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CHAPTER EIGHT

REFORMS IN EDUCATION AND THE BEGINNINGS OF SCHOOL MUSIC IN CHINESE SCHOOLS

As demonstrated in the last chapter, the last years of the Qing dynasty (1895-1911) witnessed an increasing number of reform-minded Chinese recognising the importance of educational reform in China’s search for wealth and power and consequently becoming vigorously engaged in the promotion of new schools. In the process of promoting new learning and establishing modern schools, they also became involved in the promotion of various types of Western music. Music in the new school curricula, for pedagogical purposes, became strongly characteristic of Chinese musical experience at the turn of the twentieth century. Men such as Zhong Tianwei, Lin Qi, Yuan Shikai, Zhang Zhidong, Yan Xiu, and others included music in their educational endeavours not because they were attracted by the aesthetic appeal of music but because it was an integral part of a Japan-derived reform agenda.

The early introduction of music courses in modern Chinese schools can be divided into two periods. The first started with Zhong Tianwei’s initiative in 1896 and extended until the new Board of Education began to create a national educational system for China in 1904. The first period was marked by private initiative and control. During that time the private domain included constitutional reformers, radical Chinese students in Japan, members of the ruling class and other elites who encouraged the use of music in order to achieve their respective goals. The second period began with the new national educational system and extended until 1912 when Cai Yuanpei (1868-1940), leading the way in emphasising the aesthetic and expressive elements in Western music, introduced
the concept of aesthetic education and assigned important social functions to music and music educators in China. This period saw initiatives to introduce music in the school curriculum being gradually assumed by the Ministry of Education. The rationale for the government to take on this proactive role was twofold. On the one hand, court officials held the Confucian attitude that music was an embodiment of civilised refinement. On the other, inspired by the Japanese example, they were convinced that music education afforded intellectual, physical and moral advantages to children and as such was conducive to the cultivation of “talent” for the government. Although in some cases the aims of the government and private groups conflicted and overlapped, government and private initiatives greatly facilitated the spread of Western music in China.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine how changes in education, the premier arena of reform, paved the way for the introduction of Western music into China. It will assess the roles played by constitutional reformers, progressive officials and other elites in facilitating the inception of music teaching in modern Chinese schools.

**Musical Instruction in Chinese Schools Before 1904**

The close connection between the beginning of school music and China’s educational reform movement can be seen before reform started. There were twenty-five Chinese run modern schools prior to the Sino-Japanese War in 1895,¹ but none of them seems to have had any provision for music. This is not surprising because these schools, established in the wake of the Self-Strengthening Movement of the 1860s, were

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¹ Sang Bing 桑兵, *Wan Qing xuetang xuesheng yu shehui bianqian* 晚清学堂學生與社會變遷 (Modern School Students and Social Change in the Late Qing Period) (Shanghai: Xuelin chubanshe, 1995), p. 38.
“essentially training schools designed to produce graduates who would serve the
government mainly in the military or diplomatic spheres.”² The rationale behind these
schools was not to provide the masses with educational opportunities but to recruit
“talent” for the government.³ Only when they realised that the Self-Strengthening
Movement was inadequate to save China and that Western studies should be included in
all Chinese education did Chinese reformers began to take notice of the importance of
music education.

The earliest modern Chinese school to include music as part of its school activity
was the Third Level Primary School (Sandeng Gongxue 三等公学) established in
Shanghai in 1896 by Zhong Tianwei 鍾天緯 (1840-1900), a renowned translator and
educator.⁴ In the School Regulations, it is stipulated:

After finishing school each day, students should be required to take part in physical
exercises. They should either take a walk of several hundred steps in the school
campus, or play some ball games. The school shall also select some simple and easy
to understand songs to teach them so that their minds are cultivated and spirits
invigorated.⁵

Although music was used as a part of daily exercises in Zhong’s school, it was not
considered a branch of instruction. Rather than being derived from Western influence,
one may argue that Zhong’s pedagogical philosophy was more analogous to that of the
Ming philosopher Wang Yangming. Wang argued that children’s free and fun-loving
nature could be better accommodated if they were taught a curriculum that included

² Bailey, Reform the People, p. 17.
³ Bailey, p. 18.
⁴ Wu Yongyi, YYJY, p. 399. A native of Songjiang, Jiangsu province, Zhong Tianwei (style, Hesheng 鶴笙) studied English at the translation department of the Jiangnan Arsenal. In collaboration with John Fryer and other foreigners he rendered many scientific books into Chinese. He was one of Li Fengbao’s 李風苞 entourage when the latter was appointed Chinese minister to Germany in the early 1880s. He taught at the Self-Strengthening School (Ziqiang xuetang) in Hubei and was one time adviser to Sheng Xuanhai.
⁵ Cited in Wang Pu, “Qingmo minchu yuege ke zhi xingqi queli jingguo,” p. 64.
singing and game playing.\(^6\) Yet by including music as part of his school activity at a time when China was about to be swept by reformist fervour, Zhong Tianwei highlighted the usefulness of music in modern education and allocated music a definite place in the modernised educational system. Moreover, Zhong’s action indicated that music was no longer one of the leisurely pastimes of the accomplished literatus, nor a trivial pursuit of the idler, but a pedagogical means to a useful goal.

With the launching of the Reform Movement in 1898, music began to assume a more important role in the schools sponsored by reform-minded officials. This can be seen in the case of the Private School for Cultivating Moral Rectitude (Yangzheng Shushu 养正書塾) in Hangzhou. Founded in 1899 by the Hangzhou Prefect (zhifu 知府) Lin Qi 林啓 (1839-1900), a Hanlin scholar and a reformer of some consequence, the school offered a curriculum with both Chinese and Western content at middle-school level. Rather than being an extracurricular activity, music and callisthenics were introduced as part of the study curriculum to augment such formal subjects as the Chinese Classics, ethics, mathematics, history, geography, English and science-oriented subjects.\(^7\)

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\(^7\) Sun Jinan, *JYJN*, p. 9.
The first new-style Chinese school to include music in the curriculum was the Shimin School (Shimin Xuetang 時敏學堂) in Guangzhou. The school was founded in the spring of 1898 and was renowned for its modern curriculum. The future founder and President of the National Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Xiao Youmei was a student of the school as a teenager before he went to Japan in 1901.  

The first Chinese-run school to teach instrumental music was the girls’ school established by Jing Yuanshan 經元善, the chief of the Shanghai Telegraph Bureau. Jingzheng Girls’ School (Jingzheng Nüshu 經正女塾), also known as Zhongguo nüxuetang 中國女學堂, was founded in Shanghai in May 1898. Music (qinxue 琴學), meaning the study of Western keyboard instruments, was listed as one of the subjects under Western studies.  

The Jingzheng Girls’ School was unique for it was not a purely Chinese enterprise. It was both a product of Sino-Western educational collaboration and also an embodiment of the 1898 reformist ideals. It began in the fall of 1897, with a group of reform-minded individuals in Shanghai organising a steering committee for establishing the first Chinese girls’ school. Besides Jing Yuanshan, Zheng Guanying, Kang Guangren, and Liang Qichao, personnel involved in this project were Chen Jitong, a veteran diplomat; his French wife; his younger brother, Chen Shoupeng; and Chen Shoupeng’s accomplished wife, Xue Shaohui, all of whom were well acquainted with Western ideas. Some of the

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9 Sun Jinan, JYJN, p. 8. There seems to be a discrepancy concerning the date of the school’s founding. Sun Shiyue 孫石月 writes that the school officially opened in June. See Zhongguo jindai nüzi liuxueshi, Zhongguo jindai nüzi liuxueshi 中國近代女子留學史 (History of Chinese Women Students Overseas) (Beijing: Zhongguo heping chubanshe, 1995), p. 56.
10 Sun Jinan, JYJN, p. 8; Wu Yongyi, YYJY, p. 129.
11 Nanxiu Qian, “Revitalizing the Xianyuan (Worthy Ladies) Tradition: Women in the 1898 Reforms”, Modern China, Vol. 29, No. 4, pp. 402-3. Margaret Burton has translated the prospectus of the school and
leading reformers and intellectuals of the time such as Kang Youwei, Tan Sitong, Wang Kangnian, Wen Tingshi, Chen Sanli, Huang Zunxian, and others also supported the project.\textsuperscript{12} Foreign missionaries such as Young J. Allen and Timothy Richard were among those who played important roles in the project. Mary Richard was “asked to visit the school at least once a month to see that everything was being carried on in proper order.”\textsuperscript{13} With Timothy Richard involved in the planning and Mary Richard serving as a leading faculty advisor at the Girls’ School, no wonder music, not merely singing, was included in the school curriculum.

Music was certainly perceived by Chinese reformers and revolutionaries as an important part of women’s education. Cai Yuanpei led the way in advocating the inclusion of music in women’s education. In his “Xuetang jiaoke lün” 學堂教科論 (On School Curricula) written in October 1901, Cai first proposed the incorporation of ethics, needlework, music (\textit{yinlù} 音律) and other arts subjects into the school curriculum for women’s general education.\textsuperscript{14} To Cai, music education was an integral part of aesthetic education.\textsuperscript{15} The aim of music education is not so much achieving good mastery of techniques as an overall improvement of a student’s moral rectitude. A year later in the autumn of 1902, Cai, on the founding the Patriotic Women’s School (Aiguo Nüxue 爱國女學) with other members of the Educational Society, stipulated that singing was to be a compulsory component (\textit{bixiu} 必修) of the school’s “preparatory” (\textit{yubeike} 預备科) and

\textsuperscript{12} Nanxiu Qian, p. 404.
\textsuperscript{13} Richard, \textit{Forty-Five Years in China}, p. 261.
\textsuperscript{15} For an excellent study of Cai’s emphasis on aesthetics, see William J. Duiker, “The Aesthetics Philosophy of Ts’ai Yuan-pei”, \textit{Philosophy East and West}, Vol. 22, No. 4 (1972), pp. 385-401.
“general” (putongke 普通科) courses. This stipulation was formally included in the modified regulations of the school in May 1903.

Music as an important component of women’s education can also be seen in the case of the Shanghai Attending to Fundamentals Women’s Academy (Wuben Nüshu 务本女塾). Founded by Wu Xin 吳馨 (1873-1919) in October 1902, the school was the earliest girls’ school run by Chinese in the Shanghai region to institute singing as a regular part of its curriculum. The main objective of the classes was to “enable students to sing songs with notation so that their morality and character can be cultivated.” The first music teacher was a Japanese by the name of Kawahiro Misoko 河原操子 (1875-1945). She used Japanese teaching materials and taught school songs in Japanese.

Fig. 8:2. Wu Xin 吳馨 (1873-1919)  
Fig.8:3. Kawahiro Misoko (1875-1945)

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16 Wang Pu, pp. 64-5. 
17 Sun Jinan, JYJN, pp. 13-4. 
20 Cited in Sun Jinan, JYJN, p. 11. 
21 For a brief biographical account of Kawahiro Misoko, see Zhang Qian, ZhongRi yinyue jiaoliushi, pp. 304-06. 
22 Chen Maozhi, “Xiaoxue changge jiaoshou fa xu”, p. 124.
Shanghai, of course, was not the only place where music education was attracting attention. In Tianjin, as already mentioned in the preceding chapter, Yan Xiu 嚴修 (Zi. Fansun 范孫) enlisted the services of Ms Ono Suzuko 大野鈴子 to teach Japanese and music at his Yan Family School for Girls.23

In Tongli, Jiangsu province, Jin Yi 金一 (1874-1949), a revolutionary and a close associate of Cai Yuanpei, established Tongchuan School (Tongchuan Xuetang 同川學堂) in 1902.24 He not only taught music himself but also wrote songs and published song anthologies for teaching use. Two years later in 1904, Jin Yi founded Minghua Girls’ School (Minghua Nüxue 明華女學) and once again emphasised the importance of music by making it an integral part of the school curriculum. The “Regulations of the Minghua Girls’ School”, published in the February 1904 issue of Women’s World (Nüzi shijie 女子界), stipulated specifically that singing as one of nine school subjects was to be

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23 Wu Yongyi, YYJY, p. 129.
24 Jin Yi, also known as Jin Songcen, is one of the four wenren discussed by Catherine Vance Yeh in her “The Life-style of Four Wenren in Late Qing Shanghai”, Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, Vol. 57, No. 2 (1997), pp. 458-70.
studied half an hour everyday from Monday to Saturday.\textsuperscript{25} In fact, the practice of teaching music at girls’ schools was so widespread that a year earlier in 1903 even schools in places as remote as Mongolia had started to include music as part of their study programme.\textsuperscript{26}

**Government Policy and Practice in School Music (1904-1912)**

Music teaching began to gain a stronghold in China in the twentieth century through reforms in education in the last decade of the Qing dynasty. Modeled on Japan and Western nations, a comprehensive system of schools was proposed by the 1902 imperial decree, “Qinding xuetang zhangcheng” 钦定学堂章程 (Imperial Regulations on Schools), promulgated in August. However, contrary to Qian Renkang’s claim, music as a branch of study was not mentioned in the decree.\textsuperscript{27} Music was first mentioned in the “Zouding xuetang zhangcheng” 奏定学堂章程 (Imperial Regulations for Modern Schools), drafted by Zhang Zhidong, Zhang Baixi 張百熙 and Rongqing 榮慶 and issued in January 1904.

In the educational aims outlined in “Xuëwu gangyao” 學務綱要 (Outline of Academic Matters) these officials proposed the inclusion of singing sessions in the curriculum of the national primary and middle schools. Praising the foreign use of music in classrooms for its recreational and didactic values, they argued that since singing songs (changge 唱歌) and music (yinyue 音樂) were important means of education in both foreign countries

\textsuperscript{25} See Xia Xiaohong 夏曉虹, “Tongli: Cengjing youguo de rongguang” 同里: 曾經海外的榮光 (Tongli: The glory that was), *Shanghai wenxue* (Shanghai Literature), No. 5 (2002), p. 73.

\textsuperscript{26} In 1903 Yuzheng Girls’ school (Yuzheng Nuxuetang 晉正女學堂) in Mongolia recruited Kawahiro Misoko, the same person who taught music at the Wuben nushu a year earlier, as its principal and musical instructor. Wu Yongyi, *YYJF*, p.129. Zhang Qian, pp. 304-6.

\textsuperscript{27} Qian Renkang, *Xuetang yuege kaoyuan* 學堂樂歌考源 (Tracing the Origins of the School Songs) (Shanghai: Shanghai chubanshe, 2001), p. 1.
and ancient China, they therefore should be part of regular school subjects in primary and secondary schools in China. However, due to a complete lack of suitable songs, of music teachers and the debilitated state of Chinese music, they stated, this practice could not be implemented immediately. Instead, Chinese schools should teach their students to chant simple didactic poems or nursery rhymes as an alternative measure for the time being. Nevertheless, the decree was a clear indication that music as a subject of study had begun to emerge as a matter for serious consideration.

Fig. 8.5. “Zouding xuetang zhangcheng”

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28 Shu Xincheng. JYZL, Vol. 1, p. 209
The year 1907 was a crucial moment for the beginnings of school music in China. The year marked the start of music as a subject of study in both grade and normal schools. On March 8 of that year, the Board of Education, founded in late 1905, issued a series of regulations on women’s primary and normal schools. These regulations not only recognised women’s schooling for the first time as a legitimate component of the new educational system\(^29\) but also had considerable significance in China’s music education. It was in “Zouding nüzi xiao xuetang zhangcheng” 奏定女子小學堂章程 (Regulations for Primary Schools for Girls) that music (yinyue) was stipulated as an optional subject (suiyike 隨意科) in both lower and higher primary schools for girls.\(^30\) More importantly, in “Zouding nüzi shifan xuetang zhangcheng” 奏定女子師範學堂章程 (Regulations for Normal Schools for Girls) music was stipulated as a compulsory subject (bixiuke 必修科) of a four-year course to be studied one hour every week for the first two years and two hours per week for the next two years.\(^31\)

The year 1907 was another milestone in the history of school music in China. In May 1909 the court approved the memorial drafted by the Board of Education requesting changes to the current curriculum in secondary schools. Since schools in other countries included singing (yuege) as part of their curricula, it should also be provided in Chinese schools as an optional subject for one or two hours weekly.\(^32\) The promulgation of this memorial meant that by 1909 grade schools for both girls and boys offered instruction in


\(^{30}\) Sun Jinan, YYJN, p. 28.


\(^{32}\) “Biantong zhongxuetang kecheng fenwei wenke shike zhe” 變通中學堂課程分文科實科折 (Memorial Requesting Current Regulations on Secondary Schools to be Revised) in Shu Xincheng, JYZL, Vol. 2, pp. 512-20.
music. In 1910 “singing was added to the curriculum [of lower and higher primary schools] to stimulate patriotism”.

Yet, despite the governmental decision to create a modern schools system, the achievement in reality (i.e. pupils taught) was limited in relation to China’s population. This was related to a number of practical problems, not the least of which was the need to develop a teacher training programme. As a result, modern-style music teaching did not become a widespread phenomenon. Even in areas where new-style schools had been founded, music failed to become a required subject for these schools, not even after the founding of the Republic. In articles six and eight of “Putong jiaoyu zan xing bafa” 普通教育暫行辦法 (Provisional Methods Concerning General Education) issued by the Ministry of Education in January 1912, for example, music was again stipulated as an optional rather than a compulsory subject for primary and normal schools. Even after Cai Yuan published his new educational philosophy advocating the importance of art and music in aesthetic education in February of that same year, music was to remain an elective in the school curriculum. It was not until September and December when the Ministry of Education issued its “Xiaoxuexiao ling” 小學校令 (Ministerial Order Concerning Primary Schools) and “Zhongxue xiaoling shixing guize” 中學校令施行規則 (Rules for Carrying Out Ministerial Order Concerning Secondary Schools) that \textit{changge} and \textit{yuege} were made compulsory for primary and secondary schools.

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33 Kuo-huang Han, “The Importation of Western music to China”, p. 234.
34 Bailey, p. 116.
As in Japan, where “the government’s motive in ordering singing instruction in the schools was not primarily musical,” the Qing court did not embrace song courses out of any special interest in their qualities per se, but rather as necessary parts of a Western-derived agenda for the particular institution in question. A strong utilitarian emphasis was placed on the teaching of music from the very beginning. The introduction of songs to schools, as Godwin Yuen has pointed out, “was designed to achieve a variety of objectives, from moral education and inciting patriotism to the learning of history and geography.” This is not surprising given that “the goals of education under the empire had been essentially political.” The four aims of education under the Board of Education, namely, to teach loyalty to the throne (zhongjun), reverence for Confucius (zun Kong), respect for the military and public service (shangwu), and to provide an education that had practical application (shangshi), were not meant to “serve the needs of the individual and society as a whole.”

The decrees showed that the Qing court was most concerned with the moral content of the musical courses. For example, the regulations concerning musical instruction in primary schools for girls, issued by the Board of Education in March 1907, clearly stipulated that:

As far as selecting or composing new lyrics is concerned, emphasis must be placed on the moral and ethical value of the lyrics. Songs that are to be chosen must not only be relevant to the teaching of moral principles and beneficial to the uplifting of

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37 May, p. 49.  
41 Duiker, p. 45.
public morals, but also conducive to the cultivation of the temperament and to the perfection of students’ moral conduct.\textsuperscript{42}

It was partially reacting to this overly utilitarian emphasis that prompted Cai Yuanpei to characterise the goals of education under the empire as essentially political.\textsuperscript{43}

Concerned with the subservient status of music in relation to moral education, Wang Guowei 王國維 even went as far as to suggest that singing classes in China’s modern schools had become “a virtue slave of ethics classes”.\textsuperscript{44}

Apart from its focus on the inculcation of the young with the tenets of Confucian morality and indoctrination of the principles of loyalty to the throne and respect for authority, Qing officials were also eager to highlight the utility of singing in developing children’s physical constitution, emotional well-being, and intellectual faculties. In contrast to Cai Yuanpei’s view of music as a vital component of aesthetic education, Qing officials regarded singing as part of physical education. In addition to “promoting cheerfulness” (\textit{xinqing heyue} 心情和悦) and “nurturing the moral character” (\textit{dexing hanyang} 德性涵养), the regulations of 1903 for primary schools and family education state explicitly that singing is conducive to the healthy development of the child’s ears, throat, and tongue as well as to his or her general physical development.\textsuperscript{45} As such it would ultimately contribute to China’s nation-building cause.

\textsuperscript{42} Shu Xincheng, \textit{JYZL}, Vol. 3, p. 797.  
\textsuperscript{43} Duiker, p. 45.  
\textsuperscript{44} Wang Guowei, “Lu xiaoxuexiao changge ke zhi jiaocai” 論小學校唱歌科之教材 (On Teaching Materials of School-Song Courses), \textit{Jiaoyu shijie} 教育實界 (World of Education), No. 148 (October 1907), reprinted in 俞玉滋、 Zhang Yuan 張援 eds., \textit{Zhaogguo jinxiandai yinyue jiaoyu wenxuan} 中國近現代學校音樂教育文選 (Selected Writings on School Music in the History of Modern China) (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe, 2000), p. 101.  
That music was considered part of physical education in the late Qing was illustrated nowhere more clearly than in “Hunan mengyangyuan jiaoke shuolue” 湖南蒙养院教科说略 (Curriculum Guidelines for Kindergartens in Hunan) promulgated in 1905. Here, instead of being regarded as a subject of study in its own right, singing (yuege) was stipulated as a component of physical education (tiyu 體育) and ranked as important as callisthenics (ticao 體操):

Musical rhythm if matched appropriately to patriotic texts can easily promote patriotism.46

Similar rationale is also found in the regulations issued in March 1907 for empire-wide girls’ primary and normal schools.47

Music as a means of patriotic education and fostering national pride certainly featured prominently in the minds of some of the Qing policy makers. While serving as Governor of Hunan, Duanfang 端方 (1861-1911), for example, advocated in 1905 the creation of kindergartens for three-to-six-year-olds so that the foundations of patriotism could be laid through the teaching of music.48 Formal regulations issued in 1910 required singing to be added to the curriculum of lower and higher primary schools to stimulate patriotism.49

Although the Qing court was clear about the objectives it wanted to achieve through introducing music study in its schools, it was less clear about the content and the ways in which these objectives were to be achieved. Apart from a few brief guidelines, no

48 Bailey, p. 43.
49 Bailey, p. 116
concrete curricula or detailed courses of instruction were published. The new system of education was completely modelled after that of Japan. But, rather than emulating the Japanese practice of Western-style singing in its schools, the Qing officials opted to make use of China’s traditional poetry, nursery rhymes, folk songs and ballads as teaching materials. In its regulations for kindergarten and family education issued in January 1904, for example, the government clearly stipulated that “When the child reaches the age of five or six and has gradually developed an interest in singing, he or she can be taught to sing simple and easy-to-understand poems, such as nursery rhymes, short folk songs and ballads or ancient four-line stanzas.”

Similar guidelines were issued for elementary schools to help “harmonise the student’s disposition and relieve fatigue.” But instead of simple nursery rhymes, ballads and four-line stanzas, song poems from such ancient collections as *Gushi yuan* (Sources of ancient poems) and *Yuefu shiji* (Collection of Music Bureau poems) compiled by Guo Maoqian (郭茂倩) in the twelfth century, and the works of Li Bai 李白, Meng Jiao 孟郊, Bai Juyi 白居易, Zhang Ji 张籍, Yang Weizhen 杨维祯, Li Dongyang 李東陽, You Tong 尤侗 and others.

The Board of Education, however, began to make specific suggestions for music teaching in 1907 even though music had not yet been made a compulsory subject for grade schools. In the regulations concerning primary schools for girls promulgated that year, for instance, the Board specified “the learning of simple, elegant and morally-

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51 “Zouding chudeng xiaoxuetang zhangcheng” (Regulations Governing Education, as memorialised and approved) in Shu Xincheng, JYZL, Vol. 2, p. 420.
uplifting songs” to be “the main aim of the school music course.” As far as teaching content was concerned, the regulations stipulated:

It is not appropriate for lower primary schools to use notation and charts; simple and monophonic singing (danyin 单音) should be taught. In higher primary schools, however, notation and charts can be used to teach unison songs once the students have made progress in following the previous method.

In contrast to the exclusive emphasis on unison singing in girls’ primary schools, the court stipulated the necessity of including part singing (fuyinge 复音歌) and musical instruments in the curricula of its normal schools. Because music was a required subject in the normal schools, the court also made clear the number of hours devoted to it. For example, the “Regulations for Girls’ Normal Schools” issued in March 1907 stated that music should be taught from the first year right through to the fourth year. One hour per week was to be devoted to music in the first and second years and two hours in the third and fourth. The whole course was to be taught in the sequence of unison songs, part songs, musical instruments and methods of music teaching.

Although educational decrees promulgated before 1907 made little mention of music, this does not mean that there was no music teaching in state-funded schools prior to that date. There is ample evidence that music was taught in most of the normal schools established in the wake of the first imperial decree (1904) for education. In Nanjing, for example, when San-Jiang Normal School (San Jiang Shifan Xuetang 三江师范学堂) was established in May 1903 at the instigation of Zhang Zhidong, a Japanese teacher named

Ishino Takashi (?) 石野巋 was employed as music instructor. In Shanghai, when the local magistrate (Su Song Taidao 苏松太道 in charge of Suzhou, Songjiang and Taicang areas) converted Longmen Academy (Longmen Shuyuan 龍門書院) into Longmen Normal School 龍門師范學校 (Longmen Shifan Xuexiao) in 1905, music was stipulated as part of its three-year regular course (benke 本科) and one-year course (jianyike 简易科). While students in the regular programme were to be taught unison singing two hours per week for the first two years and part singing for the third year, those enrolled in the one-year option were to be instructed in unison singing only.

In August 1906, some seven months before the Board of Education made music a compulsory subject for girls’ normal schools, San-Jiang Normal School opened a painting and handicraft section modelled on the Art Department of Tokyo Higher Normal School and an additional music teacher, Xu Chongguan 許崇光, a native of Jiangsu, was employed. According to Jiang Danshu 姜丹书 (1885-1962), a graduate of the painting and handicraft section, students majoring in these subjects could minor in music, which consisted of music theory, organ, piano and singing. In December of the same year, Beiyang Normal School (Beiyang Shifan Xuetang 北洋師範學堂) in Baoding in the

56 “Longmen Shifan Xuexiao zhanding jianzhang” 龍門師範學校暫定簡章 (Provisional Regulations of Longmen Normal School) in Qu Xingui et al., pp. 753-55.
north began to offer similar courses to students from Zhili, Shandong, Henan, Shanxi and Manchuria.  

Institutional instruction in music was not confined to ordinary normal schools. At Beiyang Women’s Normal School (Beiyang Nüzi Shifan Xuetang 北洋女子師範學堂) in Tianjin, the first women’s teacher training school to appear in Zhili province, music was offered as an optional subject in 1906 and a Japanese national by the name of Toyo’oka Ume (豐岡梅) was employed as music teacher. The course of instruction consisted of unison and part singing, musical instruments and musical pedagogy. The optional nature of the course did not seem to deter students’ interest in the subject. The students were able to showcase their musical skills on the occasion of their graduation: “The first graduation ceremony [of Beiyang Women’s Normal School] was held on 26 December 1907. After a speech by Fu Zengxiang 傅增湘 [founder of the School], students began to sing the School anthem accompanied on the organ by Zou Yunying 邹筠英 and Wu Zhenyan 吳振炎.” At the conclusion of the ceremony, students once again sang the graduation song in unison with the organ accompaniment of Cao Min 曹敏 and Liao Shibo 廖世勃.

Demand for teachers of music and callisthenics also led Jiangsu Normal School (Jiangsu Shifan Xuetang 江蘇師範學堂) in Suzhou to offer a six-month accelerated course in callisthenics in 1907. Although callisthenics, games, pedagogy, methods of

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59 “Beiyang Nüzi Shifan Xuetang Zhangcheng” 北洋女子師範學堂章程 (Regulations for Beiyang Women’s Normal School) in Qu Xingui et al., pp.760-62.
60 “Beiyang Nüzi shifan xuetang biye jisheng” 北洋女子師範學堂畢業紀盛 (Graduation Ceremony of the Beiyang Women’s Normal School) first published in Shuntian shibao 順天時報 (Shuntian Times, February 13, 1908), reprinted in Qu Xingui et al., p. 763.
teaching and physiology were to be the focus, music and handicrafts were added as necessary components of the curriculum “in order to train primary school teachers of callisthenics, handicraft and music.”

Moreover, singing in unison and use of musical instruments were to be taught one hour per week for two semesters in its one-year course.

At Fuzhou in coastal Fujian province, the Fujian Normal School (Quan-Min Shifan Xuetang 全閩師範學堂) opened in December 1903 under the enlightened Chen Baochen 陳寶琛 (1848-1935). Kuwata Toyozō 桑田富蔵 (1872-1923) was its zōng jiaoxu 总教習 or head teacher. It began to offer one-year specialist course in music and callisthenics (yinyue ticao zhuanxiu ke 音樂體操專修科) in 1906 to meet the demand for qualified teachers of music and physical education. Similar courses were offered in Zhili in 1907 when the Zhili Bureau of Education (Zhili Tixue Si 直隸提學司) established a training institute (Zhili Yinyue Ticao Chuanxisuo 直隸音樂體操傳習所) in Baoding in order to train primary school teachers of music and callisthenics urgently needed in the province. The one-year intensive programme was based on the Japanese system and taught by Japanese teaching staff. It consisted of the weekly teaching of singing (12 hours), musical instruments (2 hours), music theory and notation (2 hours), callisthenics (12 hours), games (3 hours per week), physiology (1 hour), methods of teaching (1 hour), and self-directed exercises (12 hours).

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61 “Jiangsu shifan xuetang xianxing zhangcheng” 江蘇師範學堂現行章程 (Current Regulations of the Jiangsu Normal School), in Qu Xingui et al., p. 647.
62 “Jiangsu shifan xuetang xianxing zhangcheng” in Qu Xingui et al., p. 651.
63 Wu Yongyi, YYJY, p. 186. For an account of the origins of Fujian Normal School, see Reynolds, pp. 71-3.
64 “Zhili Tixue si fushe yinyue ticao chuanxisuo shiban zhangcheng” 直隸提學司附設音樂體操傳習所試辦章程” (Provisional Regulations for the Training Institute of Music and Callisthenics attached to the Bureau of Education in Zhili) in Qu Xingui et al., pp. 775-76.
The foregoing examples show that Japan, next to Christian missionaries, provided China with her first music teachers, who became some of the first agents of Western music in Chinese schools. It is impossible to know the exact number of Japanese teachers who were employed as music teachers. Of particular interest, however, is that among the Japanese teachers and advisers Yuan Shikai employed to carry out his reforms in Zhili, we find one Watanabe Ryūsei 渡辺龍聖 (1865-1945), who was one-time president of Tokyo School of Music (Tōkyō Ongaku Gakkō) and a professor at Tokyo Higher Normal School (Tōkyō Kōtō Shiha Gakkō). Impressed by Watanabe’s impeccable educational credentials and his wealth of experience in education, Yuan hired
him in 1902 as an educational adviser at his new Zhili Bureau of Schools (Xuexiao Si 学校司) in Baoding.65

Also in Baoding, Chikamori Dekiji 近森出治, a graduate of the Tokyo School of Music and an experienced teacher of music, began to teach music at the Zhili Normal School (Zhili Shifan Xuetang 直隶师范学堂) from February 1905 and did not leave until September 1909.66 During his time in Baoding, Chikamori not only taught singing and musical instruments, organised concerts, compiled his own teaching materials, but also

65 After gaining his Ph.D. in philosophy from Cornell University in 1894, Watanabe served as a teacher at Tokyo Higher Normal School, and in 1899, president of the Tokyo School of Music concurrently. See Reynolds, China, 1898-1912, pp. 83, 87, 94. See also Zhang Qian, pp. 299-300.
66 In Wang Xiangrong’s book (p. 73), Chikamori Dekiji 近森出治, was written as Kondo Dekiji 近藤出治.
took the trouble to purchase musical instruments for the school during a trip back to Japan. Unlike the majority of Japanese teachers, he showed a keen interest in Chinese music and made frequent use of Chinese musical resources in his teaching. In addition to the many articles he contributed to Japanese music journals introducing Chinese music and music education to the Japanese public, Chikamori also published at least two books, one entitled *Xinzhuan yuefu* 新撰樂府 (Newly-Compiled Yuefu Tunes, two volumes) and other *Qingguo suyue ji* 清國俗樂集 (A Collection of Secular Chinese Music). In these works he experimented with transcribing Chinese music into standard five-line notation.67

![Fig. 8:8. An illustration from Chikamori Dekiji’s book, Qingguo suyue ji 清國俗樂集 (A Collection of Secular Chinese Music) (Zhongguo xin shuju, 1907).](image)

In Tianjin, Muraki Shōtarō 村岡祥太郎 taught music at the Training Institute for Music and Callisthenics (Yinyue Ticao Chuanxisuo 音樂體操傳習所).68 In Taiyuan 太原, Komatsuzaki Takeshi 小松崎武司 was employed as an instructor in singing and

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67 This material on Chikamori Dekiji is drawn from Zhang Qian, pp. 300-03.
68 Wang Xiangrong, *Riben jiaoxi*, pp. 73, 77.
callisthenics at the Shanxi Advanced Normal School (Shanxi Youji Shifan Xuetang 山西優級師範學堂). In Nanjing, Ishino Takashi (石野巍) worked as a teacher of music at the Nanjiang Normal School. In Chengdu, Ōno Kiyoko, a graduate of the Women’s Physical Education and Music School in Tokyo, taught music at the Chengdu Women’s Normal School (Nüzi Shifan Xuetang 女子師範學堂). In Shenyang, Hattori Shōko 服部昇子 was employed by the Provincial Women’s Normal School as an instructor in music, callisthenics and handicrafts. In Changchun, a Japanese woman teacher was responsible for delivering lessons on science and music as well as callisthenics at Women’s Normal School. In winter 1907, a Japanese national named Motohashi 元橋 was jointly employed by Zhejiang Lower and Higher Level Normal School (Zhejiang Liangji Shifan Xuetang 浙江兩級師範學堂) and Zhejiang Higher School (Zhejiang Gaodeng Xuetang 浙江高等學堂) to deliver music lessons. The shared appointment was a way to provide full-time employment to the Japanese specialist.

The predominance of Japanese teaching staff in China’s normal schools does not mean that there were no qualified Chinese teachers of music before 1907. For example, in April 1906, two Chinese instructors of music, Su Zhongzheng 蘇鍾正 and Quan Guoyuan 權國垣, both natives of Hubei province, were employed by Lianghu Normal School (Lianghu Shifan Xuetang 两湖師範學堂). Their duties consisted of teaching

69 Wang Xiangrong, p. 79.
70 Tao Yabing, p. 226. Wang Xiangrong, p. 82.
71 Wang Xiangrong, p. 88.
72 Wang Xiangrong, p. 94.
73 Wang Xiangrong, p. 95.
74 Zheng Xiaocang 鄭晓沧, “Zhejiang Liangji Shifan he diyi shifan xiaoshi zhizhao” 浙江兩級師範和第一師範校史志要 (Historical accounts of Zhejiang Lower and Higher Level Normal School and the First Normal School) in Qu Xingui et al., pp. 709-10.
unison singing and both were paid a monthly salary of twenty-four dollars. In that same year, when Yuan Shikai established Beiyang Normal School, a returned music student from Japan named Deng Ruche was hired to teach music.

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The last years of the Manchu dynasty saw a remarkable increase in the number of Chinese constitutional reformers and progressive-minded officials getting involved in the promotion of new schools. In the process some of them became aware of the potential of music teaching in modern education and consequently involved in the promotion of Western music. The fact that music was promoted in conjunction with reforms in education determined the utilitarian nature of Chinese musical experience with the West at this time. The reformers and Qing court did not embrace Western music out of any particular interest in its artistic qualities, but rather as a necessary part of a Japanese-inspired programme of reform. The beginning of school music is closely connected to the establishment of new-style schools in China. In the process of establishing song courses in Chinese schools, Japan played an important role not only as a model but also as a provider of the first music teachers. In this sense, Sanetō Keishū is correct in terming the Xinzheng years (1901-1911) the “age of the Japanese teachers” (Nihon kyōshū no jidai) in China.

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75 “Lianghu Zong Shifan Xuetang diaocha zongbiao” 西湖总师范学堂调查总表 (Survey of Lianghu Normal School) in Qu Xingui et al., pp. 680-82, 89.
76 “Beiyang Shifan Xuetang shiban zhangcheng” 北洋师范学堂试办章程 (Provisional Regulations for Beiyang Normal School) in Qu Xingui et al., p. 673.
77 Sanetō Keishū, Chūgokujin Nihon ryōgaku shikō, cited in Reynolds, p. 78.
CHAPTER NINE

EARLY CHINESE CHAMPIONS OF WESTERN MUSIC

The last decade of the Qing dynasty (1902-1912) saw the emergence of the first generation of Chinese champions of Western music.¹ In Japan at the turn of the twentieth century a small number of Chinese students became formally involved in the learning of various kinds of Western music by enrolling in Japanese institutions. After their return to China, these Japanese-trained pioneers mapped out for themselves a significant place in the Chinese urban musical scene. Some dedicated themselves exclusively to Western music. Others were involved either simultaneously or successively in both Western and Chinese music. In all, these pioneers had a profound influence on the development of modern Chinese music.

This thesis cannot give a detailed account of all those who were actively engaged in musical studies during this transitional period, that is, the last decade of the Qing. Instead, I have chosen to focus on the lives and work of some of the most representative figures of this pioneering generation. These are Xiao Youmei 萧友梅 (1884-1940), Shen Xingong 沈心工 (1870-1947), Zeng Zhimin 曾志忞 (1879-1929), and Li Shutong 李叔同 (1880-1942), all of whom, with the exception of Xiao, were known for their roles in the School-Song movement.² Although these four shared a common scholar-gentry family background, early Confucian upbringing and Japanese

¹ The term “champions” is used here not in the sense of composers, instrumentalists, or singing virtuosos, but in the sense of song arrangers, songbook compilers, school music teachers, and translators of textbooks on Western music theory.
² The school song movement has been studied by a number of scholars. See Zhang Jingwei, “Lun Xuetang yuege” 論學堂樂歌 (On School Songs) in Zhongguo yishu yanjiuyuan yanjiusheng bu 中國藝術研究院研究部 ed., Zhongguo yishu yanjiuyuan shoujie yanjiusheng shuoshi lunwenji 中國藝術研究院首屆研究 生碩士論文集 (A Collection of Masters’ Theses by the First Class of Masters’ Students of the Chinese Academy of Arts) (Beijing: Wenhua yishu chubanshe, 1987), pp. 116-51; Han Kuo-huang, “Qingmo de xuetang yuege” 清末的學堂樂歌 (The School Songs of the Late Qing) in Zi xi cu dong, Vol.2, pp. 9-28. Qian Renkang, Xuetang yuege kaoyuan. For a recent study in English, see Micic, “School Songs and Modernity in Late Qing and Early Republican China”.
education, by the time they returned to China their careers had evolved in substantially different directions. Thus, Shen’s interests were almost exclusively in teaching and producing school songs; Zeng was known for his interests in Western music theory, his holistic approach to music education, and his advocacy of reforming Chinese music along Western lines; and Li – while his place in the annals of art history of modern China was undoubtedly due to his fame as an artist par excellence in the Renaissance sense-- was also celebrated for his partiality for Schubert-style art songs and his skill in composing lyrics to Christian hymn tunes. Xiao was different in that he was the only one among this pioneer generation who went on to pursue advanced study in the birthplace of Western music, Germany. In the two decades between 1920 and 1940 he was the most influential promoter of Western art music in China.3

The disparate character of these men is of particular significance. It suggests that the Chinese introduction of Western music was not a monolithic enterprise. Their participation in Chinese musical life, in length of service and in type of activity, reflected considerable differences, as did the views they expressed about various questions concerning music in China. But in their totality they enable us to gain insight into certain conditions of Chinese musical life during the decade in question and into some of the reasons for these conditions.

Pioneer Students of Western Music – An Overview

3 Xiao embarked on his second overseas study journey in November 1912, after serving briefly as Sun Yat-sen’s presidential secretary. In Germany he studied music theory and composition at the Leipzig State Conservatory of Music and at the same time enrolled in Leipzig University as a student of philosophy and education. In 1916, after successfully defending his thesis entitled *Ein geschichtliche Untersuchung über das Chinesische Orchester bis zum 17. Jahrhundert* (A Historical Study of the Chinese Orchestra Prior to the Seventeenth Century), he graduated from the University with a doctoral degree in music education.
Compared to the tens of thousands of Chinese students who studied other subjects in Japan, the number of students involved in musical studies was extremely small. Only a handful did music, as opposed to the vast majority of the students who enrolled in the liberal arts, teacher training, and military studies. Writing in 1905, the Rev. J. Harada, based on figures obtained from the Chinese legation in Tokyo, mentioned that out of the 2,399 students studying in Japan only “four are in the school of music.”4 According to Zhang Qian 張學, a historian specialised in Sino-Japanese musical exchanges, altogether 77 Chinese students formally enrolled in various music schools in Japan between 1902 and 1920.5

The first Chinese student to enrol at the Tokyo School of Music was Wang Hongnian 王鴻年 who studied the organ as an elective during the 1902-03 academic year. In 1904, Zeng Zhimin, his wife Cao Rujin 曹汝錦, Xiao Youmei, Xin Han 辛漢 (better known by his penname Shi Geng 石更) and two other students started their music training at the same school. In 1907, there were nine Chinese students enrolled at the school. The total number in any given year, as far as the Tokyo School of Music was concerned, never exceeded twelve before 1919.6

Not all Chinese students studied at the state-funded Tokyo School of Music. Private schools where Chinese students took their music lessons included the Japan Music School (東洋音樂學校), the Tokyo Conservatory of Music (東京音樂院), the Music Academy for Girls, Girls’ School for Music and Callisthenics, and other institutions.7

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5 Zhang Qian, Zhong-Ri yinyue jiaoliu shi, p. 277.
6 Zhang Qian, pp. 372-78.
7 Zhang Qian, pp. 276-77.
Without exception, all Chinese music students were privately funded and there is no record that government scholarships had ever been used for the purpose of learning music. Xiao Youmei, Xin Han and Li Shutong were granted government scholarships for studying education, law and fine art, not music.

**Xiao Youmei and the German Classical Tradition**

In her study of Chinese students and Japanese teachers in the decade of 1895-1905 Paula Harrell describes “the typical student” in the turn of the twentieth-century Tokyo as someone “in his early twenties, rather well educated, a product of the privileged class, yet likely as not from a family whose fortunes were on the downturn. His motives for going abroad to study included personal advancement, but also a vague yearning to contribute to a strengthened China.” Xiao Youmei, who more than anyone was to profoundly influence the history of modern Chinese music, was one such student.

Born in Xiangshan, the birthplace of Sun Yat-sen, in Guangdong province on the eve of China’s defeat in the Sino-French War of 1884-1885, Xiao was tutored from an early age in the traditional manner by his father, who held the degree of *xiucai*. Xiao got his first taste of Western music in the Portuguese colony Macau where his family moved to when he was a small child. In Macau, one of his neighbours was a Portuguese priest who liked to play the organ at home. So captivated was Xiao by the sound of the instrument that he, as he wrote years later in an autobiographic sketch, “could not stop admiring it” and “regretted not having the

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8 Zhang Qian, p. 276.
9 Harrell, *Sowing the Seeds of Change*, p. 68.
opportunity to learn to play the instrument.” In 1900, Xiao returned to Guangzhou with his family. There, instead of enrolling him at a traditional Chinese school, his family sent him to Shimin Academy (Shimin Xuetang 時敏學堂), which, as mentioned in the last chapter, was one of the earliest Chinese-run Western-style schools in the region, known for its modern curriculum. A year later, following the route of many ambitious young Chinese of some means, Xiao and nine other graduates of the school embarked on a study journey to Japan, where he stayed until 1910.

Xiao’s stay in Japan followed a typical pattern at the time: intensive language study at a language school followed by a degree course in education at Tokyo Imperial University. But because of his interest in Western music he also took piano and singing as electives at the Tokyo School of Music. Like many radical students at the time, Xiao was also involved in political activism, joining the Alliance Society (Tongmenghui 同盟會) in 1906. But unlike most of the radical students in Japan at the time, Xiao’s involvement in politics was not so much due to his political conviction as to his personal connection with Sun Yat-sen, who had been a close family friend ever since his Macau days. Through Sun, Xiao also became a close friend of Liao Zhongkai 廖仲愷 (1877-1925), one of Sun’s leading lieutenants in the Alliance Society, and Liao’s wife He Xiangning 何香凝 (1879-1972), a well-known artist. Because of Xiao’s artistic interest and his seeming indifference to politics, Sun and his revolutionary associates often used Xiao’s residence in Tokyo as a meeting

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10 Cited in Xiao Shuxian 蕭淑婉, “Huiyi wode shufu Xiao Youmei xiansheng” 回憶我的叔父蕭友梅先生 (Recollections of My Uncle Xiao Youmei) in Dai Penghai et al, eds., Xiao Youmei jinian wenji, p. 84.
12 Zhang Qian, pp. 289, 372-374.
place to avoid detection. Xiao served as lookout.\(^\text{13}\) His connection with the nationalists stood him in a good stead in later years.

![Fig. 9:1: Xiao Youmei (back row, right) and his Japanese teachers. From: Liao Fushu, Xiao Youmei zhuan.](image)

![Fig. 9:2: Xiao Youmei (front row, left) and Sun Yat-sen in 1912. From: Liao Fushu, Xiao Youmei zhuan.](image)

\(^{13}\) Liao Fushu, *Xiao Youmei zhuan*, p. 7.
Very little of Xiao’s musical research survives. The only work dated at this time was an article entitled “Yinyue gaishuo” (General Introduction to Music), which he wrote between February 1907 and April 1908. This brief article, serialised in Xuebao (Journal of Academic Studies), a Chinese student publication in Japan, was the earliest ambitious attempt by a Chinese to familiarise the Chinese reading public with all facets of Western musical culture. Apart from introducing such basic concepts as tone, scale, interval, mode, melody, beat, tempo, rhythm and the like, Xiao’s article also contains passages on harmony, counterpoint, chords, form, modulation and other more sophisticated compositional techniques. Furthermore, Xiao also mentions such new disciplines as music psychology, acoustics and comparative musicology in order to illustrate the scientific basis of Western music.  

Because Xiao later went on to complete a doctorate in music in Germany and made his mark in the history of modern Chinese music in the two decades between his return from Europe in March 1920 and his death on December 31, 1940, most scholars tend to overlook his Japanese beginnings and concentrate on his later career. But Japan was where it all started. If Xiao’s curiosity for Western music was aroused in Macau, his penchant for “serious” or “classical” music was unquestionably fostered in Japan. His formal enrolment at the Tokyo School of Music certainly enhanced his interest in the music of the Viennese School (1740-1825). The Tokyo School was the only specialised musical institute in East Asia at the time where aspiring musicians

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14 An excerpt of this article is reprinted in Xiao Youmei yinyue wenji, pp. 1-2.
15 Xiao’s role as “the father of Chinese music education” and as a staunch proponent of Westernisation of Chinese music have been a topic much explored by both Chinese and Western scholars. For studies in English, see Yongsheng Liang, “Western Influence on Chinese Music in the Early Twentieth Century”, pp. 94-111; Godwin Yuen, “Stylistic Development in Chinese Revolutionary Songs”, pp. 173-84. For a post-modern evaluation of Xiao’s legacy, see Jones, Yellow Music, pp. 23-52.
could be instructed in singing, piano, organ, orchestral instruments, harmony, theory, history of music and methods of music instruction.\(^\text{16}\)

As several scholars have pointed out, German influence and standards had started to predominate at the Tokyo School of Music after the appointment of Franz Eckert (1852-1916) as a music consultant to Monbushō 文部省 (Ministry of Education) in 1883. The appointment of Rudolph Dietrich (1867-1919) after Eckert’s resignation in 1886 further strengthened the German-Austrian influence.\(^\text{17}\) Other German nationals such as Anna Löhr also taught at the school.\(^\text{18}\) Given this background, it was small wonder that the school “became an important centre for the study and performance of Western music, operas, symphonies, and chamber music.”\(^\text{19}\) During Xiao’s time there, the school had become so utterly Germanised that Izawa Shūji’s guiding principle of blending Japanese music with elements of Western music was gradually abandoned. As a result, a committee for the study of Japanese music had to be formed and attached to the in 1907 to address the problem. One of the experiments carried out by the committee was the use of the five-line staff to notate Japanese traditional music.\(^\text{20}\) This was to have a lasting impact on Xiao. Years later when he began to reform China’s traditional music along Western lines, he repeatedly argued for the adoption of Western staff notation.\(^\text{21}\) In the 1930s, Xiao personally followed the Japanese example by painstakingly transcribing traditional Chinese repertoire including *kunqu* 昆曲 into Western staff notation.

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\(^\text{18}\) Howe, p. 72.

\(^\text{19}\) May, p. 62.

\(^\text{20}\) May, p. 62.

Xiao’s training at the Tokyo School of Music oriented him towards the more specialised conservatory-type of training. As seen through his later roles first as Dean of Studies at the Conservatory of Music of Peking University (1922-1927) and then Director of the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai (1927-1940) -- the first Chinese specialised musical institution geared to turning out professional musicians, composers and teachers-- Xiao certainly adopted a professional and “scientific” approach to music education.\(^{22}\)

Xiao’s long stay in Japan (1901-1910) and his association with the Tokyo School of Music (1904-1910) may be part of the reason why after a short stint as Sun Yat-sen’s presidential secretary he chose to go to Germany for more advanced study in music. As Sondra W. Howe has pointed out, “Germanism was an important influence in the Meiji period and the specialised education of the German universities was admired.”\(^{23}\) Xiao was certainly well disposed towards things German, especially German classical music. According to Xiao’s niece Xiao Shuxian 萧淑娴 (1905-1991), when living in Beijing in the early 1920s, Xiao decorated his study with portraits and busts of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert.\(^{24}\) In his own compositions Xiao also betrayed a strong Prussian-German influence, using chords and musical idioms favoured by Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert.\(^{25}\)

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\(^{22}\) The historical significance of the conservatory has been pointed out elsewhere. See Chapter 6 of Jonathan Stock’s *Musical Creativity in Twentieth-Century China: Abing, His Music, and Its Changing Meanings* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 1996) for a description of the conservatory tradition before and since 1949. The conservatory produced China’s first generation of professional composers, performers, theorists, and musicologists, and music educators. These graduates came not only to “dominate the musical life of the intelligentsia of the treaty ports” but also to “be regarded as authorities for acceptable musical standards and behaviour” throughout the country even to this day. See Isabel K. F. Wong, “From Reaction to Synthesis: Chinese Musicology in the Twentieth Century” in Bruno Nettle and Philip V. Bohlman eds. *Comparative Musicology and Anthropology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 43.

\(^{23}\) Howe, p. 109.

\(^{24}\) Xiao Shuxian, “Ershi niandai de Xiao Youmei xiansheng” 二十年代的萧友梅先生 (Xiao Youmei in the 1920s) in *Xiao Youmei jinian wenji*, p. 120.

\(^{25}\) For a musicological analysis of Xiao’s musical works, see Wang Anguo 王安國, “Xiao Youmei qiyue zuoping yanjiu” 萧友梅器樂作品研究 (A Study of Xiao Youmei’s Instrumental Works) and
Unlike the majority of the pioneers he was little interested in simple, march-like songs. Instead he demonstrated much preference for German lieder, as evidenced by the songs he composed and edited in the early 1920s.\textsuperscript{26} For the rest of his life Xiao remained faithful in both his taste and his own compositions to the tradition of the German classics.

\textbf{Shen Xingong and the Introduction of School Songs}

If Xiao’s almost ten-year stay in Japan was responsible for sowing the seeds of his love for Western art music, Shen Xingong’s ten-month sojourn there accounted for his life-long passion for Europeanised Japanese school songs.

Like Xiao, Shen Xingong, inspired by the reform ideas of Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, also went to Japan for the purpose of getting an advanced education in Western learning.\textsuperscript{27} But Shen differed from Xiao and other pioneers in that he belonged to an older generation and was already a degree holder before going to Japan in 1902.\textsuperscript{28}

Shen’s interest in Western learning was aroused after attending lectures given by the English missionary John Fryer at the Shanghai Polytechnic (Gezhi Shuyuan 格致書院) in the 1890s. In order to learn more Western knowledge, he worked as a Chinese language instructor at St John’s College from 1895 to 1897. It is possible that Shen’s interest in Western music started at this time. As will be recalled, St John’s had always emphasised the importance of music in education and choral

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\textsuperscript{27} Chen Maozhi, “Xiaoxue changge fu xu” (1905), reprinted in Zhang Jingwei, YYSL, p. 124.
\textsuperscript{28} For a highly eulogistic biographical sketch of Shen by his grandnephew, see Shen Qia 沈洽, “Shen Xingong zhuan” 沈心工傳 (Life of Shen Xingong), \textit{Yinyue yanjiu}, No. 4 (1983), pp. 54-8. For studies in English, see Liang, pp. 45-49; Yuen, pp. 144-51.
\end{flushright}
singing especially had been an integral part of the extracurricular activities at the St John’s campus. Shen’s Japanese sojourn represented a discovery of career path even though his experience in at the Kōbun Gakuin 弘文学院 (Vast Learning Academy), the school nicknamed the “Flagship of Chinese Education in Japan,” was not entirely a happy one. Deeply impressed with the way in which singing was used in Japanese schools of all levels he was convinced that a similar system of music education was needed in China to impart modern knowledge and extol patriotism. But unlike Xiao, Shen was essentially an amateur musician because he never had any formal training in Western music. Shen certainly did not seem to have done any formal music training during his stay in Tokyo. “When the Chinese students’ association invited Mr. Suzuki Kemejiro 鈴木末次郎 to teach them songs,” wrote Shen years later, “I also went along.” As with most Chinese students in Japan at the time, Shen was quick to put knowledge to work and to integrate study with real life. “After learning only a thing or two about making songs,” Shen wrote, “I began to write my own songs.”

Shen’s interest in school songs prompted him to form the Society for the Study of Music in November 1902. Despite its short existence (two months), this Tokyo-based student organisation succeeded to a certain extent in accomplishing its goals of learning Western music theory and school song composing. The above-mentioned

29 Lamberton, St. John’s University, p. 54.  
30 Kōbun Gakuin had educated some 7,192 Chinese students, among whom were Republican-period education administrator Fan Yuanlian 范源濂 (1876-1927), revolutionary Huang Xing 黄兴 (1874-1916), co-founder of the Chinese Communist Party Chen Duxiu 陳獨秀 (1879-1942), and literary giant Lu Xun. See Reynolds, China, 1898-1912, pp. 51-2.  
31 Zhang Jingwei has stated that Shen learned some rudiments of Western music theory at mission schools prior to Japan but no evidence is cited. See Zhang Jingwei, “Jindai Zhongguo yinyue sichao”, p. 79.  
32 Cited in Shen Qia 沈洽 ed., Xuetang yuege zhifu- Shen Xingong zhi shengping yu zuopin 學堂樂歌之父-沈心工之生平與作品 (Mr Shen Xingong- Father of School Songs: His Life and Work) (Taipei: Zhonghua minguo zuoqujia xiehui, 1990), p. 27.  
33 Wu Yongyi, YYJY, p. 123.
Suzuki Kemejiro (1868-1940), a prominent music educator and teacher of the Tokyo Higher Normal School, was one of the Japanese teachers who taught Shen and his fellow school-song enthusiasts rudiments of Western music theory and techniques of school-song writing.34

Fig. 9: 3. Shen’s Japanese mentor, Suzuki Kemejiro. From: Han Guohuang, Zi xi cu dong, Vol. 2.

Historians of modern Chinese music generally regard 1903 as the crucial year in which yuege 樂歌 gained a stronghold in Chinese schools. In February that year Shen Xingong began to teach yuege at the Nanyang Primary School in Shanghai.35 For this pioneering role, Shen is extolled as “the father of school songs.”36

The term xuetang yuege (lit., school songs or songs for schools) is simultaneously used as a broad and a specific term. In a broad sense, it signifies a musical phenomenon that emerged at the beginning of the twentieth-century, exerted the highest level of influence during the ensuing two decades and ran through to the 1930s. In a narrow sense, it denotes the type of European-style singing that was introduced to the new-style schools (xuetang 學堂), as opposed to the old-style private

34 Zhang Qian, p. 297.
35 The earliest reference to Shen’s role as the originator of school song courses in China is found in Chen Maozhi, “Xiaoxue changge jiaoshoufa xu”, p. 124.
36 Qian Renkang, Xuetang yuege kaoyuan, p. 1.
academies (sishu 私塾). As a new genre distinctive from traditional musical forms, one of the salient feature of the school song was its extensive use of imported tunes, mainly from Europe, American, and Japan, to fit new verses.

Writing in November 1920, Shen himself gave the following account of his part in the beginning of music teaching in China:

When modern schools were first established in our country, singing was the only subject that was missing in the school curriculum. I went to Japan and learned a thing or two about school songs under the guidance of Suzuki Kemejiro, a professor of school songs at the Tokyo Higher Normal School. After returning home in 1903 I began to work as a teacher at Nanyang Primary School and hence the start of [the practice of] singing and dancing. The first school [outside the Nanyang Primary School] to invite me to teach music was the Shanghai Wuben Women’s Academy. In addition, the Nanyang Middle School also employed me as a part-time teacher to deliver music lessons. Whenever I taught music at these schools, the classroom was always filled to overflowing. So full was the classroom that some of them had to stand outside.  

Whether or not Shen was the first person to start singing classes in Shanghai is of little concern to our present study. From this time on, singing European-style school songs began to take hold in modern Chinese schools. Chen Maozhi 陳懋治, principal of Nanyang Primary School and a long-time associate of Shen, wrote in 1905:

[After the initial success of Shen’s classes], various private schools followed suit by introducing singing classes in their school curriculum one after another. Meanwhile private and public schools in various provinces also started music courses after students who had studied music in Japan returned home and began to teach what they had learned in Japan.  

By the late 1900s teaching school songs had become ubiquitous. Wang Guowei 王國維, arguably the first to provide a systematic exposition of the concept of aesthetics education to the Chinese reading public, was at once delighted by and concerned with the phenomenon. In 1907 he was compelled to write about the need to focus on

37 Cited in Shen Qia ed., Xuetang yuege zhifu.
38 Chen Maozhi, “Xiaoxue changge jiaoshoufa xu”, p. 124.
the aesthetic value of school songs and be critical of what was being taught in the school-song courses.\textsuperscript{40}

Shen shared Liang Qichao’s instrumental view of arts and literature and believed that singing had a major role to play as a tool of national regeneration. This conviction saw him actively involved in setting up music societies, and running summer schools and short-term training courses for potential music teachers. Early in 1904, for example, he and another Japanese-trained music educator Gao Yanyun 高_validator音頌 founded a musical society in Shanghai to promote the benefits of school-song singing in education and social reform.\textsuperscript{41} Encouraged by the warm response to his effort, he offered further singing classes for members of the Shanghai Study Society (Hu Xuehui 濠學會), to which Li Shutong belonged. In autumn that same year he also organised the Society for the Teaching and Practice of School Songs (Yuege Jiangxihui 樂歌講習會) at the Shanghai Wuben Women’s Academy. Among the forty to fifty adult participants of Shen’s Yuege Jiangxihui were such later leading educators as Xia Songlai 夏頌萊, Wang Yincai 王引才 and Wu Xin.\textsuperscript{42} It was largely due to Shen’s effort that singing school songs went beyond the confines of modern schools, broke the age barrier, and became a widespread social phenomenon that pervaded all strata of Chinese society. Huang Yanpei 黃炎培 (1878–1965), a noted reformer and promoter of vocational education, was so impressed by Shen Xingong’s work that he credited him as a path-breaker in China’s education.\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{40} Wang Guowei, “Lu xiaoxuexiao changge ke zhi jiaocai” (1907), reprinted in Yu Yuzi, Zhang Yuan eds., Zhoaungguo jinxiandai yinyue jiaoyu wenxuan, pp. 100-01.
\textsuperscript{41} Zhang Jingwei, “Lun Xuetang yuege”, p. 118.
\textsuperscript{42} Shen Qia, “Shen Xingong zhuoan”, p. 59.
\textsuperscript{43} Huang Yanpei, “Chongbian Xuexiao changge ji xue” 《重編學校唱歌集序》 (Preface to the Revised Edition of School Songs), reprinted in Zhang Jingwei, YYSL, p. 137. Chen Maozhi remarked in spring 1905: ‘Nowadays in the part of Shanghai where a forest of school buildings stands one’s ear is filled with the sounds of musical instruments and songs. This is all due to the effort of Mr. Shen
The Proliferation of School-Song Books

With the advent of singing classes came the demand for singing textbooks. Shen Xingong once again played a key role in the proliferation of school songs. He is regarded as the first Chinese to compile and publish an anthology of school songs.44

This, however, is not exactly true. Zeng Zhimin’s anthology, Jiaoyu changge ji 教育唱歌集 (Anthology of Educational Songs), appeared a month earlier (April 1904) than Shen’s anthology Xuexiao change ji 學校唱歌集 (Anthology of School Songs).45

But of all school-song writers and compilers, Shen was undoubtedly the most...
influential and most prolific. From 1904 to 1937 he wrote over 180 school songs and published fourteen volumes of song collections.⁴₆

Shen’s song anthologies can be seen as a response to “the sudden, urgently felt need for comprehensive knowledge beyond China’s traditional categories of learning.”⁴⁷ The first volume of his *Xuexiao changge ji* series was so well received that within one year it was reprinted five times.⁴⁸ Encouraged by Shen’s success, other leading educators such as Hua Zhen 華振 (1883-1966), Zhao Mingchuan 趙銘傳 (1868-1940), Ye Zhongleng 叶中冷 (1880-1933), Xin Han 辛漢, Hou Hongjian 侯鴻鑑, and Hu Junfu 胡君复, all of whom were trained in Japan, also became involved in compiling song anthologies. This gave rise to a great publishing carnival of songbooks that ran from 1904 to the mid 1920s. Something of the craze for school songs can be seen in the fact that in the year 1904 alone, nearly eighty school songs were published in Chinese newspapers and periodicals.⁴⁹ From 1903 to the eve of the May Fourth demonstrations in 1919, according to a recent study, some 1300 school songs appeared in various Chinese publications.⁵⁰ The following table, even without including songs published in various journals and newspapers, gives an idea of the magnitude of songbook publishing in the last years of the Qing dynasty.

SCHOOL-SONG BOOKS PUBLISHED 1904-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/Editor</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shen Xingong 沈心工</td>
<td><em>Xuexiao changge ji</em> 學校唱歌集 (Anthology of School Songs), Vols. 1 –3.</td>
<td>Shanghai Wenming shuju 上海文明書局</td>
<td>1904-1907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zeng Zhimin 曾志忞</td>
<td><em>Jiaoyu changge ji</em> 教育唱歌集 (Anthology of Educational Songs)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>1904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Li Shutong 李叔同</td>
<td><em>Guoxue changge ji</em> 國學唱歌集 (Songs for National Learning)</td>
<td>Shanghai Zhongxin shuju 上海中新書局</td>
<td>1905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huang Zisheng 黃子鈞 et al.</td>
<td><em>Jiaoyu changge</em> 教育唱歌 (Educational Songs), Vols. 1-2.</td>
<td>Hubei xuewuchu 湖北學務處</td>
<td>1905</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁴⁷ Reynolds, p. 118.
⁴⁸ Chen Maozhi, “Xuexiao changge er ji xu”, pp. 154-55.
⁵⁰ Yu Yuzi, “Zhongxiaoxue yinyue jiaoyu de chuangshi ji fazhan”, p. 133.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/Series</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Edition</th>
<th>Publisher/Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tian Beihu, Zou Huamin</td>
<td>Xiushen changge shu 修身唱歌書 (Songs for Ethical Education)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>1905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jin Kui, Hua Zhen</td>
<td>Xiaoxue changge jiaokeshu, chuji 小學唱歌教科書初級 (Song textbook for Primary Schools), Introductory level.</td>
<td>Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館</td>
<td>1905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ni Juemin</td>
<td>Nuxue changge shu 女學唱歌書 (Songbook for Girls' Schools)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>1905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lu Liyuan</td>
<td>Edu Zhang Gongbao xizi xuetang changge 督督張宮保新制學堂唱歌 (Songs used at the new-style schools under the supervision of the Governor-general of Hubei Zhang Zhidong) 51</td>
<td>Hubei xuewuchu 湖北學務處</td>
<td>1905-1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shou Lingni</td>
<td>Nuxue changge ji 女學唱歌集 (Collection of Songs for Girls' Schools)</td>
<td>Shanghai kexue shuju 上海科學書局</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lu Baohen, et al.</td>
<td>Xinbian changge ji 新編唱歌集 (Newly-Compiled Collection of Songs)</td>
<td>Hubei guanshuju 湖北官書局</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xin Han</td>
<td>Changge jiaoke shu 唱歌教科書 (Textbook for Singing)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wang Wenjun</td>
<td>Yiqing changge ji 怡情唱歌集 (Joyful Songs)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wuxi chengnan gongxue 無錫城南公學</td>
<td>Xuexiao changge ji 學校唱歌 (Collection of School Songs)</td>
<td>Shanghai zhongxin shuju 上海中新書局</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hou Hongjian 侯鴻鑾</td>
<td>Danyi diyi changge ji 単音第一唱歌集 (Collection of Monophonic Songs), Vols. 1-2</td>
<td>Shanghai Wenming shuju 上海文明書局</td>
<td>1906-1907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wang Jiliang 王季梁, Hu Junfu 胡君复</td>
<td>Changge youxi 唱歌遊戲 (Singing Games)</td>
<td>Shanghai yinshuguan 商務印書館</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xin Han</td>
<td>Zhongxue changge ji 中學唱歌集 (Collection of Songs for Middle Schools)</td>
<td>Shanghai puji shuju 上海普及書局</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ye Zhongleng 叶中冷</td>
<td>Xiaoxue changge chuji 小學唱歌集 (Collection of Songs for Primary Schools), Vols. 1-3.</td>
<td>Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館</td>
<td>1907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lu Baoheng, et al.</td>
<td>Xinbian changge ji 新編唱歌集 (Newly-Compiled Collection of Songs)</td>
<td>Hubei guanshuju 湖北官書局</td>
<td>1907</td>
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<tr>
<td>Xuebu bianyi tushu ju 學部編譯圖書局</td>
<td>Chudeng xiaoxue yuege jiaokeshu 初等小學樂歌教科書 (Elementary Song Textbook for Primary Schools)</td>
<td>Xuebu tushuju 學部圖書局</td>
<td>1907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jin Yi 金一</td>
<td>Xin Zhongguo changge 新中國唱歌 (Songs for New China)</td>
<td>Hongren guan 宏人館</td>
<td>1907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chen Jun, et al. 陳俊</td>
<td>Xiaoxue changge jiaokeshu 小學唱歌教科書 (Song Textbook for Primary Schools)</td>
<td>Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館</td>
<td>1907</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zhao Minchuan 赵銘傳</td>
<td>Dong Ya changge 東亞唱歌 (East Asian Songs)</td>
<td>Shanghai Shizhong shuju 上海時中書局</td>
<td>1907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wu Xi 王羲</td>
<td>Jinxinqu diyi ji 進行曲第一集 (Marching Songs), Vol. 1.</td>
<td>Shanghai shanggong xiaoxue xiao 上海尚公小學校</td>
<td>1908</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hu Junfu 胡君复</td>
<td>Xinzhuang changge ji, chubian 新撰唱歌集 (Newly-Compiled Songs), Vols. 1-3.</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>1909</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

51 For a brief bibliographical account of this anthology, see Han Guohuang, “Zaoqi Xiyue Dongjian zuozheng de faxian” 當期西樂東漸佐證的發現 (The Discovery of Evidence Concerning the Early Transmission of Western Music to China) in Zi xi cu Dong, Vol. 1, pp. 8-14.
The proliferation of school-song books had an impact went far beyond the field of music. Although initially intended for teaching purposes, Shen Xingong’s school-song series, for example, received such widespread use during the two decades between their first publication in 1904 and the rise of a new type of urban popular songs and musicals by Li Jinhui 黎锦晖 in the late 1920s that they were a major contributor to the popularity of Western-style vocal music. So popular were Shen’s songs that a concerned Li Shutong wrote in 1906:

Learners of music start to sing “Boys must have high aspirations” (Naner diyi zhiqi gao 男儿第一志气高) before they know much about music and those learning to play the organ begin to play “556655322 123” before they learn the correct finger technique.\(^{52}\)

“Boys must have high aspirations” was Shen’s first widely circulated hit song initially entitled “Physical exercise – Military drill” (ticao-bingcao 體操–兵操). The tune was adapted from a Japanese children’s song and “\(\text{55 66} | \text{55 3} | \text{22 12} | \text{3 0}\) ” are the first four bars of the song.\(^{53}\) Writing in 1937, Huang Zi 黄自 (1904-1938), the Yale-trained composer and future Dean of Studies at the National Shanghai Conservatory of Music, recalled that when he was two or three years old his mother sang him songs written by Shen. When he started school in Shanghai at the age of seven the first music lesson the teacher taught him was a song by Shen.\(^{54}\) The novelist, literary


\(^{53}\) For a thorough musicological examination of the origins and evolution of the song, see Qian Renkang, *Xuetang yuege kaoyuan*, pp. 1-5.

\(^{54}\) Huang Jinwu 黄今吾[Huang Zi]. “Xingong change ji xu”《心工唱歌集》序 (Preface to *Collected Songs of Shen Xingong*) (Wenrui yinshuguăn, 1937), reprinted in Yu Yuzi, Zhang Yuan eds., *Zhongguo jinxiandai yinyue jiaoyu wenxuan*, p. 152.
theorist and historian Shen Yanbing 沈雁冰, better known as Mao Dun 茅盾 (1896-1981), also recalled the lasting impact Shen’s school songs had on him during his formative years and claimed that he still remembered the tune and lyric of Shen’s most famous song *Huanghe* (Yellow River) even in his later years.\(^{55}\)

Reasons for the popularity of the school songs were not their artistic sophistication or melodic excellence but their simplicity and their social and political relevance. Shen’s songs were popular because they were easy to sing and could be easily adapted to serve various purposes. As can be seen in the following table, the same compilers continued to be the driving force behind the school-song book-publishing phenomenon after the founding of Republican China.

**SCHOOL-SONG BOOKS PUBLISHED 1912-1918**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title (in Chinese)</th>
<th>Title (in English)</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shen Xingong 沈心工</td>
<td><em>Minguo changge ji</em> 民國唱歌集 (Republican Songs), Vols. 1-4</td>
<td><em>Republican Songs</em>, Vols. 1-4</td>
<td>Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館</td>
<td>1912</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hua Hangchen 华航琛</td>
<td><em>Gonghe guomin changge ji</em> 政國民唱歌集 (Collection of Songs for National Citizens of the New Republic)</td>
<td><em>Collection of Songs for National Citizens of the New Republic</em></td>
<td>Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hu Junfu 胡君复</td>
<td><em>Xin changge</em> 新唱歌 (Newly-Composed Songs)</td>
<td><em>Newly-Composed Songs</em></td>
<td>Jiaoyubu 教育部</td>
<td>1913</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feng Liang 冯梁</td>
<td><em>Jun guomin changge ji</em> 軍國民教育唱歌集 (Collection of Songs for the Education of a Military Citizenry)</td>
<td><em>Collection of Songs for the Education of a Military Citizenry</em></td>
<td>Guangzhou yinyue jiaoyushe 广州音樂教育社</td>
<td>1913</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yu Yuan 余元</td>
<td><em>Ertong changge</em> 儿童唱歌 (Children’s Songs)</td>
<td><em>Children’s Songs</em></td>
<td>?</td>
<td>1913</td>
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<td>Zhang Xiushan 張秀山</td>
<td><em>Zaixin zhongdeng yinyue jiaokeshu</em> 最新中等音樂教科書 (The Latest Music Textbook for Middle Schools)</td>
<td><em>The Latest Music Textbook for Middle Schools</em></td>
<td>Xuanyuan ge 宣元閣</td>
<td>1913</td>
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<tr>
<td>Li Yanxing 李煥行, Li Zhuo 李倬</td>
<td><em>Zhong xiaoxue changge jiaokeshu</em> 中小學唱歌教科書 (Singing Textbooks for Primary and Secondary Schools), Vols. 1-2</td>
<td><em>Singing Textbooks for Primary and Secondary Schools</em>, Vols. 1-2</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>1913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hua Hangchen 华航琛</td>
<td><em>Xin jiaoyu changge ji</em> 新教育唱歌集 (Collection of Songs for New Education)</td>
<td><em>New Education Singing Collection</em></td>
<td>Shanghai jiaoyu shijinhui 上海教育實進會</td>
<td>1914</td>
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<td>Wang Dechang, et al</td>
<td><em>Zhonghua changge ji (1-4)</em> 中華唱歌集</td>
<td><em>Chinese Songs (1-4)</em></td>
<td>Zhonghua shuju 中華書局</td>
<td>1915</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{55}\) Qian Renkang, *Xuetang yuege kaoyuan*, p.7.
Just as Shen appropriated melodies of foreign and Chinese indigenous songs to serve his social, political and pedagogical purposes, later propagandists from both the Communist and Nationalist camps used his songs to express their respective political and nationalist concerns. This is nowhere clearer than in the military tunes which Shen appropriated from the Japanese navy. These were repeatedly set to new lyrics and used in military campaigns or at public rallies for mass mobilisation.\(^{56}\) Shen himself was certainly quick to use his songs to express his social and political aspirations. Shortly after the founding of the Republic, for example, Shen wrote such songs as *Zhonghua Minguo liguo ge* 中華民國立國歌 (Founding Song of the Chinese Republic), *Meizai Zhonghua* 美哉中華 (Magnificent China), *Geming jun* 革命軍 (Revolutionary Army), and *Geming jun kaixuan* 革命軍凱旋 (Triumph of the Revolutionary Army) to suit the political sensibilities of the new republican elite.\(^{57}\)

Given Shen and other school-song writers’ utilitarian attitude towards school songs, some historians of modern Chinese music hold them responsible for the rise of mass singing in modern China, claiming the school songs were essentially the forerunners of “*qunzhong gequ*” 群众歌曲 (songs for the masses) and “*geming gequ*” 革命歌曲 (revolutionary songs).\(^{58}\)

**Musical Sources of the School-Song Books**


\(^{57}\) Shen Qia, “Shen Xingong zhuan”, p. 60.

Qian Renkang 钱仁康, in his exhaustive study of the sources of the school-song music, has demonstrated that Europeanised Japanese school songs constituted one of the major root sources of the school-song melodies. This is hardly surprising given the crucial role Japan played in China’s reform in education. When proponents of the school-song movement in China first started writing or, strictly speaking, arranging songs, they naturally turned to Japanese school songs for inspiration. In some cases they followed the Japanese model blindly, substituting Chinese song lyrics for the original Japanese versions.

Shen Xingong, for example, was influenced in no small measure by Izawa Shūji. As illustrated by the following two examples, Shen’s Xuexiao change ji series was in fact directly inspired by, if not entirely based on, the song series, Shōgaku Shōka-shū Shohen 小学校唱歌集初编, published by Monbushō in 1881 under Izawa Shūji’s supervision.

59 Qian Renkang, pp. 64-109.
Fig. 9.5. Shen’s earliest song “Ticao” and its Japanese originals. From: Zi xì cu dong Vol. 2.

Fig. 9.6. Contents page of Shen’s Xuexiao changge ji. Vol. 2 (1906).
Shen’s method of teaching the scale and rhythm was also based on the methods Luther W. Mason had introduced to Japan in the early 1880s. For example, following Pestalozzian methods, Mason laid a strong emphasis on the value of the song method as opposed to note-reading. Shen followed Mason’s example by including theoretical instructions in his song anthologies rather than publishing them in separate book form.

By the mid 1900s, however, the period of servile imitation and indiscriminate adoption had come to an end. Zeng Zhimin wrote in 1905:

> When I first arrived in Japan [1901], I went to concerts and visited Japanese teachers. So impressed was I that I worshiped my Japanese teachers as if they had descended from a different planet. By the time I entered the Tokyo School of Music in winter 1903, however, I had begun to have grave doubts about the overall musical levels of the Japanese, the competence of the Japanese music teachers and the different ways they treated their students.

By 1906, Zeng had become so disillusioned with the standards of musical education in Japan that he began to urge those Chinese students who were serious about studying music “not to come to Japan but go to Europe.”

Zeng was not alone; even Shen Xingong grew bored with Japanese melodies:

> In the process of learning to write songs, I began by mainly selecting Japanese melodies. But nowadays I am no longer fond of these songs. I rather prefer European melodies. The small tonal range of Japanese tunes may be pleasing to the ear, but the tunes are trivial. By contrast, the tonal range of Western melodies is more complete and clear, and the music suggests a noble spirit.

Disillusionment with Japan led Chinese compilers of songbooks to turn to European, American and even traditional Chinese music for resources. Anthologies compiled

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from the late 1900s contained a large number of tunes adopted with or without 
modification from nineteenth-century European and American school songs as well as 
Chinese folk tunes.\textsuperscript{65}

Shen Xingong, as reflected in his later songbooks, showed a particular partiality 
for European folk tunes and Christian hymns.\textsuperscript{66} This may have something to do with 
his early association with the missionary college St John’s. Other Chinese school-
song writers and songbook compilers such as Ye Zhongleng, Hua Zhen, Zhao 
Mingchuan, Jin Yi and Hu Junfu also made frequent use of German, French, English 
and Scottish folk songs and American marching tunes in their song collections. Of 
the tunes most popular with Chinese songwriters and compilers were the French 
folksong “Ah! vous dirai-je, maman” --better known as “Twinkle, Twinkle Little 
Star”--, the Scottish folk tune “The Bluebell of Scotland” and the American minstrel 
song \textit{Rosa Lee}.\textsuperscript{67} The last named tune was so popular that Zeng Zhimin, Shen 
Xingong, Zhao Mingchuan, Xin Han, and Hua Zhen all included it in their 
songbooks.\textsuperscript{68} Chinese school-song writers also set lyrics to the melodies written by 
Henry Rowley Bishop (1786-1855), Stephan C. Foster (1826-1864), Harvey 
Worthington Loomis (1865-1930), Annie F. Harrison (1884-?), and J. P. Ordway 
(1824-1880).\textsuperscript{69} Only few early Chinese songwriters made use of melodies composed 
by such classical composers as George Frederic Handel (1685-1759), Carl Maria von 
Weber (1786-1826) and Richard Wagner (1813-83).\textsuperscript{70}

\textsuperscript{65} Qian Renkang, pp. 111-270. 
\textsuperscript{66} Qian Renkang, pp. 276-82. 
\textsuperscript{67} Qian Renkang, pp. 167-68, 179-80, and 212-17. 
\textsuperscript{68} Qian Renkang, pp. 212-17. 
\textsuperscript{69} The use and adaptation of Western songs to suite various purposes were not unique to China. In 
Vietnam, for example, a similar movement grew in the 1920s and 1930s to appropriate French 
melodies and adapt them to Vietnamese settings. See Gibbs, “The West’s Songs, Our Songs: The 
Introduction and Adaptation of Western Popular Song in Vietnam before 1940”, p. 57. 
\textsuperscript{70} Qian Renkang, pp. 151, 157, 160-62.
In their searching for tunes that could be set to texts in proper rhythm, rhyme and phrasing, some Chinese school-song arrangers, such as Shen Xingong, also demonstrated a conspicuous predilection for Chinese folk songs. Like Julia Mateer before him, Shen made good use of folk tunes such as *Molihua* 茉莉花 (Jasmine) and *Fengyang huagu* 风阳花鼓 (Drum Song of Fengyang). This contrasted sharply with Izawa’s generally disparaging attitude toward Japan’s indigenous musical tradition. Although he stressed the importance of teaching Japanese music, Izawa often held Japanese music, especially popular music (*zokugaku* 俗曲) in low esteem. Howe even goes as far as to suggest that Izawa’s exception of court music (*gagaku* 雅樂) from criticism and his limited advocacy of traditional Japanese music “were perhaps to please his superiors.”

**The Introduction of Number Notation**

In emulating the Japanese example, early Chinese practitioners of Western music abandoned the traditional Chinese practice of singing by rote and adopted a new system of teaching sight-singing: number (or cipher) notation.

Known in China as *jianpu* 简谱 (simple or simplified notation), this method was based on the figure-notation proposed by Rousseau in 1742. It is also known as Galin-Paris- Chevé method. The method gained wide currency in France in the second half of the nineteenth century and was later spread to Switzerland, the Netherlands, Russia and England. The main characteristic of the method is its use

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72 Howe, p. 105.
of numerals 1-7 instead of the seven notes of the diatonic major scale with number zero representing the musical rest. It was based on the “movable do” principle and was designed to help both students and “their often less than technically accomplished teachers.” Because it was better suited for community singing and easy to master, it was favoured by a number of social reformers. Leo Tolstoy, for example, used the method to teach peasant children music on his estate at Yásnaya Polyána. The use of number notation became so widespread in Japan after Luther W. Mason’s appointment in 1880 that almost all Japanese songbooks published in the late Meiji period were notated in this method.

There were two channels through which this notational method was introduced to China: Chinese students in Japan and Japanese teachers in China. On the one hand early Chinese school-song writers learned the method through contact with their Japanese teachers and their familiarity with Japanese textbooks. On the other hand, Japanese teachers employed by the Qing government and local officials taught this method at various normal schools and private educational establishments. The popularity of the notation was further enhanced when major publishers such as the Commercial Press in Shanghai were induced to issue songbooks employing this method. An overwhelming majority of the early songbooks were in number notation.

Yet the Chinese copying from Japan was not without difference. Unlike most of the Japanese school-song writers who treated number notation as an “approach device” and presented it in conjunction with standard staff notation, the majority of their Chinese counterparts abandoned the use of staff notation altogether in order to

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75 Rainbow, p. 203.
76 Han Guohuang, “Qingmo de xuetang yuege”, p. 22.
77 See *Zhongguo yinyue shupu zhi*, p. 13.
make the reading of music more widely accessible. Consequently the mastering of staff notation was left only to more serious students. In treating number notation as an alternative form of notation early Chinese school-song writers and compilers introduced to China a system that was only suitable for basic community singing. The limitations of number notation were quickly exposed when more sophisticated music pieces were introduced. Because Chinese school-song writers did not present number notation in conjunction with ordinary staff notation, students were at a loss as to how the two forms of notation were related. With no understanding of staff notation, students were musically illiterate to tackle the works of Western composers such as Bach or Beethoven.

The use of number notation was not universally approved in spite of its popularity and soundness. Dissenting voices without exception were from persons with better training in Western music. Zeng Zhimin, who was hailed by Liang Qichao as the first person to enter the Tokyo School of Music and to devote his life to the study of music, was perhaps the first to advocate the use of the European five-line notation.\(^78\) Although himself a keen promoter of school songs, Zeng never treated number notation as an alternative form of notation in its own right. In the teaching texts he compiled, Zeng always followed the Japanese example by presenting numerals in conjunction with staff notation. Clearly he intended to limit the use of number notation to the earliest learning stages. Having two forms of notation together (see Fig. 9:7) was his way of ensuring that the student would grow accustomed to the eventual use of staff notation.

\(^{78}\) Zeng Zhimin, “Jiaoshou yinyue zhi chubu” 教授音樂之初步 (Basic Steps of Music Teaching), Jiangsu, Nos. 11 & 12 combined (1904), p. 107. On Liang Qichao’s exaltation of Zeng’s musical study, see Da Wei, “Liang Qichao, Zeng Zhimin dui jindai yinyue wenhua de gongxian”, p. 40.
Li Shutong was also quick to voice his doubts about the wisdom of using number notation once he began to attend lessons in piano, music theory and composition at the Music Academy in Ueno Park (上野音楽學校 Ongaku Gakkō) in 1906. He wrote:

The Japanese used number notation in their shōka-shū published ten years ago; but nowadays they all use the five-line notation even for songbooks designed for kindergartens. [In contrast] number notation is still used in most of the recently published songbooks in China and taught in most of the Chinese schools. This does not seem to be quite right.\textsuperscript{79}

In his subsequent work, Li not only notated all his songs in Western five-line notation but also regretted having used number notation in his Guoxue changge ji 國學唱歌集 (Songs for National Learning). He even went as far as to urge his Chinese publishers to destroy the printing blocks and never reissue the anthology in number notation.\textsuperscript{80}

Li’s advocacy of staff notation may seem unexpected, as he had been a user of number notation prior to his departure for Japan in autumn 1905. But his was not an isolated case. Reformers of Chinese music at the time commonly held that Chinese

music was somewhat backward. As mentioned earlier, staff notation, along with functional harmony, counterpoint, orchestration, and the superior manufacturing of Western instruments like the piano, was considered more “advanced” and “more scientific.”

In fact, calls to substitute standard staff notation for China’s indigenous notational systems and to replace the “movable do” with the “fixed do” system were to become a recurring theme.

Yet despite repeated attempts to popularise staff notation, number notation was to remain the most popular notational system in China even to this day. A casual perusal of song anthologies and music textbooks for schools published in China throughout the twentieth century reveals the extraordinary popularity of number notation. Even as recently as 1979 when the Chinese government began the colossal project to collect and preserve living folk music repertories from all regions of China, number notation was preferred over staff notation.

**Controversies Concerning School-Song Writing**

Shen Xingong and most of his fellow school-song writers choosing to use European and American popular tunes rather than relying on European classics to carry out their pedagogical goals is not surprising. It is first and foremost indicative of the pioneers’ musical pragmatism and their utilitarian impulses. After all, the Chinese promoted European-style school songs not because they admired Western artistic values but for practical and extra-musical considerations. To the pioneer

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82 For example, Chao Mei-pa [Zhao Meibo, 1905-?], a graduate of the Royal Conservatory of Music in Brussels and a renowned music educator, surveying the recent developments in Chinese music, wrote approvingly in 1937, “Change was introduced by adopting the ‘Fixed Do’ system instead of the ‘Movable Do’ system.” See Chao, “The Trend of Modern Chinese music”, p. 279.

songwriters, music was first and foremost a tool for propagating their social and political ideals. Their primary consideration was not to elevate the music tastes of the populace but to encourage as many people as possible to take part in music making. To achieve this objective they needed to produce short and simple songs which could be easily learned by the uninitiated. This was why lyrics rather than tunes were emphasized. But these songs could not just be simple slogan-like agitprop. To be an effective tool, they had to be artistically attractive as well. In this respect, the Chinese encountered difficulties not dissimilar to those met previously by the Protestant missionaries. 84

The over reliance on foreign popular songs is also attributable to a general lack of formal training in Western music on the part of these pioneers. This lack of training sets them apart, both in ideas and practice, from those better trained in Western music like Zeng Zhimin, Xiao Youmei, Li Shutong and, later, the May Fourth promoters of Western music who prized the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European musical practice as the highest achievements of Western musical culture.

In experimenting with setting new lyrics to existing tunes and composing new songs, Shen Xingong, like the Protestant missionaries before him, placed a strong emphasis on the primacy of lyrics and the qualities of simplicity. Commenting on the phenomenal success of Shen’s songbooks in 1906, Chen Maozhi used such adjectives as “natural”, “pure”, and “straightforward yet charming” to characterise Shen’s songs. 85

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84 As will be recalled, starting from the early 1890s missionary attention to writing hymns in Chinese musical idioms and setting hymn lyrics to pre-existing Chinese melodies became such a phenomenon that the missionary journal The Chinese Recorder often carried lengthy articles debating the pros and cons of such practices.

Shen’s lack of advanced music training and his emphasis on simplicity led him to focus almost exclusively on singing in unison with little interest in part-songs. He was content with simple melodic lines and unsophisticated rhythmic patterns with no attention to harmonisation. His most renowned work *Huanghe* (Yellow River) (see Fig. 9:8), for example, is written in the Western major mode C, 4/4 meter and the notes used are all within the natural register of a child’s voice.

![Fig. 9:8. Shen Xingong’s *Huanghe*](image)

Although Shen used semitones and a variety of note values, including quarter rests, dotted quarter notes, dotted eights, and occasional sixteenth notes and so on to create
variety, the majority of the notes are simple half or quarter notes. These are also the principles followed previously by the missionaries.

Shen was by no means alone in stressing the principle of simplicity in school-song production. As Paul Bailey points out, “During the last years of the Qing… reformers and revolutionaries promoted the use of a more accessible written language free of the rigidities and obfuscation of the classical literary style.” Ye Zhongleng, compiler of the hugely successful textbook series *Xiaoxue changge chuji* 小學唱歌集 (Collection of Songs for Primary Schools), wrote in 1907: “As far as setting lyrics to existing tunes is concerned, it is important that the lyric should be written in an elegant yet easy to understand style.” Earlier Zeng Zhimin had expressed similar sentiments in the preface to his own song anthology *Jiaoyu changge ji* in 1904:

School song lyrics used in European and American elementary schools are written in a style easier than normal readers. In Japan also, most of the school songs are composed in plain everyday language. Children find them easy to understand yet fun to learn. [In contrast], the so-called school songs taught at our schools are written in a style that is ten times harder than normal school readers. In some cases, one single character or one sentence may require several pages of explanatory notes. Even so, children are still having difficulties understanding them. How can the purpose of teaching school songs be served if we persist using this kind of songs to teach our children?

While Shen’s partiality for simple language and melodies may have stemmed from his experience in teaching songs to large classes of untutored children and adults, Zeng’s similar point of view may well have been influenced by the Japanese *Genbunitchi* 言文一致 (language simplification) movement.

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86 For a musicological analysis of this song, see Qian Renkang, pp. 6-7.
87 Bailey, p. 31.
88 Ye Zhongleng, “Nuzi xin change sanji liyan” 《女子新唱歌》例言 (Foreword to New Songs for Girls, Vol. 3) (1907), reprinted in Zhang Jingwei, YYSL, p. 160. Ye’s series is a progressively arranged set of three volumes songbooks. It was a systematic and thorough course of teaching vocal music. Each book began with a theoretical introduction in addition to singing exercises and literature for practice. First published in 1907, it had gone through ten reprints by 1910. See Wu Yongyi, pp. 282-83.
Starting in the pre-Meiji nineteenth century, the *Genbunitchi* movement aimed at replacing the difficult literary styles used in the Tokugawa period with a simple style approximating the spoken language. As a movement of far-reaching significance, the *Genbunitchi* also had its manifestation in the field of music education. Tamura Torazō 田村虎蔵 (1873-1943) and Nassho Beijirō 納所辯次郎 were among the first to apply the principles of the *Genbunitchi* to song textbook compilation by making “the song texts simple and easily understandable.” This resulted in the publication of the ten-volume school-song compilation *Kyōka tekiyō yōnen shōka* 教科適用幼年唱歌 (Childhood Songs for School Use) in 1900, not long before Zeng Zhimin’s arrival in Japan. Believing that “for small children one ought to write pieces that are based on their conversational every-day language,” Tamura Torazō further experimented with teaching *Genbunitchi* school songs at the elementary school attached to the Tokyo Higher Normal School. It is of course difficult to ascertain exactly how much Zeng was influenced by this Japanese movement. But judging from the following passage Zeng wrote in Japan in 1904, it is safe to say that he was certainly in agreement with Tamura Torazō on the need to replace the traditionally stilted poetic diction with lyrics written in plain speech:

> As far as writing lyrics is concerned, it is better to be plain and simple than ornate. Instead of being too concerned with subtlety and elaborate diction, it is better to be straightforward and natural; and rather than using ancient expressions overloaded with allusions, it is better to keep the lyric plain and simple so that the lyric can flow smoothly.

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92 Eppstein, p. 84.
93 Eppstein, p. 82.
94 Zeng Zhimin, “Jiaoyu changj ji xue”, p. 208. It is interesting to note that while Shen Xingong and Zeng were advocating the use of simple language in school-song writing, Chen Duxiu 陳獨秀 (1879-1942) and Hu Shi 胡適 (1891-1962) were also busy promoting the importance of baihua 白話 (vernacular) in literary reform. See Chow Tse-tsung, *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China*, Paperback edition (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1967), pp. 271-72.
Not every school-song writer was content with writing songs in the vernacular, however. Some school-song writers complained about the time and emphasis given to such exercises at the expense of literary elegance. Compounded of pride, suspicion, and resentment, criticisms were particularly aimed at the palpable neglect shown to China’s own cultural accomplishments. Even the most reasonable and cosmopolitan music critics showed evidence from time to time of a resentment that was clearly very close to the surface. Wang Guowei, for example, made his dissatisfaction clear by declaring publicly that insofar as artistic value and aesthetic appeal were concerned, new school-song lyrics were immeasurably inferior to ancient masterpieces.⁹⁵ Among a chorus of dissenting voices, Li Shutong’s was perhaps the loudest. Li, like Wang Guowei, was concerned that an all-out acceptance and imitation of Western styles would lead to the abandonment of native artistic traditions. He was particularly alarmed that in their eagerness for European and Japanese songs the early Chinese school-song writers were neglecting highly developed traditional art forms such as the various styles of classical poetry-writing (cizhang 詞章). Instead of applauding Zeng and Shen’s efforts with unreserved enthusiasm, Li made his stance clear by publishing his own song anthology appropriately entitled Guoxue changge ji in Shanghai in June 1905.⁹⁶

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The publication of Li’s anthology represented a facet of the school-song movement that had a deep attachment to China’s traditional cultural forms. Moreover, it signalled that not all reform-minded individuals were in agreement with Shen and Zeng in the way they promoted Western-style school songs in China. In stark contrast to Shen’s use of simple everyday idioms, Li chose his song texts from such classical collections as the *Shijing* 詩經 and *Chuci* 楚辭. He also set poems by Li Bo 李白 (701-62 A. D.), Li Shangyin 李商陮 (813-58 A. D.), and Xin Qiji 辛弃疾 (1140-1207 A. D.) to tunes selected from the traditional *Kunqu* and other traditional repertoire. Furthermore, against the general trend of setting texts to patriotic marching songs, Li selected melodies that resembled ritual music but also showed a particular fondness for Christian hymn music. Several of the songs included in his anthology are set to hymn tunes. For example, *Ai* 愛 (Love) is based on the hymn *Jesus Loves Me* by William B. Bradbury; both *Huashen* 化身 (Incarnation) and *Nan’er* 男儿 (Men) take their tune from the hymn *Nearer, My God, To Thee* by Lowell Mason; and *Wuyi* 無衣 (Without Clothes) uses the music of a hymn by Sarah Hart entitled *Little Drops of Water.*

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97 Qian Renkang, pp. 272-74.
Li’s deep attachment to China’s classical poetry and traditional music remained undiminished even after he began formal study of oil painting at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tōkyō Bijutsu Gakkō 東京美術學校) and the piano, music theory and composition at the Music Academy in Ueno in 1906. In fact, Li’s stay in Japan served to reinforce his faith in China’s literary tradition. Writing in 1906 under his pen name Xishuang 息霜, Li remarked:

After I arrived in Japan and did some desultory readings of Japanese school songs, I discovered that about ninety-five percent of the lyrics are actually modelled after our ancient poems. (Most of the major Japanese writers of song texts are well versed in classical Chinese poetry). In recent times Chinese scholars have been so preoccupied with preparing for the imperial exams (tiekuo 帖括) that they neglected the art of poetry writing (cizhang 詞章). As a result, [the art of] classical poetry and prose writing has been frowned upon. Later when Western learning was introduced and became fashionable, the word cizhang almost fell into oblivion. Those who have neither learning nor skill treated it as trash and denounced this fine classical tradition as old and obsolete. As a result, the language of elegance is all but abandoned. Ironically when they heard Japanese school songs they marvelling at them, eulogising them as their ideal. Little did they know that what they considered to be quintessentially Japanese was actually a cast-off from our classical poetry.

This attachment to Chinese literary and artistic tradition was not a spur-of-the-moment thing. It had its origins to his Confucian upbringing, political affiliation and his versatility in various Chinese traditional art forms. Son of a wealthy salt merchant and high-ranking official, Li, who also has the distinction of being “the first

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98 Howard L. Boorman ed., *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967-71), Vol. 2, p. 325. Li was also involved in theatrical study. One of his drama teachers was the famous playwright Fujisawa Asajiro 藤澤浅二郎. In late 1906, Li, together with Zeng Xiaogu 曾孝谷, organised the first Chinese drama group the Chunliu she 春柳社 (Spring Willow Club) and played lead roles in such plays as Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (黑奴吁天录) and Alexander Dumas’ *Camille*. See Jin Mei. 金梅, *Hongyi fashi Li Shutong* 弘一法師李叔同 (Biography of Li Shutong) (Beijing: Renmin yinyue chubanshe, 2002), pp. 74-85.
100 Jin Mei, p. 1.
Chinese student to have received thorough training in Western art in Japan,“101 became known for his artistic flair in poetry, calligraphy, painting and seal carving when he was a still youngster living in the treaty port of Tianjin.102

Li’s literary and artistic preferences were strongly conditioned by the intellectual milieu of the time and the kind of intellectual company he found himself in. He was in harmony with the proponents of the guocui 国粹 (National Essence) movement in terms of intellectual temperament and literary practice.103 During his exile in Shanghai’s French concession (1898-1905), his circles of friends included Xu Huanyuan 許幻園 (1878-1928?), Cai Xiaoxiang 蔡小香 (1862-1912), Yuan Xilian 袁希濂 (1874-?), and Zhang Xiaolou 張小樓 (1877-1950), all of whom were known for their artistic proclivities and their attachment to traditional Chinese arts. Together they spent much of their leisure time practising calligraphy, Chinese-style painting, seal carving, poetry composing and making music.104 In Shanghai, Li also spent much of his time cultivating the techniques of Peking opera singing and acting, an interest he had developed since his Tianjin days; he even established a reputation as a skilled amateur performer (piaoyou 皮友).105

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104 Jin Mei, pp. 15-9.
Li Shutong’s interest in traditional art forms, however, did not mean that he was indifferent to Western learning and politically conservative. Like Shen Xingong, Li was strongly supportive of the 1898 Reform Movement and considered himself a member of the reform party led by Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao. One often-quoted example of his affiliation with the reformers is his carving of a seal bearing “Nanhai Kangjun shi woshi” 南海康君是我师 (Kang Youwei is my teacher).\footnote{Boorman, Vol. 2, p. 324a; Jin Mei, p. 13.}

After fleeing to Shanghai in late 1898 on the arrest of the reformers, he not only began formal Western learning, but also became involved with a group of radical revolutionaries. Beginning in 1902, for example, Li studied economics for a time at Nanyang Gongxue and while there, he and Shao Lizi 邵力子 (1882-1967), later known for his important role in the Nationalist government, became two favourite students of Cai Yuanpei.\footnote{Boorman, Vol. 2, p. 324; Jin Mei, pp. 28-34.}
As one of the three most “notable” composers of Chinese school songs (the other two being Shen Xingong and Zeng Zhimin), Li differed from the majority of the school-song writers in many respects. But the most important difference, as far as music is concerned, was his partiality for the European-style art song and his effort to promote it in China. It has been pointed out that Li’s attainment in various forms of classical Chinese poetry writing enabled him to write his lyrics in “a new form of literary written style which is comprehensible without sacrifice of the classical written structure.” As a songwriter, Li certainly exhibited a high degree of sensitivity to the relationship between the lyric and the melody. By carefully studying the melodies before writing the lyrics, Li succeeded in making “the Western melodies he adopts sound as though they were written for the Chinese lyrics.”

The unique qualities aside, Li’s songs, most of which were written after his return from Japan, indeed suggest a willingness on his part to embrace the Western art song tradition without reservation. Li’s songs were often written with piano accompaniment and harmonisation. His most celebrated song Chunyou (Spring Outing), for example, is a good example of his skilful use of this transplanted musical form.

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109 Unlike Shen and Zeng, who made their impact mainly in the realm of music education, Li was known for his versatility in all branches of the arts. Borrowing Joseph Levenson’s term “amateur ideal”, Chang Chi-jen, a historian of modern Chinese music, likens Li to the European “Renaissance Man.” See Chang, “Alexander Tcherepnin, His Influence on Modern Chinese Music” (Ed.D. diss., Columbia University College, 1983), p. 19. I would not go as far as quoting Levenson’s term to categorise Li’s whole artistic endeavours, as Li’s participation in music and the fine arts had a strong utilitarian ring to it and was by no means just for the purpose of “self-cultivation”. But it is clear that Li’s literary and artistic accomplishments do reflect his holistic approach to the arts.
111 Liang, “Western Influence on Chinese Music in the Early Twentieth Century”, p. 64.
The Introduction of Western Musical Theory

The first decade of the twentieth century also saw the emergence of Chinese compiled or translated textbooks on Western musical theory. As in the case of school-song compilation, Chinese students in Japan, Zeng Zhimin especially, played a leading role in the translation and compilation of instructional materials in China. Like Shen Xingong, Zeng Zhimin was born in Shanghai to a family of wealthy but progressive merchant background. He went to Japan with his wife Cao Rujin in 1901. While his wife studied singing and violin at the Tokyo School of Music, Zeng enrolled as a law student at Waseda University at his father’s request. Records of the
Tokyo School of Music indicate that from 1904 to 1907 Zeng studied singing and piano lessons there.\(^{112}\)

![Fig. 9:12. Zhen Zhimin (second from right), his wife Cao Rujin (second from left) and his brother-in-law Cao Rulin (first from right) in Japan (1901). From: Han Guohuang yinyue wenji, Vol. 1.](image)

Zeng believed that the practical and theoretical aspects of music formed an essential partnership and the early steps in musical education should encourage the principles of musical theory to proceed in equal measure with instruction in singing and instrument playing.\(^{113}\) This stress is clearly reflected in the number of books and articles he either authored or translated. Zeng began to write about musical theory before he formally enrolled at the Tokyo School of Music. His first work, entitled “Yueli dayi” 專理大意 (Introduction to Music Theory), was published in the Tokyo-based Chinese student periodical Jiangsu 江蘇 in 1903. In 1904 he published a book entitled Yuedian jiaokeshu 樂典教科書 (Textbook of Musical Grammar) in Tokyo.


Although around that time a number of similar books were published by Christian missionaries and their converts, Zeng’s book, based on an English textbook translated into Japanese by Suzuki Komojiro, seems to be the first of its kind ever written by a Chinese with no Christian affiliation.\textsuperscript{114} Because of his formal training in Western music, Zeng was able to define sounds, notes, stave, rise and fall, and so on in a much more scholarly manner than his Chinese contemporaries. Of particular significance was Zeng’s introduction of a welter of technical terms and their definitions into the Chinese lexicon.\textsuperscript{115}

Unlike Shen and the majority of school-song compilers, Zeng was also interested in the more sophisticated compositional and performing techniques of Western art music. In autumn 1905, barely a year after his enrolment at the Tokyo School of Music, he published his “Hesheng lueyi” 和聲略意 (Basic Principles of Harmony) in instalment in the Tokyo-based radical Chinese student periodical

\textsuperscript{114} Zhang Qian, p. 287; Wu Yongyi, \textit{YYJY}, p.124; Chen Lingqun, “Zeng Zhimin-”, p. 45.

Xingshi 醒狮 (Awakened Lion). Yet, Zeng’s interest in advanced Western compositional techniques did not seem to dampen his enthusiasm for simple song writing because in the same year he also wrote “Jianyi jinxingqu” 简易進行曲 (Simple Marches).

Zeng’s attention to the practical uses of music also saw him devoting much energy to the musical effect of school singing. For him, unless students were taught singing in a systematic way and instructed in musical theory, nothing enduring could be achieved. Because of this conviction, Zeng published as early as 1903 his article “Singing and Methods of Teaching Songs” (Changge ji jiaoshou fa 唱歌及教授法). A year later, he wrote “Basic Steps in Music Teaching” (Jiaoshou yinyue chubu 教授音樂初步), which was an adaptation of Luther W. Mason’s The National Music Teacher translated into Japanese by Uchida Yaichi in 1883 as Ongaku shinan 音樂指南.

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116 According to Chen Lingqun, Zeng’s article is the earliest of its kind ever written by a Chinese. See Chen Lingqun, “Zeng Zhimin”, p. 45.  
119 Jiangsu, No. 7 (1903), pp. 59-74.  
120 Published in Jiangsu, Nos. 11 & 12 combined (1904), pp. 107-20.
Zeng Zhimin also stressed the importance of keyboard instruments in learning music. From an advertisement placed in *Xingshi* in 1905, we learn that his *Fengqin lianxi fa* 風琴練習法 (Methods of Playing the Organ), along with his *Jiaoyu changge ji, Guomin changge ji* 國民唱歌集 (Collection of Songs for National Citizens), and other teaching manuals, were to be published in Shanghai by the Kaiming Book Co. (Kaiming Shudian 开明書店).\(^{121}\) In a lengthy article he wrote in 1904 he suggested manufacturing Western organs and pianos as one of the four ways to reform Chinese music.\(^{122}\) Organ playing also featured prominently in the detailed curriculum he prescribed for serious learners of music. For kindergarten and primary-school music teachers, he recommended the two-volume organ manual *Fengqin jiaoze ben* 風琴教則本 (Manual for Organ Playing) published in Japan should be used as a textbook. But for those intending to work in secondary schools should study the more advanced

\(^{121}\) Chen Lingjun, “Zeng Zhimin”, p. 45.

\(^{122}\) Zeng Zhimin, “Yinyue jiaoyu lun”, p. 56.
manual Gaodeng fengqin jiaoze ben 高等風琴教則本 (Manual for Advanced Organ Playing) in addition to Fengqin jiaoze ben.\(^{123}\)

Zeng not only wrote about the importance of instrumental music in music education he also practised what he preached. After returning to China in 1907, he joined with two Japanese-trained musicians, Gao Yanyun 高砚雲 and Feng Yaxiong 馮亞雄, to hold a summer music course in Shanghai teaching brass, woodwind and percussion instruments as well as Western music theory to the general public. In the following year, Zeng set up a school for underprivileged children and purchased various Western instruments for teaching use. He even established a forty-piece orchestra at the school with himself as conductor and his wife as concertmaster.\(^{124}\)

![Fig. 9:15. Zeng Zhimin and his orchestra. From: Jiaoyu zazhi, No. 3 (February 1911)](image)

Although Zeng showed a keen interest in the technical aspects of Western music, it would be wrong to assume that he was a believer in art for art’s sake. On the contrary, Zeng’s promotion of Western music theory was motivated as much by his belief in the social value of Western music as by his interest in its artistic form. He repeatedly emphasised the moral and ethical virtues of music in education and his


conviction that the exclusion of music in China’s traditional education was partially responsible for China’s decline as a civilised nation. He wrote in 1903:

Music is emphasised by people in countries as far as Europe, America and as near as Japan whenever they talk about education. Singing as a subject of study in elementary schools is ranked as highly as their national language… Music can inspire good feelings and help cultivate joyful disposition and therefore as a subject of study it is indispensable.\textsuperscript{125}

In 1904 he reiterated his utilitarian viewpoint by stating that music was the most urgently needed tool to bring about a total transformation of Chinese society.\textsuperscript{126} He even went as far as to assert that music brings more benefits to society than it does to the education of children. He spelled out the ethical, intellectual and physical benefits of music: music is good for ethical education because it fosters a sense of loyalty, filial piety, public-spiritedness, self-determination and independence; music is a good for intellectual education because it helps the acquiring of general as well as specialised knowledge; and music is good for physical education because it is conducive to the fostering of a martial spirit and to the development of physical agility.\textsuperscript{127}

Apart from its apparent Confucian colouring, Zeng’s emphasis on the intellectual, physical and particularly moral benefits of music in education may be understood in the broader context of developments in Japanese educational thought at that time. Several writers have pointed out the moralistic tendency in Japanese educational thinking in the 1880s and 1890s.\textsuperscript{128} Zeng’s rationale certainly bears a

\textsuperscript{125} Zeng Zhimin, “Yuéli daví”, \textit{Jiangsu}, No. 6 (1903), p. 63.
strong resemblance to statements Izawa Shūji made in his introduction to Shōgaku Shōkashu Shohen in 1881.\textsuperscript{129}

Zeng might also have been influenced by the writings of David P. Page (1810-848). Page’s Theory and Practice of Teaching was translated into Japanese (Peiji-shi Kyōjuron 彼日氏教授論) as early as 1876. Page chose music “not as an end in itself or for its artistic merits… but for its practical effectiveness in character building, maintaining good order, and promoting clear enunciation and good reading ability.”\textsuperscript{130}

The didactic and moral underpinnings of Page’s views of music teaching would have certainly struck a harmonious chord with anyone with a Confucian educational background:

[Music] promotes good reading and speaking, by disciplining the ear to distinguish sounds; and it also facilitates the cultivation of the finer feelings of our nature. It aids very much in the government of the school, as its exercise gives vent to that restlessness which otherwise would find an escapement in boisterous noise and whispering – and thus it often proves a safety valve, through which a love of vociferation and activity may pass off in a more harmless and a more pleasing way…

Music is the language of the heart, and though capable of being grossly perverted… its natural tendency is to elevate the affections, to soothe the passions and to refine the taste… It is the united testimony of all who have judiciously introduced singing into their schools, that it is among the best instrumentalities for the promotion of good feelings and good order.\textsuperscript{131}

Zeng’s belief in the primary importance of music in social and political reform also led him to view China’s indigenous musical traditions from a strongly utilitarian perspective. He formed a clear distinction between the types of music to be used or discarded. He was well aware that China had a long tradition of using music as a means of education. But the so-called “\textit{liu yi} 六藝 (six arts) practice, in his view, was lost.\textsuperscript{132} Chinese music of his time, he declared, was only a kind of “social music”

\textsuperscript{129} Izawa Shūji’s introduction is cited in Eppstein, “Musical Instruction in Meiji Education”, p. 28
\textsuperscript{130} Eppstein, “Musical Instruction in Meiji Education”, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{131} David Perkins Page, The Theory and Practice of Teaching (1873), quoted in Eppstein, pp. 4-5.
(shehui yinyue 社會音樂). By “social music,” Zeng was referring to Chinese popular entertainment music such as the solo songs dominant in urban centres (xiaoqü 小曲), theatre music (xiqü 戏曲), and song-narratives (qüyi 曲藝). In his view, this type of music was for pleasures, and, as a cheap form of entertainment commonly practised and enjoyed by people of low socio-economic stratum, it was morally degenerate and licentious. Because these kinds of music had no value in exalting ethical virtues, Zeng argued, they were inappropriate in schools or as an agent for social and political change. Moreover, because of its degenerate nature, this music had to be replaced by “school music” (xuexiao yinyue 學校音樂). The term “school music” suggests that it was only used within China’s modern schools. In fact, what Zeng meant was a new type of music, namely Westernised music capable of functioning as a didactic tool. In Zeng’s view, this kind of music was not only more refined artistically, more scientific in terms of its notation, but, most importantly, capable of promoting social and political change.\(^{133}\)

Zeng’s distinction between “school music” and “social music” can be understood as a natural outgrowth of the traditional Confucian distinction between “vulgar music” and “refined music.” As Kuo-huang Han has pointed out, “For centuries Confucian scholars had shown sharp divisions in thought concerning the two types of music, namely, secular and refined (correct) music.”\(^{134}\) Confucius himself certainly had much to say about the harmful effects that vulgar music could have on a country and its people. One often-quoted example is his indignation upon hearing the music of the states of Zheng 鄫 and Wei 衛:

The tones of Zheng and Wei were tones of a world in chaos and compare to the dilatory ways of the people. The tones of the Mulberry Grove above the P’u

\(^{133}\) Zeng Zhimin, “Yinyue jiaoyu lun”, pp. 59-60.
\(^{134}\) Kuo-huang Han, “The Importation of Western Music to China”, p. 235.
River were tones of a state facing extinction. The administration was dissolute, and the people wandered about haplessly. They vilified their superiors and behaved with such selfish abandon that nothing could save the situation. Zheng tones are of a mind that tends toward doting excess and licentiousness. Song tones are of a mind frail and effeminate. Those of Wei are of a mind rushed and vexed, those of Qi a mind haughty and remote. All four of these are excessive in their (external) attractiveness, and they are, therefore, harmful to one’s virtue.\textsuperscript{135}

Due to the belief in the overwhelming power of music and the presumed relationship between music, emotions, moral character, and political governance, Confucian-trained scholars had a natural aversion to the type of music that was associated with sensual enjoyment. Coming from a privileged background, Zeng, as well as all the educated classes in China, was doubtless well versed in Confucian ideas about music and, as demonstrated by his division of music, he certainly shared Confucius’ political and moralistic concerns.

While there can be no doubt that Zeng’s elitist viewpoint owes its origin to his Confucian upbringing, his ideas and attitudes should also be placed in the context of Japanese musical iconoclasm. Zeng’s sneering at Chinese popular entertainment music resembles a similar attitude towards indigenous Japanese secular musical tradition exhibited slightly earlier by his Japanese mentors. As mentioned above, Izawa Shūji, the most influential music reformer and educator of the Meiji era, was deeply ambiguous in his attitude towards popular Japanese music. A comparison of the following two passages, one by Izawa and the other by Zeng, shows a clear ideological affinity:

The popular music of Japan has remained for many centuries in the hands of the lowest and most ignorant classes of society. It did not advance moral or physical culture, but was altogether immoral in tone. It is against the progress of the education of society. It is against the introduction of good music into the country.\textsuperscript{136}

There must be a clear distinction between “school music” and “social music”.... “Social music” has fallen into the hands of the low and humble classes and is no longer salvageable. What we should study is “school music.” Nowadays most of the “social music” is lascivious and degenerate. However, once “school music” is developed, music of the other kind will be eliminated through natural selection.\textsuperscript{137}

Clearly both Izawa and Zeng were deeply steeped in the moralistic tradition of Confucianism and both of them saw music primarily as a force for good or evil. Seeing that the outcome of education is a moral one, both Izawa and Zeng believed in the importance of promoting music of the appropriate kind.

But unlike Izawa who had a grudging respect for some forms of traditional Japanese music such as the court music \textit{Gagaku}, \textit{Nō} theatre music, \textit{biwa} (Japanese short-necked plucked lute) music, and even some forms of “popular music” like \textit{Naga-uta} and \textit{koto} music, Zeng’s iconoclasm was more radical. As far as music is concerned, he argued, a radical change in thinking must take place:

We must not only get rid of the outworn ideas that consider everything archaic and traditional as good but also do away with the bad habit of chasing current fashions. If something is beneficial to the country, we should invent it. But if we cannot invent it, we should adopt and imitate it.\textsuperscript{138}

Reiterating the importance of a thorough knowledge of Western music as a prerequisite in ultimately creating a new music for China, he wrote, “Before we talk about music reform and create a new music for China, we must understand what music is.” Music, he argued, like any other scholarly subject, should be studied systematically and diligently. The first step in musical study, Zeng suggested, was music theory. “Those who know nothing about music theory should neither attempt to compose music, nor play musical instruments.”\textsuperscript{139}

\textsuperscript{137} Zeng Zhimin, “Yinyue jiaoyu lun”, p. 59.
\textsuperscript{138} Zeng Zhimin, “Yuedian jiaokeshu xu”, p. 209.
As seen, the first decade of the twentieth century saw Chinese champions of Western music assuming the role of agents of Western music. One salient feature of this Chinese agency is its utilitarian orientation which had been shared by missionaries and reformers before them. A small number of Chinese pioneers of Western music showed some genuine interest in the artistic and aesthetic qualities of Western music as an expressive art. But the vast majority were primarily concerned with the practical utility of European-style songs as a means for enlightening the populace, strengthening the country and transforming society. Because of the important roles they played in the introduction of school songs as a means of social and educational reforms into modern Chinese schools, members of this generation are often termed songwriters (yuege zuojia 樂歌作家),\(^\text{140}\) song-arrangers, or “music educators” (yinyue jiaoyujia 音樂教育家).\(^\text{141}\) In other words, their historical significance lies not so much in their roles as agents of Western art music as in the part they played in promoting yuege in China’s modern school system. Due to their collective efforts a singing phenomenon known as the school-song movement (xuetang yuege yundong 學堂樂歌運動) came into being. In this sense, Chang Chi-jen, a Taiwan-based modern historian of Chinese music, is right in defining the term “modern Chinese music” as “a bi-product of political reformation and revolution.”\(^\text{142}\)

Yet, despite their overtly utilitarian motives and selective approach to Western music, these early practitioners of Western music greatly facilitated the wider distribution of Western musical knowledge among the Chinese urban population and were largely responsible for instilling a set of new musical values in the minds of educated Chinese. This small but extremely vocal group of pioneer students were

\(^{140}\)Qian Renkang, pp. 1-2; Liu Ching-chih, Zhongguo xinyin yue shilun, Vol. 1, p. 42.
\(^{142}\) Chi-jen Chang, “Alexander Tcherepnin, His Influence on Modern Chinese Music”, p. 4.
responsible not only for the institutionalisation of musical instruction in modern Chinese schools but also for the popularisation of Western ways of teaching music in Chinese society. They were responsible for the formation of a new musical tradition in China.  

CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapters I have tried to delineate the processes by which Western music came to be introduced to China. I have focused on the writings and work of Christian missionaries and Chinese reformers and examined how religious and socio-political imperatives and constraints were involved in the process of transmitting Western music to China in the period of 1842 to 1911. The question of music, as an evangelical tool for the missionaries in their relations with the Chinese Christian community in the broader context of Western global expansion, and, for the reformers, as a key mechanism for transforming effete self-serving subjects into patriotic citizens with a single, common purpose against the backdrop of China’s struggle for modernity, has been the main theme of discussion. In conclusion, it may be worth bringing together some of the findings from the nine chapters and restating the general argument of this thesis.

This thesis began with a retrospect of Western music in China from the time Christianity first entered China with Nestorian missionaries in the seventh century to its proscription in 1724, focusing in particular on its most conspicuous proponents, missionaries of the Society of Jesus. This historical overview demonstrates that the introduction of Western music in China from the very outset was inextricably linked to the cause of Christian expansion. Although an acute paucity of source materials prevents us from gaining a fuller picture of the musical activities of the Nestorians and the Franciscan brothers, enough evidence has emerged to show that using hymn singing as a direct means of proselytising was an integral part of early Christian enterprise. As we have seen, the Franciscan brothers who came to China during the Yuan dynasty made Catholic liturgical music an integral part of their Christian ritual.
In addition to training Chinese choirboys to sing the praise of the Lord, they also used music to endear themselves to the Mongol rulers all for the purposes of disseminating the Christian faith.

Music was also integral to the expansion of European Catholicism in China during the so-called “Catholic centuries” of 1600-1800.\(^1\) Jesuit missionaries not only continued to use Catholic liturgical music in their churches but also used European secular music, musical instruments, and musical theory as part of their overall strategy to convert the Chinese from the top down. In the same way as they took advantage of their skills in Western-style painting, architecture,\(^2\) and their knowledge of such secular topics as mathematics and astronomy, the Jesuits used Western keyboard musical instruments and musical clocks not only as *objets d’art* but also as examples of mechanical ingenuity to attract Chinese interest for the ultimate goal of propagating their faith.

But the Jesuits’ use of music as a means to Christianise China from the top down was a double-edged sword. On the one hand, their musical and scientific skills gave them the coveted access to the Ming and Qing courts, allowing them to be closer to the Chinese ruling elite. On the other hand, their eagerness to please the emperors with Western *objets d’art* and their technical expertise consumed so much of their energy that to a certain extent it hindered rather than facilitated their religious efforts.\(^3\) Jesuit musicians, who often worked simultaneously as court mathematicians,

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\(^1\) This is the term used by Joanna Waley-Cohen in her *The Sextants of Beijing: Global Currents in Chinese History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999), p. 56.


\(^3\) Jonathan D. Spence, referring to the cases of Schall and Verbiest, has argued “that on balance it was the Chinese who had gained from the exchange. They had used the Westerners’ skills when it suited them, and paid a fair price, but had little else in return.” See Spence, *The China Helpers*, p. 33.
astronomers, architects, and painters, had limited time and energy for missionary work. As a result, the kinds of Western music, especially Western musical theory, had only limited circulation among the Chinese literati, ending up little more than an item in the imperial archive or the imperial collection.

The acceleration of imperialist encroachment on China and the resulting influx of Westerners in the wake of the Opium Wars marked a turning point in the history of Sino-Western musical exchange. In spite of the arrival of Western traders, diplomats and military advisers from the mid-nineteenth century onward, Christian missionaries, Protestants in particular, bore the chief burden of transmitting Western music to China from the mid 1840s to the late 1890s. Like the Nestorians, the Franciscan brothers and the Catholic Jesuits earlier, the missionaries who came to China in the wake of the Opium Wars, Protestants in particular, made music an important instrument of Christian evangelism. This is illustrated nowhere more clearly than the amount of time and energy early Protestant missionaries spent first on compiling hymnbooks and then on the problems of teaching the Chinese to sing the European diatonic scale.

The extraordinary emphasis on the use of music by the Protestants was not accidental. Martin Luther recognised music as a means of religious expression and appreciated it as an aid to devotion. Even John Calvin, the man who has traditionally been viewed as less than enthusiastic about the arts and music, stated in his Preface to the Genevan Psalter of 1542 “that singing has great force and vigour to move and inflame the hearts of men to invoke and praise God with a more vehement and ardent zeal.” As the musicologist Charles Garside has pointed out, “Since music was indissolubly associated with prayers in Calvin’s mind, it thus becomes for him one of

the three fundamental expressions of formal worship.”⁶ Psalms and hymns were certainly an important part of the Protestant enterprise in China. Like the Catholics’ use of illustrated books, engravings, and painting to illustrate Christian doctrine,⁷ the Protestants used hymns to drive home the spiritual message.⁸ Besides spreading the Christian message by lyrics, hymn singing was also useful in a number of areas, not least of which was its usefulness in fostering a sense of devotion and creating an atmosphere conducive to Christian worship. By bridging the gap between print and oral cultures, hymn singing certainly made the teachings of Christ more accessible to the Chinese masses. In this sense, the correct, effective rendition of meaning was clearly more important than accurate singing of the diatonic scale. This is precisely the reason why early Protestant missionaries were so preoccupied with the issues of textual translation rather than with music. It was only in the last years of the nineteenth century that issue of music became a matter of concern.

The introduction of Western music by Christian missionaries in the imperialist nineteenth century, however, involved a different set of musical idioms, channels of dissemination, and a rapidly changing social milieu. Whereas the music introduced earlier pertained almost exclusively to Catholic liturgy, the repertoire introduced at this time was dominated mainly by Protestant hymnody. In the early stages of the nineteenth-century missionary enterprise in China, the channels through which Western music was disseminated consisted mainly of Christian congregations and music teaching in mission schools at the primary level. Differing from their Catholic

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⁸ This is not to say the Protestants did not use other means to propagate the Christian faith. Patrick Hanan has studied the missionary use of novels to advance their evangelist cause in China. See Hanan, “The Missionary Novels of Nineteenth-Century China,” Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, Vol. 60, No. 2 (2000), pp. 413-30.
predecessors, the presence of missionaries in China at this time was facilitated by Western imperialistic expansion and consequently their proselytising activities did not have to be clandestine. One implication of this changed circumstance was the spread of congregational singing, among other forms of Western music, to a relatively wider Chinese population. In the process of making Christianity audible, the missionaries also facilitated the formation of a group-singing tradition that even to this day is still a dominant feature of modern Chinese music.9

Unlike their Roman Catholic predecessors who performed Catholic rituals in strict accordance with what was being used back home in Europe and America and sang hymns in Latin, Protestant missionaries encountered a new set of problems in their efforts to teach the Chinese to sing the praise of the Lord. As well as facing problems in textual translation and setting translated hymn texts to music, the missionaries also had to overcome difficulties of a musical nature.10

When first introduced by missionaries in the early days of the Protestant evangelisation of China, consisted of hymns of late eighteenth-century strophic hymn and psalm tunes of either British or American origins. Owing mainly to their being unaccustomed to Western diatonic scale and to the novelty of congregational singing, members of Chinese congregation often found it difficult to sing European tunes. In their response to native resistance, some missionaries, in spite of their deep-rooted belief in the superiority of Christian civilisation, favoured the conciliatory approach of musical synthesis while others guarded jealously the gems of the Western repertoire. Debunking the commonly held myth that missionary discourse on music teaching was homogenous, I have argued that missionaries of different nationalities

10 This is not to say that Catholics had no problems of teaching their Chinese converts to sing Western tunes. But the sources that I have examined are not sufficient to shed any light on the Catholics in this regard.
and denominations neither shared a uniform strategy in teaching the Chinese to sing, nor spoke with one voice with regard to what types of Western music they ought to teach the Chinese. As demonstrated in Chapters Three and Four, their choices were often contingent upon their national, denominational, and educational backgrounds.

The dissemination of Western music in China in the last decades of the Manchu dynasty, as in the rest of the non-Western world, was not a one-way process; nor did it follow a single trajectory. It involved substantial agency and cultural adjustment. In order to realise the ultimate goal of Christianising China, some missionaries showed remarkable tolerance toward China’s indigenous musical tradition. Some even came to appreciate China’s musical achievements. In this respect, their musical pragmatism and cultural sensitivity were not fundamentally different from the Jesuits’ approach of cultural accommodation. For the sake of spreading the gospel, missionaries were prepared to adapt themselves to the Chinese environment and indigenise Christian music. The appropriation of Chinese musical materials, as explicated in the cases of Julia Mateer and the Richards, demonstrates that being sensitive to China’s musical traditions was part of missionary strategy dictated by the imperatives of Christian evangelism.11

Yet despite the missionary efforts, Western music, as represented by Christian psalms and hymns, still failed to attract a large following in China. This failure had as much to do with the inability of Christianity to attract many Chinese converts as with the failure on the part of Chinese to see the relevance of Western music in their quest for modernity. Not surprisingly it was not until the very last years of the 1890s, when

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11 As Nicholas Temperley has pointed out, “Popular singing as part of worship was an invention of the reformers: first the Bohemian Brethren, then the Lutherans, Zwinglians, and Calvinists, then Anabaptists, Anglicans, and Presbyterians, then Congregationalists and Separatists; much later, Baptists. They used metrical texts because these could be fitted to folk tunes already known to the people as secular songs.” See Temperley, “The Old Way of Singing: Its Origins and Development”, *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (1981), p. 513.
Chinese reformers realised that aspects of Western musical culture were not only relevant but could also be essential to their reforms, that the wide diffusion of Western music in China became possible.

Chinese reformers and Christian missionaries shared a common instrumentalist approach to music in spite of the difference in objectives. Our examination of Western music in the eyes of early Chinese travellers, diplomats and self-strengtheners prior to the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 has shown that the changing attitudes of Chinese reformers toward Western music were largely conditioned by their Confucian utilitarian view of music. The praise of music as part of the Western educational curriculum by early Chinese diplomats and the deployment of brass bands as part of Yuan Shikai’s military modernisation effort illustrate clearly that the practical utility of music was very much at the heart of the Chinese reformers’ understanding of music. The importance of music in the reformist aspirations of Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao and their interpretation of music as relevant to Chinese modernity and as a tool to transform weak self-serving subjects into a public-spirited and patriotic citizenry further point to the utilitarian orientation of those who were concerned with the development of a new culture in turn-of-the twentieth-century China.

Both missionaries and Chinese reformers paid attention to the practical uses of music in the propagation of ideas, attitudes and values and made heavy use of one genre of Western music: group singing. To be sure, there is nothing new about the Chinese singing in groups. Chinese peasants at celebrations after harvest always sang along with their favourite opera arias at open-air opera performances. The distinction is between politically motivated singing, a new phenomenon, and pleasure-induced singing. Like the missionaries who had a clear distinction “between the music which one makes to entertain men at table and in their houses, and the Psalms which are
sung in the Church in the presence of God and His angels,”12 the Chinese reformers were clear about what they wanted to appropriate from the Western repertoire. And their reformist agenda saw them taking great care to select songs and music that were neither frivolous nor light-hearted. The fact that Wang Tao and Liang Qichao were among the earliest to translate the German and French national anthems into Chinese underscores the utilitarian motive of their thinking. Singing national anthems, as Benedict Anderson has argued in his study of the global phenomenon of nationalism, “no matter how banal the words and mediocre the tunes…. provided occasions for unisonality, for the echoed physical realization of the imagined community.”13

But missionaries in the last two decades of the nineteenth century were also conscious of the importance of Western music as an emblem of modernity. Instead of confining to hymn tunes and gospel songs, missionaries also introduced the types of music that were used for various social and educational activities, including work, public life, parties, celebrations, and outdoor events. This change was a partial result of the missionary change of approach. As we have seen, early nineteenth-century missionaries advocated an evangelical rather than a social gospel approach to mission work but by the end of the nineteenth century a social approach to Christianity began to gain ascendancy. Like their introduction of chemistry and sports and physical education at this time,14 missionaries introduced instrumental music as part of their mission school curriculum not so much as a direct means of evangelism but as a way to cater to the Chinese longing for modernity. But rather than attributing this important development to the missionary initiative alone, it is important to put it in

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13 Anderson, Imagined Communities, p. 145.
the broader context of burgeoning Chinese urbanites’ demand for modernity. From the late 1890s onwards, calls for Western music of a higher order, like the demands for instruction in English and other modern school subjects, did not come from missionaries but resulted from the missionary response to Chinese demand for modern knowledge. The teaching of Western music of the classical tradition at the McTyeire School in Shanghai, for example, reflects as much Young J. Allen’s evangelical thinking as his astute response to a growing Chinese demand for instruction in modern subjects such as English, mathematics, commerce and science. Emblematic of Western modernity and of wealth and privilege, Western instrumental music, as represented by piano and violin, satisfied the pretensions of the rising Chinese middle class to superior social status. Although unlike hymns, piano music could not directly convey God’s message, as a manifestation of superior Christian civilisation, it provided Christian moulding to children of China’s social and political elite.

Yet, despite the inspirations Chinese reformers had initially drawn from the writings and personal contacts with Protestant missionaries such as Timothy Richard and Young J. Allen in their proposals for social, educational, and political reforms, they turned to Japan for practical guidance.

Indeed, as the nineteenth century drew to a close, Japan replaced the Christian missionaries as the main sources of Chinese knowledge of Western music and Japanese institutions became the training ground for the first generation of non-missionary Chinese champions of Western music. Japan showed the Chinese, among other things, concrete examples of how music could be used to advance the cause of nationalism. Compared to that of the missionaries, the influence of Japan was certainly more widespread and long lasting; and the roles played by translations of
Japanese works, Japanese teachers and advisers, and the musical activism of those Japanese-trained pioneers were directly responsible for the rise of the school-song movement in China.

The Japanese origins of China’s musical modernity, however, should not obliterate the importance of the missionaries in the transformation of China’s musical culture. True, the turn of the twentieth century saw Japan taking on the role of cultural intermediary, eclipsing the influence of the missionaries as the main mediator of Western ideas and concepts, including music, to China. But the missionaries were by no means idle. As in previous years, they continued to take an active part “in the Chinese definition of their nation” through propagating ideals and customs from Western civilisation.\(^{15}\) The fact that several of the songwriters who participated actively in the 1911 Revolution and the school song movement, including Shen Xingong, were either graduates of mission schools or owed their initial exposure to Western music to missionaries or missionary institutions testifies to the continued missionary influence during the years of the “Japanisation of China”\(^ {16}\). Moreover, the continued appropriation of hymn tunes by school-song writers, social reformers, music educators, revolutionaries, and even the warlords, shows much about the scope of the missionary influence.\(^ {17}\)

The importance of the missionaries and the reformers in the development of Western music in China did not diminish in any significant way after the founding of the Chinese Republic. Nor did the preoccupation with the instrumentality of music

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\(^ {15}\) Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, p. 1.

\(^ {16}\) This is the title of an article published in the *Revue des deux mondes* of August 1905. See Bastid, *Educational Reform in Early Twentieth-Century China*, p. 210, n59.

\(^ {17}\) On reformers, see Qian Renkang, *Xuetang yuege kaoyuan*, pp. 272-94. The warlord Feng Yüxiang’s use of singing, including choral singing, for the purposes of teaching military methods, inspiring good behaviour and inculcating patriotism in his men had much to do with his conversion to Christianity. See James E. Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord: The Career of Feng Yu-hsiang* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966), pp. 87-88; Shi Lei, *Zhongguo jindai junge chutan*, p. 97.
cease. On the contrary, the emphasis on the practical uses of music was such that the 1920s and 1930s saw the intensification of a long process of using music as an instrument of social and political persuasion, culminating in Mao Zedong’s insistence that art serve politics and the masses in his famous “Talks at the Yan’an Forum on Literature and Art” in 1942.\(^\text{18}\) The fact that Chinese music scholars, even as recently as the late 1980s, were still debating whether the social and political functions of music should be considered the most important criterion in judging musical works speaks volumes for the longevity and scope of influence of this instrumentalist approach to music.\(^\text{19}\) Given this kind of stress on the instrumentality of music in social and political indoctrination, it is not at all surprising that in post-1949 China these concerns have been repeatedly cited by the mainland authorities as the reasons to launch a series of campaigns aimed to stop the spread of bourgeois influence in China.\(^\text{20}\) To cite three recent examples, in the early 1980s, pop songs of Taiwan and Canto pop from Hong Kong were officially attacked not because they were musically

\(^\text{18}\) Mao, of course, was not the only CCP leader who saw the efficacy of songs in expanding the Communist influence in China. Other high-ranking Communist officials who saw the efficacy of songs in expanding the Communist influence in China included, Peng Pai 彭湃 (1896-1929), Qu Qiubai 曲秋白 (1899-1935) and Zhang Wentian 張聞天 (1900-1976). Peng Pai used oral literature and wrote revolutionary songs in folksong style to win support among the peasants there; Qu was one of the earliest to translate the *Internationale* into Chinese. Qu also composed a widely circulated song entitled *Chichao qu* 赤潮曲 (Song of Red Tide). Compared to the CCP, the KMT appeared to be less than effective in its use of arts and literature in rallying the masses to support its cause. Some scholars, including David Holm, even go as far as to attribute this as one of the reasons for the ultimate downfall of the KMT. But the KMT was fully conscious of the efficacy of music in ideological indoctrination and culture building. One early example of the KMT use of music was the establishment in 1932 of the “Committee for the Promotion of Musical Education” in Nanchang. Like the Communists, the KMT made extensive political uses of mass singing. In the New Life Movement launched in early 1934, the KMT used mass singing as an agitational tool in a bid to change the moral character of the Chinese. In the National Spiritual Mobilisation Movement launched in March 1939, mass singing was again used as a means to rally people behind the government.


\(^\text{20}\) For a discussion of various campaigns launched by the Communist authorities to suppress Western bourgeois influences after 1949, see Ming Yan 明言, *Ershi shiji Zhongguo yinyue piping daolun* 20 世紀中國音樂批評導論 (An Introduction to Musical Criticism in Twentieth Century China) (Beijing: Renmin yinyue chubanshe, 2002), pp. 221-502.
deficient but because they supposedly undermined, rather than reinforced, the ideological hegemony of the state. Similarly, the suppression of rock music and musicians, as represented by Cui Jian 崔健 (1961-) and a small group of “underground” rock and jazz musicians, in the mid-1980s, and the official diatribes denouncing the musical experiments of the “New Tide” (xin chào 新潮) composers a few years later were both motivated precisely by the same political considerations. 21 Western music continues to enjoy (or suffer from) the kinds of importance that nineteenth-century missionaries and Chinese reformers might easily grasp.

21 For a useful introductory study of indigenous popular music in the cultural and political arenas in mainland China, see Jones, Like a Knife. For an ambitious but not well-argued study of politics and “New Tide” composers, see Mittler, Dangerous Tunes. On “New Tide” composers, also see Li Shiyuan 李詩原, Zhongguo xiandai yinyue: Bentu yu xifang de duihua 中國現代音樂: 本土與西方的對話 (Contemporary Chinese Music: A Dialogue between China and the West) (Shanghai: Shanghai yinyuexueyuan chubanshe, 2004).
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ABBREVIATIONS

CR  The Chinese Recorder (Published at Fuzhou in 1867 as The Missionary Recorder, changed to The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal in 1868-72; resumed publication in Shanghai in 1874. From 1911 till the journal ceased publication in 1941 the name was shortened to The Chinese Recorder.)


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