founded, the newly-born government still attached great importance to collection, adaptation, inheritance and development of folksongs. It also encouraged professional musicians to enter the border areas and villages to collect folksongs so that they could adapt those works to a higher level. During this period, this kind of works made large achievement and far-reaching influence among Chinese choral works. Apart from a certain number of political choruses adapted from folksongs, only this kind of works broke through the restriction of Lü Ji's narrow political music perspective. Not only the scope of subject selection became wider but also technical treatment turned to be more flexible. They had a common characteristic that they were full of folk emotional appeal and flavor as well as human kindness. Many of them became precious items with distinct Chinese style among the treasure-house of Chinese chorus, they were not only widely welcomed by the chorus circle of China but also could be heard until now.

In the field of political chorus, He Lüting adapted the four-part mixed chorus *The East Is Red* in 1945 by refilling the text according to the melody of *Ride a White Horse*, a Shanbei folksong. After the People's Republic of China was founded, Li Huanzhi¹⁴ adapted it for the second time without changing the name. The adaptation was very

¹³ Li Qun (1925-2003), lady composer, the former editor of *Children's Music*.

¹⁴ See p. 28.

successful, in a certain period, *The East is Red* had become a classic chorus on various important occasions, especially in the Cultural Revolution after 1966, it became a hymn for the personal worship of Mao Zedong.

In 1952, conductor Wang Fangliang¹⁵ selected about 20 village girls who were good at singing Shanbei folksongs and founded a Shanbei folksong chorus in the Central Song & Dance Ensemble in order to meet the demand of development of choral music. They mainly performed some folk chorus that had been adapted from Shanbei folksongs such as *Soaring Through the Sky*, adapted by a kind of Shanxi local melody, *Sanshili Pu* (Courier Station of Thirty and Half Kilometer Villager), *Blue Flower* and *Elder Brother Is at Home From Red Army*. This brought about great influence on the music circle at that time. Among them, the a cappella *Sanshili Pu* was widely spread after performance by the ensemble, it was still a conventional item on the chorus stage nowadays.

Sanshili Pu was a small village in the countryside of Shanbei. A local girl Li Fengying fell in love deeply with a boy Qiu Shuangxi who lived in the neighboring village Sishili Pu (Fourty and Half Kilometer Village) before the July 7 Incident in 1937. After the Anti-Japanese war broke out, Qiu Shuangxi joined the Eighth Route Army led by the Communist Party with great enthusiasm. Sooner he went to front. When Qiu was leaving his home, Li Fengying saw him off in front of the cave-house¹⁶ in Sanshili Pu. She wrote letters to Qiu Shuangxi to encourage him to kill more enemies at front. In a time when marriage was totally arranged by parents, Li Fengying dared to break through the old restriction of marriage in Chinese countryside and pursued for her true love, her story was widely spread at that time. In 1953, touched by the story of Li Fengying, Wang Fangliang adapted the Shanbei folk song which had the same name into a cappella. The cappella paid particular attention to independence of each voice part, nature of melody, nationalization of harmony, it became successful soon after it was released.

Half-moon Rises was another successful churoos adapted by composer Cai Yuwen (1921-) and conductor Yang Jiaren jointly based on the Qinghai¹⁷ folksong. The China Youth Art Troupe was going to participate in the Festival of World Youth and Students for Peace and Friendship during the early days after the new China was founded. Because there was a lack of proper chorus, Cai Yuwen and Yang Jiaren adapted an excellent Qinghai folksong *Yilala*. The work was very successful in the

¹⁵ Wang Fangliang (1928-), conductor, composer.

¹⁶ Now people are living in Caves in Shanbei (the North Shanxi Province).

¹⁷ Qinghai, Qinghai Province in the Northwest China.

Festival. When it was staged in China, it was also welcomed by Chinese, and it is still sung today.

Guests from Afar, Please Stay was also a chorus as excellent as *The Half-Moon Rises* adapted in this period according to a folk song. Originally, it was a folk song of Sani ethnic group who lived in Yunnan province of China. The work expressed the joy of Sani people who welcomed all the guests to visit their hometown after their living standard was improved in the new China. Mai Ding¹⁸ adapted it into a mixed chorus that enjoyed great popularity and strong vitality. In 1957, this work won a gold medal of composition in the 6th World Youth Festival in Moscow. Later on, it was performed for many times to express the hospitality of Chinese people when there are foreign guests coming from afar.

Choral Works Adapted from Ancient Songs

During this period, Li Huanzhi adapted the ancient lute song *A Loyal Person* (汉节操) into a cantata *Su Wu*. It started a new field, that is “sing ancient songs in modern mode”.

The ancient Chinese lute song *A Loyal Person* tells a story about an envoy of the Han Dynasty¹⁹ named Su Wu. In 100 B.C., there was a short-lived ease between long-term adversaries Han and Hun. Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty accepted the sue for peace from Hun who lived in the north of China and commissioned Su Wu, the deputy commander of the imperial guards, to serve as envoy to Hun. Su was detained there but he did not surrender. After that he was exiled to the cold “North sea” (the area near the Lake Baikal in Siberia of Russia today) to herd sheep. When Su Wu was released after Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty died, he had already herded sheep for 19 years. He was a young guy when he left his country and his hair all became grey when he came back to his hometown.

The rich tonality changes and main melody in the original melody were preserved when Li Huanzhi adapted this lute song into a cantata. In addition, Li also adopted the Western composing techniques like harmony and counterpoint that made the work have a different tune color with the ancient lute song, because the accompaniment was completed by Chinese ethnic orchestra, it was also different from Western chorus. In addition, In July, 1957, *Su Wu* won the gold medal in the 6th World

¹⁸ Mai Ding (1927-), a famous composer.

¹⁹ The Han Dynasty, here means the West Han from 202 B.C. to 9 A.D.

Youth Festival.

3. Qu Xixian and Her Choral Works



Qu Xixian NO. 38

Qu Xixian (1919-2008) was a well-known female composer who rose after the Communist Party established the regime in the mainland. She was interested in music when she was a child. She began to play piano when she studied in the middle school. In 1940, she entered the Qiangmuguan National Conservatory of Music²⁰ and further studied piano from Jiang Dingxian. In 1943, she studied composition from a German teacher Feilankeer and Tan Xiaolin in the Department of Composition of the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai and graduated

in 1948.

Qu Xixian taught in the Music Department of National Beiping Art School after she graduated from the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai. She became a teacher of the Central Conservatory of Music after the Conservatory was founded in September, 1949. Strictly speaking, Qu Xixian should belong to the Academic School. She felt very excited and created *People All over the World of One Mind* after she witnessed the founding of the People's Republic of China. It was this work that made Qu Xixian well-known on the music stage of China. The work was composed of unison and four-part chorus. Although it possessed some sense of slogan from modern perspective, it conformed to the characteristics of that time and also conveyed the composer's true feeling of life at that time. Maybe because of this, it received reputation from the Salvation School after it was released. In the preface of the *Selection from Qu Xixian's Works*, Shen Yawei once said: "you can not hear any somberness or sigh in the whole song (*People All over the World of One Mind*), instead, it is full of fire-like enthusiasm and pride. The melody was fresh, the structure complete, the harmony and polyphony simple and clear."²¹ In 1951, the work won the second prize in the 3rd Festival of World Youth and Students for Peace and Friendship. In 1954, this work won the first prize in the National Masses Songs for its extensive influence.

²⁰ In Chongqing city, Sichuan Province.

²¹ Shen Yawei, *Preface in Qu Xixian Song Selection* (Shanghai Music Publishing House, 1989), 1.

The creating scope of Qu Xixian expanded continuously as her composing techniques became more and more mature. The adapted choral works with ethnic tune was another important field for her in the 1950s. In 1954, she adapted *Pastoral*, a popular song spread in Zhaowudameng area in the East Inner Mongolia of China into a four-part mixed chorus. Her adaptation made the work more charming. While retaining the tune and style of the original folksong, it made full use of harmony with horizontal line interweaving each other to depict perfectly the beauty of prairie in the East Inner Mongolia and the poetic artistic conception of harmony between human being and the

Pastoral

N0. 39

The musical score for 'Pastoral' is a four-part mixed chorus. It is written in B-flat major (one flat) and 4/4 time. The first system shows the vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) with lyrics '啊，' (A,). The second system shows the vocal parts with lyrics '翠 绿 的 草 地 上 哎' (Cui green of the grassland on). The music features horizontal line interweaving and dynamic markings like p (piano) and f (forte). The Alto part has a melodic line with a slur and a fermata. The Tenor part has a melodic line with a slur and a fermata. The Bass part has a melodic line with a slur and a fermata. The Soprano part has a melodic line with a slur and a fermata.

nature through music. During the early days after the founding of the P.R.China, the material life in China was extremely poor, and every-thing in the country needed to be rebuilt. The composer, who created the work in an optimistic attitude under such living condition, had already exceeded the limitation of time. The work gave people a fresh feeling after it came out. It also became one of the classic works of Chinese choirs from a modern perspective, the work reflected the state of mind of people in that particular time although it had exceeded time, so it was listed as one of the key works

in teaching materials of the national higher education of normal colleges which had influenced people generation after generation.

In 1956, the criticism initiated by the core figure of the Salvation School—Lü Ji against the Academic School with He Lüting as its representative, evolved into a political persecution. Finally, it aroused attention of the central government. From February to March, Chen Yi²², a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, and Zhou Yang²³, the Deputy Director of Propaganda Department of the Central Committee represented the central government to solve the contradiction between the two schools. After hearing their music views of both sides extensively, Chen Yi thought that the criticism on He Lüting was not normal in the party, it was caused by sectarian ideas which could easily bring about ideological chaos.

However, Chen Yi also thought that the music outlook of He Lüting had some elements of capitalist especially that he looked down upon Lü Ji in terms of academy. Chen Yi called that as the result of viewing things from bourgeois perspective. Compared to Chen Yi, the criticism against Lü Ji from Zhou Yang was much more profound. He said the development of Chinese music was much lagged behind other sectors even though it had some development after the new China was founded. Lü Ji should take responsibility for that. Zhou Yang also agreed with Chen Yi's opinion on the problem of He Lüting's music perspective. He also thought that He Lüting had some bourgeois ideas on some important problems. Although Lü Ji did not use words like "the bourgeois idealism" or "the counter-revolutionist hidden in the musical circle" to attack the persons who had a different views with him in terms of academy for certain period later on, we can see that Chen Yi and Zhou Yang did not solve the fundamental problem in the musical circle of China, and, Lü's class political music perspective had always influenced on Chinese music creation.

In 1956, Qu Xixian's *Grand Chorus of the Red Army Base Area* with Red Army period as its context was created under this political environment of music. Although this work came out from the abnormal historical background of Chinese choral music, it played a positive role in encouraging people in the early days after the new China was founded for its subject. It depicted the armed struggle of the local Red Army who lived in the base area during the Civil War. Thus, it opened up a new area in a narrow chorus creation scope.

²² Chen Yi (1901-1972), famous statesman, strategist, diplomat, poet, a Marshal of People's Republic of China.

²³ Zhou Yang (1908-1989), literary theorist, literary translator, literary activist.

On October 23, 1956, a large-scale anti-government demonstration broke out in Hungary, a socialist countries in Europe. The demonstration evolved into bloody conflict ultimately. This event shocked the Chinese government greatly. The creation environment in the musical circle of China had been relatively loose after the mediation of Chen Yi and Zhou Yang. However, after the Hungarian Incident, an Anti-rightist Movement led by the Chinese Music Association with Lü Ji as the representative was launched in the musical circle of China. The objective of the movement was to beat all people who had different views as “Rightist”, Chinese chorus was led to an ultra-left road which was full of class conflict since then.

In 1963, under the instruction of paying great attention to class conflict in the musical circle, Qu Xixian created a four-part mixed chorus *Proletarians of the World, Unite!* The song was full of power and grandeur as well as distinct characters. It won the second prize in the National Masses Songs in 1964 for its beautiful music emotional appeal and high level of music skills. However, it was a product under the political conflict, it was almost unimaginable to sing its text like “All imperialists and reactionaries are monsters and ghosts, how can they resist the overwhelming revolution wave? Even if the paper tiger makes threatening gestures like a beast of prey, expose it, wipe it out!”. So it is regret that it was not handed down.

In the 1950s and 1960s, Qu Xixian spent the most splendid phase of her chorus creating career, many influential works were created during this period. She could have created more excellent works. However, the absurd time and the ceaseless political movement had left endless regret on her creating road. This abnormal music creating environment did not come to an end until 1976. In 1977, she created the mixed chorus *Ussuri Boat Song* when she was nearly 60 years old. This work could be compared to her work *Pastoral*. *Ussuri Boat Song* was warmly welcomed after it was released.

On the whole, Qu Xixian’s choral works which were adapted or composed during the 1950s and 1960s had the largest influence. Among them, the non-political works enjoyed the strongest vitality. Some choral works depicted the class conflicts which closely kept up with the characteristics of that time, although they had high artistic level and great influence during that specific period, few of them were handed down, and they could only be useful for chorus researchers today.

4. Ma Geshun and His *The Anointed One*

Ma Geshun was born in Qian County of Shanxi Province in 1914. His parents were both Christians. His name came from a biblical figure “Gershom”, the eldest son of Moses (Geshun is the Chinese equivalent of Gershom). He accepted Christian beliefs when he was young. His enlightenment of music was completed in church. He studied music in the Music Department of Nanjing Central University from 1933 to 1937. After victory of the Anti-Japanese War, Ma Geshun went to study chorus conducting in the Westminster Choir Conservatory in America where he got his master degree. In 1950, he graduated from the American Southwest Conservatory of Music. After he came back to China, he taught in Shanghai Baptist Theological Seminary, the University of Shanghai, the East China Normal University and Shanghai Conservatory of Music. In addition, he also took charge of many positions continuously like director of the Chinese Musician Association, standing director of the Shanghai Music Association, artistic advisor of the Chinese Chorus Association, advisor of the Christian Hymn Committee of China Christian Council, artistic advisor of the Shanghai Chorus Association, the member of the International Chorus Society and member of the American Chorus Conductor Association. In February, 1981, he was invited by the American Chorus Conductor Association to make speeches and hold concerts in twenty-one universities. He was awarded “Honorary Academician of the Westminster Choir Conservatory”. Currently, he is a professor of Shanghai Conservatory of Music and takes the position of the 4th term director of the Chinese Music Association.

Most of present chorus conductors who work on the stage of Chinese music actively have got the tuition and direction from Ma Geshun. His influence even has spread to the countries in the Southeast Asia, America and Australia. In 1956, some Soviet experts who worked in China suggested him to compile a teaching material about chorus when a lot of chorus materials were badly needed. After analyses of Latin language, Slavic language and Chinese language and long term research on Chinese dramas, Ma Geshun found out a method which was suitable for Chinese people. He published the first work *Chorus*²⁴ in Chinese in 1963. So far, the *Chorus* has been republished for 5 times. It is the only monograph about chorus in China and is regarded *Bible* in the chorus circle of China.

²⁴ Ma Geshun, *Chorus*, Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House, 1963.

At beginning of the 1950s, he created a Christian oratorio *The Anointed One* under a relatively loose political environment. This work was completed under the influence of Handel's *Messiah*. The text was adopted from the scripture in *Bible*. At that time, "his motive was very simple: that was to enable Chinese people to sing some Christmas songs written by Chinese in Chinese on Christmas Day."²⁵ The creation of *The Anointed One* started from the spring of 1953 and lasted for totally one year. It was published by Chinese Baptist Press in October, 1954. On the Christmas Eve of the same year, the work premiered in a church. After that, it was widely spread across China.

This work is divided into two parts. The first part *Prophecy* consists of six songs, namely, *The Root of Jesse* (male solo), *How Beautiful are the Feet of Those Who Bring Good News* (a mixed chorus), *Let Your Voice be Loud in Song, O Heavens and be Glad, O Earth* (a baritone solo), *Emmanuel* (a soprano solo), *Certain Base* (a mixed chorus led by a tenor) and *For Us a Child is Born* (a mixed chorus). The second part *Accomplishments* also included six songs, namely, *My Soul Doth Magnify the Lord* (three-part female chorus), *God Loves the World* (a tenor solo), *Glory to God in the Highest* (a soprano recitation and mixed chorus), *The Spirit of the Lord is on Me* (a baritone solo), *Rejoice and Sing Praise* (duo combined tenor and baritone) and *To Him be the Glory* (a mixed chorus). Among them, *How Beautiful are the Feet of Those Who Bring Good News* and *My Soul Doth Magnify the Lord* were the two familiar works.

The Anointed One was a top work after Chinese composers began to create church music. However, when the "Anti-rightist Movement" was launched especially when the Cultural Revolution broke out, church activities were prohibited. Thus, this large-scale religious suite was criticized and prohibited as a "poisonous plant". However, the destiny of this work was totally different abroad. It was translated into many languages and widely sung in the Southeast Asia, America and Australia, it was a church music with the greatest influence and highest level of art created by a Chinese author across the world.

²⁵ Ma Geshun oral, finished by Xue Yanli, *Life As a Flame-like Burning—Ma Geshun Autobiography* (Shanghai Music Publishing House, 2003), 67.

5. Influence of the Hungarian Incident on Chinese Chorus

After the criticism on the problems in the Chinese music circle proposed by Chen Yi and Zhou Yang during the period from February to March, 1956, Mao Zedong, the top leader of China, came up with the guidelines called “let a hundred flowers bloom” in the field of art and “let a hundred schools of thought strive” in the field of academy in order to solve the problems in the art circle and academic world in that period of China. “Let a hundred flowers bloom” meant that all kinds of styles and schools of literature and art could develop and contend freely; “let a hundred schools of thought strive” meant that all kinds of academic thoughts, theories and schools could develop and contend freely. The proposition of the “double hundred” guidelines clarified the development direction of Chinese art and academy which completely conformed to the developing law of art and science. It would be definitely good for the healthy development of Chinese art and science if the guidelines were complied with. Thus, the year of 1956 was called “spring for Chinese intellectuals” in the history of the new China.

However, some time before, Matyas Rakosi, the premier of Hungarian government and the first secretary of the Socialist Workers Party (Magyar Dolgozók Pártja), had been copying the developing mode of the Soviet Union. He developed heavy industry one-sidedly in economy, promoted the personal worship in politics and destroyed the legal system of the country. All these actions had aroused the dissatisfaction of Hungarian people. On October 23, 1956, a demonstration was held in Budapest by several hundreds of thousands of university students and the masses. They required Matyas Rakosi to go off the stage and supported Imre Nagy to take the position of the premier. They also asked the government to adjust the relation between Hungary and the Soviet Union based on the principle of equality and independence. Soon after that, this movement evolved into a large-scale riot and bloodshed. The event was suppressed by the Soviet Union forces. Mao Zedong who was in the east of the world was greatly shocked by the Hungarian Incident. When the “double hundred” guidelines were first put forward, he received objection from many members of the Communist Party, their reason was that the guidelines were actually used to encourage the attack against the proletariat by the bourgeois ideas. They argued that only Marxism held the proletarian ideas among the one hundred schools while the rest 99 schools were all non-Marxism, if they were set free, the result would probably be that

the ideas of non-Marxism or even the bourgeois ideas would get better over Marxism. Before the Hungarian Incident, Mao Zedong advocated the “double hundred” guidelines at all costs and criticized the people who objected them. However, he kept fully alert after the Hungarian Incident and had to consider how to avoid the Hungarian Incident in China specially in the second half of 1956 when some unsteady phenomena happened in some places of China including the strike of a few workers and students in cities and the withdrawal of some members of the agricultural cooperative in rural areas. All these phenomena had increased the worry of Mao Zedong about the recurrence of the Hungarian Incident in China. Thus, Mao Zedong changed his mind. On the Congress of the Secretary of the Provincial and Municipal Committee held in January, 1957, Mao Zedong said that one advantage of the Hungarian Incident was that a few people who aroused the riot were lured to be exposed. He also said:

The guideline of ‘a hundred flowers bloom’ should be executed. Some people think that only fragrant flowers Can bloom while the poisonous plants can not. This only indicates that they have not grasped the essence of the guidelines. Generally speaking, counter-revolutionary expressions are certainly not allowed. However, if they appear in the form of revolution rather than counter-revolution, then we have to set them free so that they will be easier to be identified and contended.²⁶

We can indicate that the “double hundred” guidelines here were not quite the same as the meanings Mao initially proposed. If the original “double hundred” guidelines were a policy to encourage the development of art and academy, now it had become a strategy to identify revolution and counter-revolution. In May, 1957, a movement with an impressive influence that was used to beat back the furious attack of the bourgeois rightist was launched across China, that is called the famous Anti-rightist Movement in the modern history of China. The objective of Anti-rightist Movement was to wipe out different voices from political, ideological and organizational perspectives. Thus, “a hundred flowers bloom” was changed into “a special flower blooms” while “a hundred schools of thought strive” was changed into “only one school strives”. In the academic circle of China, the warm spring was thrown into long winter again.

The Anti-rightist Movement in the musical circle started from the article entitled *The Anti-rightist Struggle Should be Further Carried Out in the musical circle* which was published in *People's Music* in August. Before that, as Lü Ji was criticized by Chen Yi and Zhou Yang as well as restricted by the “double hundred” guidelines

²⁶ Mao Zedong, *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, V. (People's Publishing House, 1977), 339.

proposed by Mao Zedong, he had made a great concession on his extreme left standpoint on music theory. However, the nationwide Anti-rightist Movement carried a keynote which was the same as the viewpoint held by the Salvation School, Lü Ji, who had always held the leftist ideas in his bone, restored his former standpoint. From July, 1957, in order to cooperate with the political situation of the Anti-rightist, *People's Music*, an official publication of the Chinese Music Association led by Lü Ji, issued a group of articles to reveal the crimes committed by the Rightists in the musical circle. That had laid the basis to carry out the comprehensive Anti-rightist Movement and it was launched formally in the musical circle in August.

Three young students from Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Wang Lisan, Liu Shiren and Jiang Zuxin became the first group of victims of the Anti-rightist Movement in the musical circle. Before the Hungarian Incident, the three students wrote an article entitled *Comment on the Evaluation of Some Symphonic Works of Xian Xinghai* jointly under the encouragement of the “double hundred” guidelines proposed by Mao Zedong. The article was published in *People's Music*. At that time, Xian Xinghai, based on his status in Chinese music especially the influence of *Yellow River Cantata*, was regarded with Nie Er as pioneers of the Chinese proletarian music and the founder of socialist music. The three students pointed out the defects and limitations in Xian's symphony based on the principle of “let a hundred schools of thoughts strive”. Thus, they were the first to be beaten as a small rightist group which went against the literature and art route of the Communist Party. They were also deprived of their rights to study and participate in music creation in the future.

Following the three students, many gifted musicians were beaten as “rightists” who went against the Communist party and the society including Liu Xuean²⁷, one of the four disciples of Huang Zi and others. In the musical circle, the Anti-rightist Movement provided an opportunity for new criticism and revenge against the Academic School that was not successfully suppressed by the Salvation School. In 1958, in order to suppress some music that could not please the leftist school, popular music created by Li Jinhui in the earlier times was found out again and received severe criticism. They also criticized Huang Zi for another round. The scope of criticism became larger and larger as the movement went farther and farther. In February, 1959, Ma Sicong²⁸ who worked actively in the musical circle of China became another object to be criticized. The reason was that there were no progressive songs that praised

²⁷ See p. 54.

²⁸ See pp. 123-124.

the new China, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries in his performance. As the movement became more and more left, the voice of criticism became higher and higher and Chinese chorus-campain was shocked more and more greatly. After the Anti-rightist Movement, China began to experience the “Great Leap Forward Movement” and the “Struggle against Right-deviation Movement” which were more left. In May, 1966, the ultra-left “Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution” broke out, which has shocked the world. This movement lasted for 10 years and came to an end in October, 1976. During this period, China entered a crazy unreasoning phase, Chinese chorus was totally repudiated. The work of the Chinese Music Association and its branches in many provinces and cities was forced to stop. As president of the Chinese Music Association, Lü Ji, who often appeared in an image of “leftist” School and participated in the revolutions with the Communist Party for more than half of his life, was beaten also as an “anti-communist old timer” by people who were even more left than him. Lü Ji used to beat other musicians who had different views with him as “rightist”, but in the Cultural Revolution, he himself was imprisoned and sent to a hoggerly to raise pigs. Ma Sicong stowed away to Hong Kong with his wife in 1967 because he could not bear the inhuman persecution in the Cultural Revolution. Finally, he went to the United States and lived there for the rest of his life. He died in Philadelphia of America in 1987. He Lüting was determined as the figure to be criticized at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, he was put into prison later on for 5 years and set free through many activities with the help of his elder brother who was a former classmate of Mao Zedong. Qu Xixian was beaten as a traitor and spent six and a half years in jail. Ma Geshun was beaten as a rightist in 1957 and just was rehabilitated in February, 1979. During that period, he had suffered all kind of torments that were hard to bear. He could only go through that long period by the Christian belief in his mind. During 1966-1976, 11 famous professors of Shanghai Conservatory of Music were persecuted to death. Huang Zi died decades ago. However, the thunder of criticism on him became louder and louder. Finally, his tomb was excavated. Before the Cultural Revolution, although the Chinese Music Association led by Lü Ji was left leaning, some choral works which had a strong sense of revolution or slogan were also created occasionally, the hall of Chinese chorus became an area of ruins after Lü Ji was beaten down. At that time, beside a few songs like *The International* and *The East Is Red*, only some choral works which apotheosized Mao Zedong and eight revolutionary model operas which distorted the nature of human were left. In the decade of the Cultural Revolution, Chinese choral music arrived at the bottom in its history.

6. Chinese Choral Works after the Anti-rightist Movement

As a result of the Anti-rightist Movement, Chinese art and academy became monotonous and depressive in China, politics became centralized. A phenomenon came into being that only the words could be heard that were spoken by the member who had greater power musicians from the chorus circle at that time were involved into the inexplicable movement without knowing the reasons in the capricious political environment, no one could create new products when the political climate was not clear enough.

The first Five-Year Plan of the national construction(1953-1957) was successfully completed in China when the “rightists” were suppressed down. Encouraged by the achievements, a lot of leaders, including Mao Zedong and some other leaders in the central and local governments, produced complacency. They wanted to go faster while formulating the second Five-Year Plan. They suggested some slogans like “Work hard, work practically and work ingeniously, one day is equal to two decades” and “surpass U. K. within 10 years, catch up with U.S. in 15 years”. They also proposed the Great Leap Forward plan in the hope that China would enter the communist society in advance.

At that time, Chinese showed worship like a pious pilgrim for Mao Zedong and the Central Government. During the large-scale Great Leap Forward movement, all Chinese had enthusiasm like fire. All industries launched a climax of the Great Leap Forward across the country. At first, those musicians who were not beaten as rightist looked at the crazy people with fear. Later on, they participated in the movement cautiously because they were afraid of being criticized for being lagged behind the situation. They participated in the Great Leap Forward in music works actively under the mobilization of the Chinese Music Association. At that time, in order to show their working performance, musicians set off a large-scale music creation movement, countless music works emerged in a short period. Under the instruction of the idea of eager for quick success and instant benefit, these works were commonly produced in a rough and slipshod way, full of formulation and slogans without any artistic value.

Certainly, some relatively good choral works were still created during the Great Leap Forward period. Among them, *Ming Tombs Reservoir Cantata* created by He

Lüting, and *Huangpu River Cantata* by Ding Shande²⁹ were some representative works. The original idea of the composers was to reflect the positive side of the Great Leap Forward through these works. But the mania and turgescence brought by the Great Leap Forward seriously affected the influence and vitality of these works, they were unable to exceed the similar works created by the musicians like Xian Xinghai during the Anti-Japanese War in terms of artistic value.

The Great Leap Forward Movement started from 1958 and came to an end in 1960. It brought an unprecedented economic disaster in China because of people's neglect of scientific and social laws. From 1960, China underwent a three-year natural disaster successively. At the same time, the Soviet Union which had always provided China with great aids stopped their assistance because of the ideological differences between the two ruling parties. These made the Great Leap Forward lack of momentum in the later period and it had to come to an end in a hurry. After 1976 when the Cultural Revolution ended, the creating environment of music became a little loose, the creation of chorus was more active with a wider scope of subject selection, the artistic quality was relatively higher.

7. Choral Works Reflecting the National Construction

Jinhu Lake Cantata created by Zhang Dunzhi³⁰ had the highest artistic level among the works reflecting the national construction in this period. In terms of subject selection, the view angle of the Great Leap Forward was inherited, which gave us a similar impression of *Ming Tombs Reservoir Cantata*. In fact, it was hard to tell that Zhang Dunzhi was not influenced by He Lüting when he selected the subject. *Ming Tombs Reservoir Cantata* reflected that 400,000 people built a reservoir near the Ming Tombs in Beijing during the climax period of the Great Leap Forward Movement, while Jinhu Lake was located in the ethnic group areas in the Southwest China which was constructed by many ethnic groups. The five-movement *Jinhu Lake Cantata* was full of lyric and romantic temperament. The folk music of the local ethnic groups was adopted as the main tune. Polyphonic techniques were employed in order to form a dynamic effect of interaction of different voice parts.

²⁹ Ding Shande (1911-1995), a composer, pianist, studied in the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai in 1928, and the Paris Conservatory of Music in 1947.

³⁰ Zhang Dunzhi (1938-), a composer, graduated from the Conservatory of Music in Shanghai in 1962.

The Proletarian Revolutionary Songs with Spirit of Internationalism

Although China was still in status of extreme poverty, she exported a large amount of materials every year to aid “the proletarian revolutions all over the world”. A group of proletarian revolutionary choral works which thought about the world were created in order to keep up with the situation. *Proletarians of the World, Unite!* by Qu Xixian was a representative among them. Although the work reflected the creative talent and high level of artistic quality of the composer, it did not exert enough influence that it should have in the history of Chinese chorus because of its too close relation to the times. Yet as a symbol of the specific historical period, it can not be ignored.

Choral Works Based on the Poems of Mao Zedong

A major result of the Anti-rightist Movement was that some straight forward and upright people were beaten to the counter-revolutionary rightists, Mao Zedong, in the eyes of those who were not beaten down, became a god. Mao Zedong began to release poems on *Poetry* at the beginning of 1957. Several composers adapted some of Mao Zedong’s poems into chorus out of the worship and love towards Mao Zedong. Excellent works in the early time included the mixed chorus *The Long March* by Li Huanzhi based on a Mao’s eight-line poem with the same name and seven characters in each line. Zhu Jian’er³¹ adapted a five-movement chorus based on Mao Zedong’s five poems that were related to *The Long March* in the form of symphony and cantata. In 1964, Shen Yawei³² created *The People’s Liberation Army Occupied Nanjing*. Those were two prominent choral works adapted according to the poems of Mao Zedong.

Original Choral Works Reflecting the Revolution War

In April, 1964, Xiao Hua (1916-1985), director of the General Political Department of the Chinese Army was convalescing from hepatitis in Hangzhou. He recalled his comrades in Red Army who passed away during the extremely difficult Long March and could not sleep all night. After dozens of sleepless nights, he wrote 12

³¹ Zhu Jian’er (1922-), a composer, graduated from the Tchaikovsky Conservatory of Music in Moscow.

³² See p. 111.

poems which constituted the first draft of *The Long March Song Suite*. In 1965, in order to commemorate the 30th anniversary of arrival in Shanbei after the Long March that was completed by Red Army, four Chinese composers including Chen Geng³³, Sheng Mao³⁴, Tang He³⁵ and Yu Qiu³⁶ selected 10 movements from the work mentioned above and jointly completed the work *The Long March Song Suite, Red Army Fears not the Trials of the Long March*. The combination of lyricism and epic properties was the artistic characteristic of this suite of songs. In the chorus history of China, it was the most successful large-scale work which was related to the Long March. The work vividly expressed the 7,500 Km Long March of Red Army which had shocked the people both from China and abroad with precise rhythm, fresh lyric meaning, distinct images, strong folk style and music full of appeal. The ten movements included: ① *Farewell* (mixed chorus); ② *Breaking through the Blockade Line* (two-part chorus); ③ *Light of Zunyi Conference* (female duetto); ④ *Crossing through the Chishui River*³⁷ *Four Times* (male & female solo and male & female chorus); ⑤ *Crossing the Dadu River* (mixed chorus); ⑥ *Over the Snow-capped Mountain and Crossing the Vast Grassland* (tenor solo and chorus); ⑦ *Arriving in Wuqi County* (unison and two-part chorus); ⑧ *Celebrating the Victory* (male solo and chorus); ⑨ *Announcing Good News* (female solo and chorus); ⑩ *Joint of the Forces* (mixed chorus). These 10 movements connected 10 different battles and life scenes together one by one and vividly depicted a significant picture of the world-famous Long March. It also reflected the heroic character of Red Army and built up a splendid image of the people's army. It was large-scale vocal music suite of songs which had innovative pattern, unique style and strong ethnic flavor in addition to the combinations of epic properties and lyricism, ideological content and artistic quality.

8. Chinese Choral Works in the Cultural Revolution

The Anti-rightist Movement, the Great Leap Forward Movement and the following three consecutive years' natural disaster had brought great loss to the national economy of China. Although Mao Zedong was worshipped by the masses even to an extent of superstition, his ruling position was greatly challenged within the

³³ Chen Geng (1923-), a composer, military band conductor.

³⁴ Sheng Mao (1928-2007), a composer.

³⁵ See p. 137.

³⁶ Yu Qiu (1929-), studied accordion in Army, went to the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai for studying Composition in 1950.

³⁷ Chishui River, in Guizhou Province. In order to get rid of the enemy's encirclement, Red Army ever crossed through the Chishui River for 4 times.

party, as they had different views about the strategy of managing the country. In order to strengthen his position, Mao Zedong launched the unprecedented Cultural Revolution by taking advantage of the worship of him among other people. The so-called Cultural Revolution was actually a power usurping movement. The whole movement could be divided into three phases. The first phase was that Mao Zedong deprived of the rights of those who had different political view with him or who might threaten his position in order to strengthen his position. It was a comprehensive civil war in which the social order was extremely chaotic. The second phase was that Lin Biao³⁸, who was the successor designated by Mao himself, began to seize the power from Mao Zedong. The third phase was the developing phase of the Cultural Revolution which was controlled by Jiang Qing, Mao's wife. The enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee marked the beginning of the Cultural Revolution which was launched by Mao Zedong. On June 1, 1966, *People's Daily*, the newspaper of the Communist Party of China, released a piece of editorial in order to call on people to beat down all the capitalist authorities and intellectuals. After that, the situation became worse and worse. Presidents of universities like Peking University, Nanjing University and Shanghai Conservatory of Music were criticized in public. On July 28, Red Guards³⁹ of young students wrote a letter to Mao Zedong, declaring that "the revolt is reasonable". Mao Zedong expressed his agreement and the Cultural Revolution broke out.

The choral music during the Cultural Revolution can be divided into two categories. One was the chorus that served directly for the Cultural Revolution including god creation music and revolt music, another one was the chorus created in the "revolution model operas".



Children Singing Songs based on Mao's Quotations

N0. 40

³⁸ See p. 73.

³⁹ Red Guards were not military, but a special masses organizations.

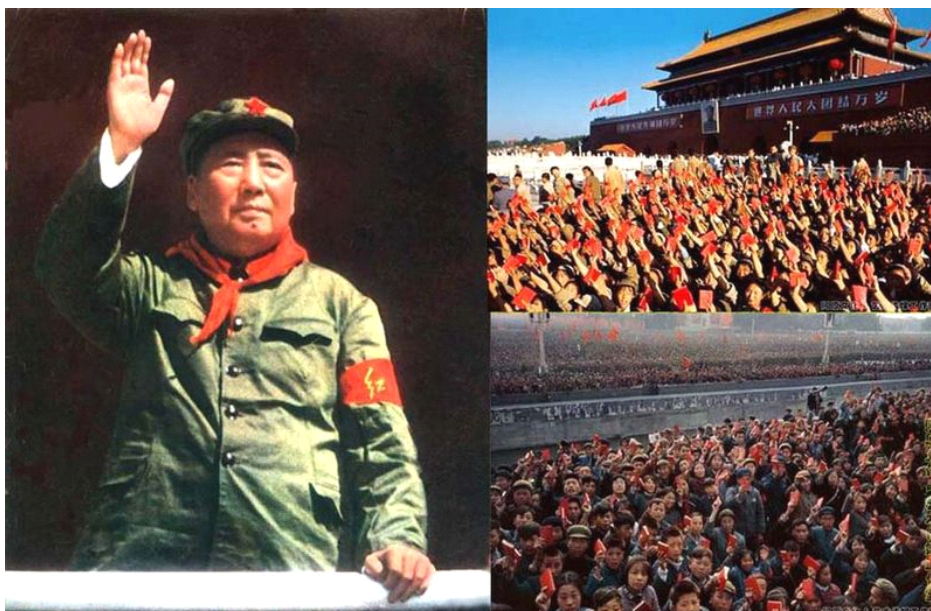
Songs Based on the Quotations from Chairman Mao

This was a unique singing phenomenon during the Cultural Revolution in China. It was a product of the “god creation movement”⁴⁰. Before the Cultural Revolution, Lin Biao advocated to compile *Quotations from Chairman Mao*, better known in the West *The Little Red Book* based on the words of Mao Zedong in order to build Mao Zedong into a living god in the hearts of Chinese people. Soon after the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution, some people adapted the *quotations of Mao Zedong* into chorus-work. They imitated Christianity, regarding Mao Zedong as an omnipotent god who controlled the whole society of China. The worshipping songs were heard on every kind of occasions. At that time, many quotations from Mao were those that instigated people to conduct class conflict. Since many excellent composers were beaten as the counter-revolutionists, the songs created by the god creation school were lack of aesthetic feeling with simple rhythms and rough melodies and without any artistic quality, needless to say its influence.

Revolt Songs of Red Guards

The Cultural Revolution started when Mao Zedong took advantage of some young students, i.e. Red Guards, to deal with other leaders within the party who had different opinions with him. Under the support of Mao Zedong, the members of Red Guards produced a large number of “Revolution rebel” songs. In a slogan of “the revolt is reasonable”, singing songs based on *Quotations From Chairman Mao*, Red Guards attacked government offices, public places and temples and private courtyard and apartments. Most of these songs adopted march style. They were not melodic at all in terms of musicality, the only requirements were “high”, “fast”, “hard” and “loud” which could make people horrified after listening to them. Compared to quotation songs, revolt songs were created in a more rough and slipshod way without any aesthetic feeling of music. They only left people with crazy terror and wanton trample on artistic laws of music.

⁴⁰ Liang Maochun, “On *Quotations Song Phenomenon*”, *Huang Zhong—Journal of Wuhan Conservatory of Music* 1 (2003), 5.



Chairman Mao and Red Guards

No. 41

Odes

This was a kind of chorus which was used to praise Mao Zedong and the Central Committee of Communist Party. The works included *Long Live Chairman Mao*, *Ode to the Red Sun* and *Chairman Mao Is the Red Sun in Our Heart*.

Like quotation and revolt songs, odes chorus works were also used to serve the Cultural Revolution. But different from the former two, the odes carried a certain artistic value. They could be counted as musical works while the former two had no artistic value at all and were not musical works, instead, “they were just absurd noise emitted in a ridiculous time”⁴¹.

Other Choral Works in the Cultural Revolution

In 1971, the legal successor Li Biao could not usurp the power successfully from Mao Zedong. He died in an aircraft accident on the territory of Mongolia. The social and political situation became a little better and the environment of art creation turned a little bit loose. At that time, some chorus works with relatively better artistic value emerged such as *Red Flowers on the Mountain*, *Committeeman Mao Comes to Sanwan County*, *Chairman Mao's Poems Cantata*, *On the Road of the Long March*. Since they had artistic quality to some extent and many sections had profound basis of music knowledge, which were totally different from the quotation and revolt songs,

⁴¹ Liang Maochun, “Music of the Period of *Cultural Revolution*—for the *Cultural Revolution* Ended Two Decades”, *Symphonic—Journal of Xi'an Conservatory of Music* 4 (1996), 7.

they are listed in the choral works created during the Cultural Revolution here. Among them, *Red Flowers on the Mountain* adopted the skills of folk music and was well-received despite its simple structure.

Choral Works in the “Revolution Model Operas”

The decade Cultural Revolution was also called the decade calamity in China. During that period, Chinese chorus was destroyed greatly. In retrospect of the Cultural Revolution, the most impressive thing in the literature and art circle was the eight model operas including: *The Red Lantern*, *Shajiabang*⁴², *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy*, *Harbor*, *Raid the White Tiger Regiment*, *The Red Detachment of Women*, *The White-haired Girl* and *Symphonic Shajiabang*. These 8 model operas were selected by the Cultural Revolution Group led by Mao Zedong’s wife—Jiang Qing to replace other forms of literature and art in order to brainwash people. They were also products under the ultra-left ideas wave. The major characteristic of the 8 model operas was “to give prominence to positive characters, to give prominence to heroic characters among positive characters and to give prominence to major heroes among heroic characters”⁴³. In terms of time and space, these model operas included the Civil War, the Anti-Japanese War, the Liberation War, the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea and Construction of the new China. Their contents involved class struggle, praising the heroes in the revolution, breaking through the traditional system, resisting imperialism and praising of Mao Zedong. Among them, *Symphonic Shajiabang* was the relatively eye-catching one. Created in 1965, this work was originally called *Symphonic Chorus Shajiabang* which included solo, female chorus, male chorus and mixed chorus. It was a meaningful exploration for the modern music on the creation of Opera in China. However, this work could not break through the “three prominence” during the extreme left ideas wave, the explorations could only get half result with twice effort.

⁴² Shajiabang, a small village of Jiangshu Province.

⁴³ Wang Yuhe, “Chinese Contemporary Choral Music (1946-1976)”, *Music Research* 2 (1989), 10.



The Red Detachment of Women

N0. 42

Church Music During the Cultural Revolution

As a result of the Cultural Revolution, all leaders in China were attacked except Mao Zedong himself. In the musical circle, the major leaders of the Chinese Music Association including Lü Ji were criticized and put into jail one by one. At the same time, choral music both from China and abroad were criticized as “poisonous plants”, even *Yellow River Cantata* created by Xian Xinghai and *Song of Guerrilla* created by He Lüting were criticized as products of the “black line of literature and art”. Christianity as a “foreign religion” from the West certainly could not escape the destiny of being criticized.

Throughout the history of Christianity in China, Christianity played an extremely important role in the origin and development of Chinese chorus, however, when foreign forces came to invade China and when the members of the Communist Party were taking effort to get the regime, many churches played an interfering and destroying role. As mentioned above, after the September 18 Incident when Japanese invaded the Northeast China, the Vatican stood by the side of Japanese and became the first one to admit the “Manchukuo” established by Japanese in China. When the Anti-Japanese War fully broke out in 1937, the Vatican representative to China released an order to Chinese Catholics that all the Chinese Catholics were supposed to maintain neutrality in the life-and-death war for Chinese people. After the Anti-Japanese War, Catholic and Protestant in China participated in the Civil War by supporting the Chiang Kai-shek government under the order from the Vatican and the governments of

America and England. At the end of 1949, the Vatican instructed the Chinese Catholics to resist the newly-born people's government after the Communist Party got the regime. All these facts had made the members of the Communist Party view Christianity as a tool of aggression of imperialism and its culture. The Communist Party also thought it necessary to cut off all the links with the imperial powers. In the second half of 1951, the Communist Party began to promote a strategy of "Three-self Principles" in Chinese Churches, namely, "Self-governance", "Self-support" and "Self-propagation" to remove foreign influences from China. During the Cultural Revolution, Christianity used to be viewed as "demon" by ultra-leftist school, Churches in China were closed and clergies were put into jail at that time. Hymns which had always been sung for a long time since 1840 was completely prohibited.

All in all, the Cultural Revolution was the decade when the leftist ideologies were replaced by the ultra-left ideas, it was also the decade when Chinese chorus regressed. During the decade, a large number of excellent music workers were beaten down, criticized or even prosecuted to death. The regular education of the country was destroyed so seriously that new music talents could not be cultivated. The environment of Chinese chorus became depressing although there were several pieces of chorus episodes in odes and model operas. The extremely withered situation of Chinese chorus resulted from this movement could not be concealed, its negative effects still could not be shaken off after many years after the Cultural Revolution came to an end.

V. Problems in Chinese Chorus after the Cultural Revolution and Its Current Situation

1. Several Problems of Chinese Chorus after the Cultural Revolution

Mao Zedong passed away on September 9, 1976. One month later, Jiang Qing and her “comrades” within the Communist party, namely, the “Gang of Four”¹ were all arrested. Thus, the decade Cultural Revolution came to an end. However, it did not mean the end of the left ideas. After Mao Zedong, China’s top leader Hua Guofeng² continued to insist on the “taking class struggle as the key link” and “continue the revolution under the proletarian dictatorship” that were the ideas of Mao Zedong. Hua Guofeng put forward a statement of “two whatever”, namely, “resolutely uphold whatever policy decisions by Chairman Mao, unswervingly follow whatever instructions by Chairman Mao”. Under the guidance of these leftist ideas, musicians could hardly come out of the nightmare of the Anti-rightist Movement and the Cultural Revolution. Chinese chorus took on a dreary look for quite a long time and few choral works with historic significance or artistic value came out.

Obviously, the phenomenon that all people’s voices were stifled in the chorus circle had something to do with Lü Ji who took control of the Chinese Music Association and stuck to a left-leaning music criticizing route. In October, 1976, Hua Guofeng established his top leading position in the Communist Party. After that, Lü Ji continued his music work again. In 1977, Lü Ji published a chorus *Ode to the Wise Chairman Hua* after he got freedom, *People’s Music* resumed publication at the same time. In Lü Ji’s opinion, he had to accept the idea of “two whatever” if he really thought Hua Guofeng was a wise leader. The Anti-rightist Movement was a decision made by Mao Zedong and Lü Ji also participated in it as a promoter. He knew he had a lot of mistakes during the movement. However, a common characteristic of the “leftist” school was refusing to admit his faults. Lü Ji affirmed this movement according to idea of “two whatevers” naturally in order to affirm himself. In regard to

¹ The Four Person are: Jiang Qing, Mao Zedong’s wife (1914-1991); Wang Hongwen (1935-1992), the Vice-Chairman of the Central Committee of Communist Party of China; Zhang Chunqiao (1917-2005), the vice Premier of the People’s Republic of China; Yao Weyuan (1931-2005), an officials in charge of ideology of the Communist Party of China.

² Hua Guofeng (1921-2008), Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China from October, 1976 to June, 1981.

the Cultural Revolution which was launched by Mao Zedong, Lü Ji became an opportunist in order to protect his benefit although he was also a sufferer of this movement. He was a critics towards the Cultural Revolution, but he did not criticize Mao Zedong who was the real decision maker, he made Mao Zedong's wife and her supporters in the party as his targets. In this way, he superficially did not go against the ideas of "two whatever" and could feel comfortable.

On June 3, 1978, the Chinese Music Association resumed its work formally. In the Standing Council Enlarged Meeting held on that day, Lü Ji took four points as the major work of the Chinese Music Association in the following days, namely, to expose and criticize the "Gang of Four", to study Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong's thoughts, to plunge into the thick of life, to enhance the cultural cultivation and dig into the music techniques. Among them, to expose and criticize the "Gang of Four" was actually the criticism of the Cultural Revolution. However, he did not mention the Anti-rightist Movement which was closely related to the Cultural Revolution as major work of the Chinese Music Association in the following days. In October, 1979, Lü Ji took over the position of president of the Chinese Music Association again and his left-leaning ideas still confined the development of Chinese music. That was an important reason why Chinese chorus did not restore for a long period after the Cultural Revolution.

The lack of successors was another reason why Chinese chorus could not restore for a long period after the Cultural Revolution. A lot of brilliant musicians in the chorus field were beaten down or killed during the Cultural Revolution, higher education colleges or universities were forced to close down and regular performing groups were cancelled. All of these had shaken the root of Chinese chorus fundamentally. Many music Conservatories and arts colleges only started to enroll students from the second half of 1979 although the Cultural Revolution ended in October, 1976. According to the educational system, students from Conservatories and art colleges should study for four years, "Thus, during the period from 1966 when the Cultural Revolution started to 1983 when the first group of music students graduated, there had been no new talents in the field of the China's Chorus for 17 years!"³

In July, 1977, Deng Xiaoping⁴, who used to be beaten down twice during the Cultural Revolution, restored his work under the support of the central powerful figures. After his comeback, Deng Xiaoping began the work of rehabilitation of the

³ Jü Qihong, *Music History of the New China: 1949-2000* (Hunan Arts Publishing House, 2002), 241.

⁴ Deng Xiaoping (1904-1997), the decision maker of the reform and opening up of China.

rightist members. Many rightist musicians returned to the music circle after the rehabilitation. However, twenty-one years had passed from 1957 when the Anti-rightist Movement started to 1978 when the rehabilitation of the “Right School” members ended. The young in the past was not young any more, even Wang Lisan⁵, who used to be a student of the rightists in 1957, was already nearly 50 years old and had passed the prime time for creation, their knowledge and age at that time both became old. In addition, the mind of people had not been liberated completely under the influence of the long-lasting left idea. Thus, it is not hard to understand why Chinese chorus produced nothing during that time.

After the Cultural Revolution, the left deviationist idea influenced not only the circle of Chinese chorus but also the other fields across the country. Deng Xiaoping and his supporters knew that best since they had experienced these all. On the famous Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee held by the Communist Party after the Cultural Revolution, “two whatever” was denied thoroughly. In addition, the meeting also strived to transfer the key work of the party from class struggle to social and economic construction. However, the leftist ideas had been deep-rooted in the party, which meant it was extremely hard to eradicate the ideas just for one time. In 1992, the reform policy of Deng Xiaoping was interfered by the leftist ideology, Deng began his southern inspection tour from January 18 to February 21, 1992. During the southern inspection, Deng Xiaoping made an important speech. The main spirit of the speech was that: “we should keep on alert against the right and more importantly guard against the left; those who did not support the reform should resign.”⁶ The uncompromising speech shocked the left members in Beijing thoroughly. At the same time, people’s mind was emancipated further. As a result, the steps of reform and opening as well as economic construction accelerated significantly, which brought China with a prosperous economic wave. The wave was so strong with its momentum that Chinese chorus which had not recovered from the restriction of the left idea yet was submerged. Here is a good example which can show the embarrassing situation of Chinese chorus. In 1985, Ma Geshun organized the Chamber Ensemble of Shanghai Musician Association in Shanghai. The members were all excellent talents from broadcasting stations, orchestras or music Conservatory. At the beginning, people cooperated with each other well in hope of restoring Chinese chorus by contributing their own strength. For a period, the ensemble performed a large number of works.

⁵ See p. 151.

⁶ Deng Xiaoping, *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* III. (People’s Publishing House, 1993), 381.

However, as the economic wave was coming, all the members of the ensemble were busy to earn extra money, the ensemble could hardly gather people again and disbanded at last.⁷

During the economic wave, not only the ensemble of Ma Geshun but also the famous Shanghai Orchestra (including chorus and symphonic orchestra) disbanded. Other professional troupes like the Chorus of the Central Opera and Dance Drama College, China Broadcasting Chorus and Central Political Department Chorus that were at the highest level in China could hardly organize regular activities in the economic wave.

Certainly, a most important reason was that the government did not attach adequate importance to chorus and did not give them financial and policy support. Chinese chorus appeared mainly in the form of the masses singing which only paid attention to political instigation instead of policy and financial support for professional choirs after the September 18 Incident in 1931. The weakness was exposed after the country entered into a complete economic construction period. Owing to the low income for chorus creation, many composers did not want to engage in creating chorus. Many high level chorus workers left their ensembles to seek other way out owing to the lack of rehearsal venue, rehearsal expenditure and support from government in addition to the lack of performance opportunities and lower income. All of these resulted in the lack of new works. Without new works, the performances could not attract audiences. Without audiences, how to raise the income? Under the circumstance, new works in the chorus field became fewer and fewer. Even though there was a new work, nobody was able to organize members to conduct the rehearsals. As a result, the chorus level became lower and lower, finally, it lost its deserved position and influence in the field of Chinese chorus.

2. The Developments of Chinese Chorus and Choral Works after the Cultural Revolution

After the Cultural Revolution, Chinese chorus was confronted with many difficulties. With the end of “Two whatever”, various thoughts of the society struck the chorus field of China. At the end of 1978, Christianity gained its acceptance and churches opened again. On the 3rd national members’ representative convention of the

⁷ Ma Geshun oral, finished by Xue Yanli, *Life As a Flame-like Burning—Ma Geshun Autobiography* (Shanghai Music Publishing House, 2003), 186.

Chinese Music Association at the end of 1979, Lü Ji, who had always taken the position as a leftist, did not criticize Xiao Youmei and Huang Zi, instead, he evaluated their contributions to the development of Chinese music objectively. Thus, the life and death struggle between the Salvation School and the Academic School stepped out the first Reconciling step. Li Jinhui was given an objective judgment in this meeting but his popular music wrote in the 1930s was still listed as “vulgar music” and “decadent music” politically and received criticism.

Nevertheless, the times had changed. Although popular music could not be accepted officially, it was smuggled in the form of cassette tape from Hong Kong and Taiwan and widely spread among common people. The young generation of that time had been tired of revolutionary music, they quickly accepted the new form of music. At the beginning, people could only listen to music in secret by spreading the cassette tapes under the severe investigation of the government. Later on, more and more smuggled cassette tapes were brought to China and suppression on popular music from the government gradually lost its effect. Simultaneously, some composers began to pay attention to popular music and they began to compose their own popular music soon after studying the music from Hong Kong and Taiwan. From that time on, popular music became an unstoppable torrent across China and spread very quickly in the whole music world.

The impact of popular music to the Chinese musical world invoked a fierce debate in the music circle. The leftist denounced the composers of popular music as “rogue composers” while the supporters of popular music no longer paid attention to their opponent opinion. When the debate could not come to unification, they directly joined in the promotion of popular music.

In the early years of 1980s, Shi Yuemeng, vice president of the Chinese Music Association with a wise mind, undertook the position of editor-in-chief of magazine *Song*. Under the leadership of Shi Yuemeng, the magazine *Song* and the Central People’s Broadcasting Station initiated a selection activity of “My Favorite Songs” across the country. Several millions of audiences participated in the campaign and fifteen popular songs created by composers from the mainland China were selected at last. This activity promoted the prosperity of popular music further. In addition, a large amount of composers were attracted to join the composing team of popular music.

The action of *Song* shocked Lü Ji who was president of the Chinese Music Association and a large group of musicians who objected to popular music as well. In order to reverse the development direction of music, the “Conservative School” in the

Chinese Music Association led by Lü Ji and the Ministry of Culture of the Central Government that also held a conservative view took some powerful administrative means jointly from the bottom to the top, they held a similar activity named “Award for the Best Masses Songs” which took the revolutionary as the criterion in order to go against Shi Yuemeng. After the professional evaluation, leaders selected twelve revolutionary songs to compete with the fifteen songs selected by magazine *Song* and other organizations. At last the fifteen songs were not prohibited under powerful administrative means, instead, they were spread more widely. The twelve revolutionary songs, however, were not spread at all among the masses except the propaganda through the media controlled by the Ministry of Culture.

This competition ended the situation that Lü Ji controlled the developing direction of Chinese music. Certainly, the situation that revolutionary songs occupied the music circle of China predominantly also came to an end. Although there were also several times of suppression on popular music launched by the “Leftists”, they all ended up with the victory of popular music. With the triumph of popular music, Li Jinhui who had been criticized for more than half a century was viewed as the pioneer of Chinese popular music at the beginning of the 20st century. From that time on, the music circle of China was emancipated from the restriction of the left idea thoroughly.

When popular music struck the depressive and monotonous music of China, Chinese chorus had some new development under the interaction of “left” revolutionary music and the new music.

The period from 1976 to 1982 was the unprecedentedly desolate period for Chinese chorus. Few choral works were created during this period. The works which had some influence were all created shortly after the Culture Revolution. One was *Premier Zhou, Where are You?* Created by Shi Guangnan⁸. At that time, the Cultural Revolution just ended and people were still missing Zhou Enlai, the first premier in China. Under this background, *Premier Zhou, Where are You?* Made a great influence after it was released. In 1978, Liu Dunnan⁹ created *Song from the Deep Forest* in order to praise the geologist Li Siguang who found oil in China. In the same year, He Lüting created *The 3rd Armed Insurrection in Shanghai* in order to commemorate Zhou Enlai. Young composer Zou Huiming composed *Composition for the Early Poems of Zhou Enlai (4 Songs)*, among the 4 songs, there were two small-scale choruses and two large-scale choruses. In terms of subject selection, they all kept the idea of eulogizing

⁸ Shi Guangnan (1940-1990), a composer.

⁹ Liu Dunnan (1940-), a Chinese-American composer.

the achievements of leaders of the Communist Party, the only difference was that those choruses did not only focus on Mao Zedong exclusively, instead, they also paid attention to other leaders, this should be viewed as a kind of emancipation of the minds of composers at that time.

In 1980, Qu Xixian composed *Please Call Me by My Nickname*, a chorus which reflected the deep love of overseas Chinese to their motherland. Although this work changed the praise of leaders to the praise of China, its idea became more advanced and the subject became more novel, compared to the former works.

Chinese chorus actually began to recover in 1982. In this year, promoted by Lü Ji, the first “Beijing Chorus Festival” was held jointly by the Chinese Music Association and the Ministry of Culture. This was the largest contribution of Lü Ji to the restoration of Chinese chorus when he was president for the last term. During the depression period of Chinese chorus, the “Beijing Chorus Festival” was undoubtedly like a thunder in spring for the dying Chinese choir movement. Around the second “Beijing Chorus Festival” held in 1986, a group of choral works with different styles and literary genres came out, which put Chinese chorus to a small climax. Some Choruses which had some influence during that period included:

Suite of Chorus *Nature and People in Yunnan* by Tian Feng

Tian Feng was a composer who was good at creating chorus during the Cultural Revolution period. *Composition for the Poems of Chairman Mao (5 Songs)* was his large-scale chorus with significant influence at that time. His creating enthusiasm was aroused by the first Beijing Chorus Festival which was held in 1982. In 1985, he created 5 choruses including *Fishing Girls in Erhai*¹⁰, *Sea, On the Way to the Market, Moleng*¹¹, *Funeral, Ballad of Husking Rice* and *Night of the Fire Festival* that were representative works of customs of five ethnic groups in Yunnan. They were collectively called *Nature and People in Yunnan*. The work was completed based on deep research and extensive collection of local folk music after the composer had penetrated into the deep of those ethnic groups in Yunnan for a long period. Each part of the chorus had its own style in addition to unique characteristics and the whole chorus combined folk music with the Western modern composing techniques together skillfully. It became a representative work with significant influence among similar

¹⁰ Erhai, a lake in Yunnan Province.

¹¹ Moleng, a Chinese Minority in Yunnan Province.

works in the 1980s. In 1986, the Ensemble of Yunnan Arts Conservatory performed this work successfully in the second Beijing Chorus Festival and stirred a big influence.

Li Huanzhi and his *Hu Jia Song*¹²

Li Huanzhi (1919-2000) was a famous composer, chorus conductor and musicologist in China. He was born in Hong Kong in 1919, and spent his childhood in Xiamen. His enlightenment of music was accomplished in a church-choir. He was a fruit ripened by the Western music. In 1936, Li Huanzhi entered the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai and studied harmony from Xiao Youmei. In addition, he played piano and studied chorus as selective courses. In 1938, he entered the Music Department of Yan'an Lu Xun Arts College and continued to study composition and conducting in senior class from Xian Xinghai after he finished all the courses. In the meantime, he taught in a school. He worked as leader of the Arts College for a long time after the People's Republic of China was founded. He replaced Lǔ Ji as president of the Chinese Music Association in 1985.

Li Huanzhi began to create songs from 1935 and vocal music creation was an important part of his music activities. Among his vocal works, chorus occupied a major part. He had an open-minded during creation of chorus. He could adapt folksongs into choral works or adapt Chinese ancient music materials into chorus by use of modern compositional techniques. Among his works adapted from folksongs, *The East Is Red* had the most significant influence. It was a chorus work with strong political property adapted from a Shanbei folk song. This work was sung across the whole country during the Cultural Revolution, while *Su Wu* was also an excellent work adapted according to Chinese ancient music. Li Huanzhi was also criticized during the Cultural Revolution. What's worse, he was deprived of the freedom of creation. He restored his work of adapting ancient music from the beginning of the 1980s.

Hu Jia Song was a large-scale choir suite adapted by Li Huanzhi according to the Chinese ancient lute melody named *Eighteen Songs on a Nomad Flute* in 1984. It is said that *Eighteen Songs on a Nomad Flute* was created by Cai Wenji, a talented poet and composer in the late Han Dynasty¹³. According to the record in *Han Book* (about History of the Han Dynasty), Cai Wenji was born in 177, the late Han Dynasty when

¹² Hu Jia is a wind instrument made by rolling reed leaves into the shape of oboe sheet or cone pipe with its head squeezed into reed, which enabled reed and pipe blend into a whole. It firstly originated from the Qin and Han Dynasty in China and was widely spread in the northern and Western region of China.

¹³ The late Han Dynasty, here refers to the East Han Dynasty from 25 to 220 A.D.

the society was in a chaos due to incapability of the government, the first the Yellow-Turban Army Uprising(黄巾军起义)¹⁴, the second the tangled warfare among the warlords, the third Hun frequent invasions to the Central China. In 196, Cai Yi, Cai Wenji's father was killed during Hun's invasion to the Han territory while she was also caught by Hun. Sooner she became the wife of King Zuoxian of Hun who admired Han culture in the central China very much. In 208, Cao Cao, a Chancellor of the Han, unified the north of China on the whole. He paid a heavy sum of money to redeem Cai Wenji in the name of his teacher Cai Yi, Cai Wenji's father. At that time, Cai Wenji had given birth to two children with King Zuoxian, and she was put in a dilemma. Finally, she chose to return to her homeland rather than living with her children. *Eighteen Songs on a Nomad Flute* was written after her return and mainly expressed the strong feeling of her love for her homeland and missing for her children.

Eighteen Songs on a Nomad Flute had totally 18 sections of the text, the whole melody combined the tune of Hu Jia and the tune of Guqin (ancient string instrument in China) together which expressed a dismal and sorrowful feeling. *Hu Jia Song* was a large-scale suite of vocal music with unusual temperament created by Li Huanzhi by selecting 9 sections from them and adopting method of modern polyphony based on the style of the original melody. It was a successful work created in a more mature method during the exploration of the artistic expression of Chinese ancient melody by using modern chorus since the "sing the ancient songs in modern method" was initiated by some composers in the 1950s, it became a competitive work in the new era of Chinese chorus.¹⁵

After that, Li adapted a Guqin song into a female chorus *Ballads of Four Seasons* and also created a male chorus *The King of Qin Breaks through the Battle Line* which was adapted according to a lute score. All his works had left different influence on the chorus field of China.

Other Choral Works after the 1980s

Cleaving the Coffin and *Life, Spring of the Universe* were two influential choral works during this period.

Cleaving the Coffin is an oratorio adapted by Qu XiaoSong¹⁶ based on the melody of his own dance opera *Underworld*. The dance opera was created by taking

¹⁴ The Yellow-turban Army, a Rebel Army from 184 to 192, all the soldiers of the Army wore yellow turban.

¹⁵ Jin Xuedong, "Li Huanzhi His Chorus Hu Jia Song", *Journal of Xinghai Conservatory of Music* 4 (1997), 32.

¹⁶ Qu XiaoSong (1952-), composer, teaching at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music.

the story of “Zhuangzi¹⁷ Tests His Wife”, an ancient Chinese story as its script. The composer adopted Sichuan dialect, music material and expression method of Sichuan opera in addition to simple and fluent tunes. All these made this work full of dramatic and legendary traits. The whole oratorio was composed of *The Funeral Scene*, *The Seduction Scene*, *Dramatic Change*, *Killing Wife*, *Desperate Cries*, *Dream Moaning* and *Release Souls from Purgatory to Heaven*. We can see from the above the composer’s successful endeavor in exploring national spirit and Chinese classic culture by means of the modern compositional techniques.

Life, Spring of the Universe is also an oratorio created all by Liu Nianxun¹⁸. In the work, Liu revealed a philosophical statement that people should strive for a bright future from the unlimited universe by using his limited life. He applied 4 movements to describe the circulation and repetition of the seasons and the deep philosophical meaning in the form of music.

Church music after the Cultural Revolution

After the Communist Party took control of the regime in the mainland China in 1949, Christian churches in China were transformed into “Three-self Churches” by the Communist Party, considering that many Christian churches had some relation with those of Europe and America and they had affected the liberation process led by the Communist Party to various extents. The establishment of “Three-self Churches” put an end to the situation that each sect of Christianity developed in its own way independently without any interaction. Those churches that held an inimical attitude towards the Communist Party had all been clamped down while those who agreed to cooperate with the Communist Party formed a nationwide church organization called the “Three-self Churches”. The “Three-self Churches” alleged the slogan of self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating to the outside world. As a matter of fact, it was supported thoroughly by the government. At that time, the “Three-self Churches” and the government had agreed on a private treaty saying that the church members could not preach outside churches while the government could not conduct the education of communism in churches, but churches had to undertake the responsibility to clear up the influence of “imperialism” on the new churches and conduct education of “support of socialism and patriotism” to church members inside

¹⁷ Zhuangzi (369-286 B.C.), famous thinker, philosopher, writer, a representative of the Taoist.

¹⁸ Liu Nianxun (1935-), composer.

churches.

At the beginning of the transformation of the “Three-self Churches”, the government showed a relatively merciful attitude towards churches and all praise and worship activities could be carried out regularly. The church choral *The Anointed One* by Ma Geshun was a product of this period. When the Cultural Revolution started, the “Three-self Churches” could not protect themselves. Their activities were forbidden even if they were patriotic. So, hymns were prohibited for ten years in China without any development.

The activities of churches were allowed to recover since 1978, and hymns gained some new development. In February, 1981, Chinese Christian Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee, China Christian Council decided to set up a work team of hymns in order to recompile hymnal. Thus, they began to seek texts and melodies across the country. From March, 1981 to September, 1989, 2256 hymns emerged and 56 of them were selected into *Hymns (New Editor)*.

The accomplishment of *Hymns (New Editor)* had greatly promoted the development of hymns in China. The attitude of the government towards churches became more and more tolerant as steps of the reform and opening in China accelerated gradually. With the development of the “Three-self Churches”, family churches also emerged, and more and more hymns were created by family churches. A lot of hymns created by family churches have been transmitted to other countries, which exerted great influence on Chinese churches across the world. When it comes to the 21st century, the creation of hymns has entered the most free and resplendent period since 1840.

3. Influence of the Economic Construction Wave on Chinese Chorus

In the 1980s, Chinese chorus recovered a little after having got rid of the restriction of the Cultural Revolution. Especially after the Beijing Chorus Festival, a small climax of choral creation was aroused for a period and a group of works with higher quality came out. However, with arrival of high tide of the national economic construction, the development of Chinese choral music has to face a great economic pressure. Since Deng Xiaoping’s southern speech in 1992, Chinese chorus has entered a difficult period of consolidation. When it comes to the 21st century, both the pattern and content of Chinese chorus still remained at the level of 1980s.

Having undergone the disturbance of the leftist idea for dozens of years and influence of economy wave which took place at the end of the last century, Chinese

chorus became weak and lack of vitality like a patient who did not see doctor even though he had been ill for a long time. Although the chorus society of China has organized nation-wide and world-wide chorus festivals one after another, the decadent and stagnant trend of Chinese chorus is not converted. When we reexamine the choral music in China today, we are surprised to find that there are so many problems to be solved, the major problems will be discussed as follows:

Lack of New Choral Works

The rapid development of Chinese economy since the 1990s benefited from the internal economic reform and the growing integration with the world economy. Under this background, some chorus troupes of China also actively communicated with the world chorus. However,

Few Chinese choral works can leave an impression to the international chorus circle. Take the international chorus competition as an example. All the works performed by Chinese ensembles that have won some awards were all foreign works. Apart from some revolutionary choral works, or some works which had strong complex of communism, or some simple folk choruses and ancient songs which were sung in a modern way, there are few modern choral works that conformed to the international music trend, fine works are even fewer¹⁹.

Two reasons which can explain the situation are as following: One is lack of the composers who not only have profound understanding of life but also have a good command of extensive modern music, another is influenced by the economy wave, some capable composers are unwilling to engage in the field of chorus because of the low reward of choral works.

Low Level of Chorus Troupes

For various reasons, the number of excellent Chinese ensembles have become smaller and smaller. Whenever there is a chorus mission, related departments will organize a group of members temporarily and give them an intensive training for a period so as to fulfill the task. Although these ensembles have participated in more and more chorus competitions and the ranks of competitions are getting higher and higher,

¹⁹ Du Yu, "The Embarrassment of Professional Choruses", *People's Court News*, August 1, 2002.

their levels of these ensembles basically has not improved significantly through these competitions. As to some professional chorus troupes like Chorus of the Central Opera and Dance Drama College, China Broadcasting Chorus and Central Political Department Chorus seldom participated in similar activities because of lack of financial support and restrictions of rehearsal venue. What's more, some ensembles are forced to disband because they meet difficulty in supporting themselves. The fact that the amateurs take place of the professionals is the current situation of Chinese chorus²⁰.

Backwardness of Music Education

The backwardness and low level of Chinese chorus has its source in the backward standards of vocal music education and music educational system. Currently, students majoring in vocal music are still trained by using numbered musical notation in many areas of China. Most students in colleges or universities have not received any strict training before. Here is an example, in March, 1991, Wang Xilin²¹ was going to arrange a 25 minute chorus "Soprano and Symphonic Orchestra" for his individual concert. He invited a famous soprano to undertake the solo part in chorus half a year ago. The melody has chromaticism, the song had its tonality, the soprano was independent from the symphonic orchestra, no instruments were applied to accompany the voice parts. Six months later when she came to the rehearsal venue to perform with the orchestra, the soprano found that she could not find the tune at all. She had to turn to some instrumental players for help²². A drop of water can reflect a whole world. A soprano who stands for vocal music level of China was just so, we can imagine the levels of other unknown musicians.

Crisis Caused by Foreign Languages

Chinese chorus originated from Christian hymns, but people only sang Chinese chorus or some chorus that had been translated into Chinese. For a quite long period, Chinese ensembles were unable to sing any works in foreign languages. Nowadays, almost all Chinese ensembles begin to rehearsal original works, however, the rehearsal of one foreign work is still extremely difficult because of the weak basic knowledge of

²⁰ Lu Yue, "Overview of the Chinese Choral Music in the 20th Century", *Playwright* 4 (2005), 138.

²¹ Wang Xilin (1936-), a famous composer.

²² Wang Xilin, "Worries about Chinese Choral Music", *Journal of Nanjing Institute of the Arts (music and performing version)* 3 (2000), 22.

foreign languages. At present, many music Conservatories have begun to pay attention to cultivation of foreign language ability of students. However, the music level of students may be neglected while more attention is paid to language proficiency. For example, in the graduate recruitment of universities, the destiny of a student always depends on his foreign language proficiency rather than his professional knowledge of music. As it was, the contradiction between foreign language and music can not be ignored, because it will trouble the improvement of the level of Chinese chorus in a quite long period in the future.

Few Successors of Chorus Conductors

The aging chorus conductors in China and the lack of successors have become two important factors that restricts the improvement of the level of Chinese chorus. In China, little attention is paid to the cultivation of chorus conductors, and few students would like to apply for the major in music Conservatories. Currently, most of the chorus conductors who are active in the field of chorus grew up during the 1950s and 1960s, few are from new generation. In the national youth choir competition held by CCTV in 2008, the Art Conservatory of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, the champion of the competition, could do nothing but invited a retired teacher as their conductor, because there was no qualified and young chorus conductor. As for other ensembles, the position of conductor was usually undertaken by some composers mostly. The lack of successors of chorus conductors is an important reason why choral art of China is in a depressing situation and vicious circle.

Low Appreciation Taste of the Audiences

The mainstream chorus works were controlled by the Salvation School gradually after the September 18 Incident in 1931. Under the guidance of the salvation musicians, the Chinese audiences had got used to listening to the masses chorus. With start and deeper implementation of reform and opening, Chinese chorus began to connect with world chorus, but the appreciation level of most audiences still remains at the stage of the masses chorus. People can hardly understand and accept foreign works. The most typical example is that during the first youth chorus competition held by CCTV in 2008, a letter from audiences suggested that participants should sing more Chinese songs instead of foreign ones after several foreign songs were sung on the stage. This

proposal immediately got the support from the present audiences. Then a chorus named *Sky Road* adapted from a popular song and performed by the Military Band of Armed Police was quickly arranged. The low-level chorus resulted in the audiences with low-level of appreciation. The audience with low-level appreciation will in turn influence the improvement of chorus level of chorus. Thus, Chinese chorus sinks into a strange circle.

Ingrained habits die hard. The disadvantages of Chinese chorus not only resulted from the influence of genovariation in musicians of the early years but also ascribed to the acquired environment defects. Fortunately, Chinese musicians did not abandon themselves to despair, instead, they have been working hard against the destiny silently. They have always been trying their best to transmit the important of Chorus to Chinese society. They held the first “Beijing Chorus Festival” in 1982 and founded the China International Chorus Festival ten years later. In March, 2008, China Central Television held the “National Television Chorus Competition of Young Singers”. Each activity has made huge influence on choral music step forward in China. The “National Television Chorus Competition of Young Singers” in particular, it has invoked chorus hot in China and also exposed many problems in the field of Chinese Chorus. Although the road may be long and tough, with the problems being solved gradually, Chinese chorus will appear on the world stage with a brand-new image.

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APPENDIX

I. Some Chinese Folk Musical Instruments and Yangge

Mentioned in the Dissertation

See P. 50.

II. List of the Major Musicians in the Chinese Choir History

1. **Chen Hong** (1907 -?), composer, music educator, musicologist, a professor of the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai, 1926-1930 studied in France. See p. 53.
2. **Chen Sizhi** (1911-1992), Christian composer. See p. 121.
3. **Chen Tianhe** (1911-1955), composer, studied in the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai from 1930. See p. 117.
4. **Ding Shande** (1911-1995), a composer, pianist, studied in the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai in 1928, and the Paris Conservatory of Music in 1947. See p. 154.
5. **Fan Zuyin** (1940-), musician, editor-in-Chief of the magazine *China Music*, President of Music Association of Chinese Ethnic Groups. See p. 46.
6. **Feng Yuxiang** (1882-1948), military strategist, patriotic generals, prominent democrats. See p. 18.
7. **Gong Mu** (1910-1998), poet, educator. See p. 113.
8. **Guang Weiran** (1913-2002), famous modern poet, literary critic. See p. 68.
9. **He Lüting** (1903-1999), famous musician and educator in China. See pp. 82-87.
10. **Huang Zi** (1904-1938), one of the most important composers in the National Music School in Shanghai and in the Chinese Choir History. See pp. 35-37.
11. **Lao Zhicheng** (1910-), pianist, composer, educator. See p. 116.
12. **Li Huanzhi** (1919-2000), composer, conductor, music theorist, studied in the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai from 1937. See p. 28, pp. 170-171.
13. **Li Jinhui** (1891-1967), the father of Chinese popular music. See p. 58.
14. **Li Shutong** (1880-1942), a famous musician in the period of the School Songs, the first Chinese secular chorus in China was created by him. See pp. 20-22.
15. **Li Weining**, birthday and the date of death unknown, composer, pianist. See p. 28.

16. **Liu Xuean** (1905-1985), composer, music educator, studied in the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai from 1930. See p. 54.
17. **Lü Ji** (1909-2002), composer, the most important leader of the Chinese Musicians Association. See pp. 90-93.
18. **Jiang Dingxian** (1912-2000), composer, music educator. See p. 96.
19. **Jiang Wenye** (1910-1983). See pp. 119-121.
20. **Ma Geshun** (1914-), conductor, advisor of the Chinese Christian Vocal Committee. See pp. 147-148.
21. **Ma Ke** (1918-1976), See pp. 95-96.
22. **Ma Sicong** (1912-1987), violinist, composer, music educator, the first president of the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. See pp. 122-124.
23. **Nie Er** (1912-1935), musician, the composer of the national anthem of the People's Republic of China. See pp. 101-102.
24. **Qian Renkang** (1914-), musicologist, composer. See p. 13.
25. **Qu Xixian** (1919-2008), famous female composer. See pp. 143-146.
26. **Sha Mei** (1909-1993), composer, music educator. See p. 54.
27. **Shen Xingong** (1870-1947), the father of the School Songs in China. See pp. 13-14.
28. **Shen Yawei** (1920-), army composer. See p. 111.
29. **Shi Yuemeng** (1915-2008), composer, conductor, the third and the fourth Vice-Chairman of Chinese Musicians Association. See p. 114.
30. **Tan Xiaolin** (1911-1948), composer. See pp. 116-117.
31. **Tang He** (1922-), composer, former executive director of the Chinese Musicians Association. See p. 137.
32. **Tian Feng**, composer. See p. 169.
33. **Vladimir Shushlin** (1896-1978), Russian, vocal music educator. See p. 28.
34. **Wei Hanzhang** (1906-1993), famous lyrics writer, Huang Zi's partner. See p. 39.
35. **Wu Bochao** (1903-1949), composer, pianist conductor and music educator. See p. 28.
36. **Xia Zhiqiu** (1912-1993), trumpet player, music educator. See pp. 67-70.
37. **Xian Xinghai** (1905-1945), composer, pianist, his *Yellow River Cantata* is the most well-known work in China. See pp. 70-73.

38. **Xiang Yu** (1912-1968), composer, studied in the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai from 1932 to 1937. See p.114.
39. **Xiao Youmei** (1884-1940), who founded the first music education institute —the National Music School in Shanghai, China. See pp. 25-29.
40. **Zheng Zhisheng** (1903-1941), composer, conductor, studied composition in Lyon Conservatory of Music from 1928 to 1932. See p. 116.
41. **Zhao Meibo** (1907-), vocalist, music educator, graduated from the Royal Conservatory of Music in Brussels, Belgium, returned to China in 1936. See p. 100.
42. **Zhao Yuanren** (1892-1982), composer, *Charm of the Sea* was his representative. See pp. 29-35.
43. **Zheng Lücheng** (1914-1976), army composer, who wrote the *Warsong of the People's Liberation Army*. See pp. 87-88.
44. **Zhou Shu'an** (1894-1974), music educator, the first female composer and chorus conductor in China. See pp. 63-66.

III. List of the Major Chorus Works in the Chinese Choir History

1. ***Spring Outing***, No. 9, composed by Li Shutong. See p. 24.
2. ***Charm of the Sea***, No.12, composed by Zhao Yuanren. See. P. 33.
3. ***A Fairy Mountain in the Ocean of a Never-never Land***, No. 14, composed by Huang Zi. See p. 41.
4. ***Resisting the Enemy***, No. 15, composed by Huang Zi. See p. 60.
5. ***The Flags are Fluttering***, No.16, composed by Huang Zi. See p. 62.
6. ***800 Heroes Song***, NO. 18, composed by Xia Zhiqiu. See p. 69.
7. ***Yellow River Chantey***, No. 21, composed by Xian Xinghai . See pp. 77-78.
8. ***Roar! The Yellow River***, No. 22, composed by Xian Xinghai . See p. 81.
9. ***Song of Guerrilla***, No. 25, composed by He Lüting. See p. 86.
10. ***The Eighth Route Army Cantata***, composed by Zheng Lücheng. See p. 88.
11. ***Nirvana of the Phoenix***, composed by Lü Ji. See pp. 93-95.
12. ***Because of Motherland***, composed by Jiang Dingxian. See p. 97.
13. ***Victory Rush***, No. 30, composed by Shen Yawei. See pp. 112.
14. ***Red All over the River***, No. 31, composed by Zheng Zhisheng. See p. 115.
15. ***Song of Righteousness***, No. 33, composed by Tan Xiaolin. See p. 118.
16. ***Tyrant of the East***, No. 35, composed by Ma Sicong. See p. 124.
17. ***Motherland***, No. 36, composed by Ma Sicong. See p. 126.
18. ***Crowded Purchase Cantata***, No. 37, composed by Lu Huabai. See p. 127.
19. ***Pastoral***, No. 39, composed by Qu Xixian. See p. 144.
20. ***The Anointed One***, composed by Ma Geshun. See p. 148
21. ***The Long March Song Suite***, composed by Chen Geng, Sheng Mao, Tang He and Yu Qiu. See p. 156.
22. ***Su Wu*** , composed by Li Huanzhi. See p. 142.
23. ***Nature and People in Yunnan***, composed by Tian Feng. See p. 169.
24. ***Hu Jia Song***, composed by Li Huanzhi. See p. 170-171.