

TAIWANESE COMPOSERS AND PIANO WORKS IN THE XX CENTURY: TRADITIONAL CHINESE CULTURE AND THE TAIWAN XIN YINYUE

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The paper will try to prove how piano music can be considered a main tool for understanding the evolution of XX century Taiwanese New Music. Starting from the first generation of Taiwanese composers and on the basis of their piano works, the meaning of "*xin yinyue*" will be analysed; the paper will then try to identify the influences of both so-called "traditional culture" and western music in the development of the new music written by the subsequent generations of composers. The role of *Xuanyin yaji* (Atelier de creation musicale "Formusica") in the spreading of new piano works in the 90s will be also taken into consideration, as it allows us to draw out an outline of present-day piano music trends in Taiwan.

Background

In the context of the evolution of western music in Taiwan, the introduction and the propagation of western musical instruments was a relatively new incoming. If we consider the first contacts of western music with the Taiwanese islander, we have to remind the role of the Dutch and the Spanish in the seventeenth Century. As it was for mainland China, the western music arrived in Taiwan as a contribute of Christian missionaries amongst whose purposes there was also to use of the music as a tool for the evangelization. The seventeenth century represents the first contact between Taiwanese residents and western music: at that time and in that context, music was obviously subdue to the religious aims. Because of this, it's easy to guess that the main role was played by vocal music especially by singing holy songs and so on. Music was not yet considered as a kind of art but as a tool for educational purposes. Amongst those who received the first train, the Taiwan aborigines (*yuanzhumin*原住民) were the greatest numbers. After almost forty years (1624 – 1662) the Dutch were driven out by Koxinga 鄭成功 and because of the policy of isolation adopted by the Qing towards foreigners, also the missionaries were forced to abandon the island. In this way all the musical seeds spread by missionaries in that short period were quickly buried and we have to wait almost two hundred years for seeing Taiwanese had another chance to meet western music again. It happened when four ports¹ in Taiwan were forcibly opened to foreign trade following the Treaty of Tianjin (1858) and the Treaty of Beijing (1860). In 1865 the English Presbyterian mission arrived in the south of the island and started

¹ "Events elsewhere would not loosen its grip on Taiwan. In 1850, the British attempted to get coaling rights for their ships in Taiwan. This was denied by Liu Yunge. Governor-General of Fujian and Zhejiang, who initiated efforts to strengthen Taiwan's defenses. However, the Treaty of Tianjin in 1858 opened up Jilong and Danshui to Western ships." *Chapter 1 – Taiwan History* (<http://www.geocities.com/ludahai/Taiwan-ch1.html>). And also: "...Trade treaties were signed one after another: Tianjin, Beijing, etc.; Taiwan's four harbours Jilong, Danshui, Anping and Dagou were forcibly open to trade." See *Danshui hongmao cheng* 淡水紅毛城 – *A History of Taiwan Architecture* (http://www.dm.ncyu.edu.tw/vr/vr02_map/001/001-03.htm). For further information see: Murray A. Rubinstein, *Taiwan: A New History*, Armonk, M.E.Sharpe, 1999, pp.167 – 177.

setting up schools and seminaries in the Tainan 台南 area. In 1872 the Canadian Presbyterian mission settled in the north of the island, in Danshui 淡水 (also written Tamshui², nearby Taipei). In their schools, music was considered as a subject matter worth of being taught as all the others. Obviously, as for Dutch and Spanish two century before, they were aware of the importance of music as a tool for evangelization; so it's no wonder that, in those years from 1859-60 to 1895 (the beginning of the Japanese occupied period) teaching western music still meant to empathize mainly the religious aspect especially for gospels and psalms. In this period, amongst those who received these rudiments of music there were not only aborigines but also a great deal of Chinese (*hanren* 漢人) emigrated from the mainland, Hakka and other Chinese minorities. In the English Presbyterian mission, those who had the responsibility of teaching music were Rev. David Smith³ (*Shi Dapi mushi* 施大闢牧師), Miss Sabine Elizabeth Mackintosh (*Du Xueyun guniang* 杜雪雲姑娘), Mrs. Montgomery (*Man Xiongcai mushiniang* 滿雄才牧師娘) and L. Singleton (*Shenyi Guoxuan jiaoshi* 沈毅敦宣教師). In the Canadian Presbyterian mission, the greatest contribute in music education was due to the efforts of Rev. George Leslie Mackay⁴ (*Ma Jie mushi* 馬偕牧師), Miss Hannah Connell (*Gao Hana guniang* 高哈拿姑娘), Mrs. Margaret Mellis Gauld (*Wu Weilian mushiniang* 吳威廉牧師娘) and Miss Isabel Taylor (*De Mingli guniang* 德明利姑娘)⁵.

Looking from the perspective of piano music teaching, the latter two held certainly the most important role. Mrs. Margaret Gauld [1867 – 1960], on the basis of the accounts of her students, was an extraordinary musician and teacher with a wide cultural background⁶. She arrived in Taiwan in 1892 and remained there for 31 years, supporting Taiwan's first generation most talented musicians and composers. When she arrived in Taiwan, there was neither a person who had seen a “piano” before⁷, so in this sense, she's considered the pioneer of piano teaching in Taiwan. Miss Isabel Taylor [1909 – 1992] arrived in Taiwan in 1931 and continued on the same way of Mrs. Gauld. Miss Taylor was, in all intents and purposes, a pianist: she was born in Scotland but her family soon emigrated to Canada. In 1931, after the graduation at the Toronto Royal Conservatory of Music, she immediately decided to go to Taiwan where she started teaching music in the Danshui Girls' School. After a short while in which she went to the States to attend advanced courses at the Westminster College, she came back to Taiwan where she remained until 1973. Amongst her students, there were the composer Chen Sizhi 陳泗治, the

² Regarding the English transcription of Taiwanese names, I use the *pinyin* transcription except for those editorial works (both printed and electronic books, documents, etc.) published in Taiwan with English translation: in these cases I will maintain the original transcription used in them.

³ He remained in Taiwan from 1876 to 1882. He held a post in the Tainan seminary school: he was the first who settled a course of western music in a school in Taiwan.

⁴ Arrived in Taiwan (Danshui) in 1872, pioneer of the Canadian Presbyterian Church in Taiwan.

⁵ “[...]Oxford College in Tamsui, the first Western school in Taiwan, was moved to Taipei later to provide theological as well as general college courses for students. With the college established, Dr. Mackay turned his attention to the education of women in Taiwan. In response to his appeal, the Women's Foreign Missionary Society of the Canadian Presbyterian Church provided funds for the building of a school for girls. That school, opened in 1883, is the first institution of its kind in Formosa. Named Tamsui Girls' School during Japanese occupation, it was renamed Shun Te (Pure Virtue) after Taiwan was restored to the Republic of China in 1945. It operates side by side with the Tanchiang (Tam Kang - Tamsui River) High School, which has grown out of the middle school for boys Mackay also started at Hobe. Dr. Lee Teng-hui, the first popularly elected president of the Republic of China in Taiwan, attended that school while the island was still under Japanese colonial rule”. By Joe Hung, “Mackay founds schools, hospital at Hobe: Canadian missionary undergoes vicissitude”, Excerpt from the Special of *The China Post* Internet Edition (<http://www.chinapost.com.tw/>), July 2002.

⁶ Lü Yuxiu 呂鈺秀, *Taiwan yinyue shi* 台灣音樂史 (Storia della musica Taiwanense), Taipei, Wunan 五南, 2003, p. 84 – 86.

⁷ She is called the Mother of music teaching in Taiwan. See Zhuo Fujian 卓甫見, *Taiwan yinyue zheren: Chen Sizhi* 台灣音樂哲人: 陳泗治 (The Philosopher of the Taiwanese Music: Chen Sizhi), Taipei, Wangchunfeng wenhua 望春風文化, 2001, p.25.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.26

pianist Ms. Wu Shulian 吳淑蓮 (soloist of the YMCA Oratorio Society), the musicians Lin Shuqing 林淑卿, Chen Ren'ai 陳仁愛, Chen Xinzhen 陳信貞 and more.

Another aspect of core importance for the evolution of music education in Taiwan, was held by the Japanese. After 1895 they started building their schools in the island, setting up music courses, encouraging music education. At the same time, in order to control the thought and the activities of Taiwanese people, they also persuaded Taiwanese students to go to Japan for their abroad studies. From the perspective of the musical studies field, the most part of the students attended in Japan the music courses of the Ueno Ongaku Gakkō⁸ 上野音楽学校 (Tokyo Music School) and the Tōyō Ongaku Gakkō⁹ 東洋音楽学校 (Orient Music School). A step forward in music education happened when the “Institute for the Circulation of the National Language¹⁰” was divided in two different sections: *yuxuebu* 語學部 (Division for Language Studies) and *shifanbu* 師範部 (Division for the Superior Studies). Either of them had music classes but the *shifanbu* 師範部 allowed its students of musical matters to research in depth their field of interest. Anyway vocal music still held the main position amongst musical studies: in that period the only solution to study instrumental music and composition was to study abroad, so no wonder that all the Taiwanese musicians of the first generation went in Japan for attending advanced music courses. Amongst them I would like to mention the first Taiwanese musician that went to study music abroad in Japan (1906): Zhang Fuxing 張福興 [1888 – 1954] who studied at the Ueno Ongaku Gakkō¹¹ 上野音楽学校. Moreover there were also the following pianists: Gao Cimei 高慈美 and Zhang Changhua 張常華, at the Teikoku Ongaku Gakkō 帝国音楽学校 (Imperial Music School); Zhang Caixiang 張彩湘 and Zhou Sunkuan 周遜寬 at the Musashino Ongaku Gakkō 武蔵野音楽学校 (Musashino Academia Musicae); Lu Quansheng 呂泉生 and Li Guixiang 李桂香 at the Tōyō Ongaku Gakkō¹² 東洋音楽学校 (Orient Music School); Gao Jinhua 高錦花 at the Nihon Ongaku Gakkō 日本音楽学校 (Japan Music School); Lin Jinsheng 林進生 and Dai Fengqi 戴逢祈 at the Kokuritsu Kōtō Ongaku Gakkō 國立高等音楽學校 (École National Supérieur de Music – National Superior School of Music).

On the way of New Music 新音樂

The person that mentioned for the first time the term *xin yinyue* 新音樂 was the composer and music theorist Lü Ji¹³ 呂驥 [1909 – 2002]. It happened in 1936 with his article *Zhongguo xin yinyue*

⁸ In present days is called Tōkyō Geijutzu Daigaku 東京芸術大学 (Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music)

⁹ That changed the name in Tōyō Ongaku Daigaku 東洋音楽大学 and today is called Tōkyō Ongaku Daigaku 東京音楽大学 (Tokyo College of Music).

¹⁰ *Guoyu chuanxisuo* 國語傳習所. It happened when the Japanese governor in Taiwan settled the *Shifan xuexiao guize* 師範學校規則 (Superior Schools Regulations). At that time, what it was called “national language” still was, obviously, Japanese. Generally speaking, since the beginning of the XX Century to the end of the War of Resistance *kangzhan* 抗戰, Japanese was the main language of the pedagogical institutions. Chen Bijuan 陳碧娟, *Taiwan xin yinyue shi* 臺灣新音樂史 (Taiwan New Music History), Taipei, Yue Yun 樂韻, 1995, pp.73 – 75.

¹¹ See also note n.6. It's interesting to notice that Zhang Fuxing, although became a famous violinist, he started studying keyboards instruments, particularly he attended for some years organ music classes and played J.S. Bach's *Passacaglia und Fuge* BWV 582 in his graduation concert (1910).

¹² See note n.7.

¹³ Pename of Lü Zhanqing 呂展青 [1909-2002] born in Xiangtan, Hubei. Started loving music from early age; he could play lots of traditional instruments. He worked as teacher, archivist and editor. He entered three times vocal music class at Shanghai Conservatory but because of financial straits he was forced to stop his studies halfway. In 1932 he went to

de *zhanwang* 中國新音樂的展望 (Forecasts on the new Chinese music) in which he raised the slogan *xin yinyue yundong* 新音樂運動. Clearing the meaning, he states:

“[It’s] the weapon to win over the emancipation of masses, a kind of means that reflects and shows the feelings, the thoughts and the life of masses, a further assumption of the responsibility in the awakening, the education and the organization of masses’ mission¹⁴.”

This kind of account, together with the peculiarities of the *xin yinyue* 新音樂 explained by Li Ling¹⁵ 李凌, show a strong political aim, synthesized by the scholar Liu Jingzhi 劉靖之 with the effective locution “New Chinese Music Realism¹⁶” (*Xianshi xbuyi de xin yinyue* 現實主義的新音樂) in which the political effectiveness was more important than the musical excellence¹⁷. However, also for this reason, in present times music scholars from mainland China are still suspicious¹⁸ towards the use of the term *xin yinyue* 新音樂 and so, most of them continue using locutions as *jin xiandai* 近現代 or *dangdai yinyue* 當代音樂. Looking the Taiwanese music context, the discussion on the semantic content of the syntagm *xin yinyue* is still a *vexata quaestio*, especially referring to its meaning in relation with *xiandai yinyue* 現代音樂. According to the chronological placing of this phenomenon in Taiwan’s XX century music history, it’s accepted the assumption that it started about in the ’50 and became a main topic of debate in the ’60. For a better understanding of the problems connected to its definition, it’s useful to report the following statements:

“The term *xiandai yinyue* 現代音樂 comes from European countries or United States, it’s the English word for *Modern music*, *Music of Today* or *Contemporary Music* [in English in the text, n.d.a.], and the content it refers to,

Shanghai to take part at the Leftists’ Dramatists League and then went to Wuhan where he founded the Wuhan Dramatists League. In 1933 he returned to Shanghai to take part at the Music Group of the Dramatists League. When Nie Er left the country, he took the responsibility of the Union’s works and constituted the Songwriters’ Society and the Amateur Association for Songs and Chorus Studies. At the eve of the War of Resistance, he went to Beijing where he developed singing activities for national salvation. In 1937 he went to Yan’an and subsequently took the head of the Music Department at the Lu Xun Arts Institute. After the liberation, he constantly held the leadership of the National Association of Music and remained president of the Association of Chinese Composers until his last days. Since the ’30s he wrote several vocal works and essays that contributed to the evolution of Chinese contemporary music. Wang Yuhe 汪毓和, *Zhongguo jin xiandai yinyue shi* 中國近現代音樂史 (History of the Recent Contemporary Chinese Music), Beijing, Renmin yinyue chubanshe 人民音樂出版社, 2001⁸, pp.171-173.

¹⁴ Lü Ji 呂驥, “Zhongguo xin yinyue de zhanwang” 中國新音樂的展望 (Forecasts on the New Chinese Music), *Shanghai Guangming* 上海《光明》 (“Brighting” Shanghai), 7/1936.

¹⁵ Li Yuanyong 李緣永 (Li Ling 李凌), “Lüe lun xin yinyue” 略論新音樂 (Discussing the New Chinese Music), *Xin Yinyue* 新音樂 (New Music), 3/1940.

¹⁶ Liu Jingzhi 劉靖之, *Zhongguo xin yinyue shi lun* 中國新音樂史論 (Discussion on new Chinese Music History), Taipei, Yao Wen 耀文, 1998, p. 3.

¹⁷ “Throughout the 20th century, new music in China has mainly served as a tool for specific purposes. “School Songs” during the early period of this century were classroom teaching; “Chinese art songs” began in the 1920s as a medium of self-expression first by Chao [sic] Yuanren (趙元任 1892 – 1982) and Huang Zi and then gradually became an effective tool of the anti-Japanese War and the Communist party’s struggle against Kuomintang (the Nationalist Party); in the 1950s and early 1960s, both orchestral and vocal compositions were “produced” to acclaim the Chinese Communist Party and socialist China; during the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976, “revolutionary model works” (*geming yangban xi* 革命樣板戲) were the only music allowed to be performed and heard by one billion people.” Liu Ching-chih (Liu Jingzhi 劉靖之), “The Development of New Music in China: Reflections on Past Research”, in Liu Ching-chih ed., *Papers and Proceedings of the Music Symposia of the 34th International Congress of Asian and North African Studies (ICANAS) – Asian Music with special reference to China and India*, Studies of Ethnomusicology, no.6 - 第三十四屆亞洲及非洲研究國際學術會議: 音樂研討會論文集, “民族音樂研究” 第六輯, Hong Kong, University of Hong Kong - 香港大學亞洲研究中心, 1997, p.11 (Bilingual edition).

¹⁸ Liu Jingzhi 劉靖之, *Zhongguo xin yinyue*..., 1998, pp. 10 – 23.

is completely uncertain, essentially because the definition word *xiandai* and its musical aspect, has no concrete pattern; but generally speaking there two different view:

- The extensive one: as synonym of “XX Century Music”, it refers to the generic definition of the music in the XX Century. Its main characteristic is that it extends the extreme spheres of music, and the music produced by past societies, areas or periods cannot be compared one another.
- The narrow one: as a synonymous of terminologies like “*xiandai yinyue* 現代音樂”, “*xin yinyue* 新音樂”, “*jintian de yinyue* 今天的音樂”, it refers to the music that adopts new writing techniques, mainly the avant-garde music written after the Second World War and so it means also the music written in the XX century considering Europe and United States as main focus.

Anyway *xiandai yinyue* do not include the music of the mass (*tongsu yinyue* 通俗音樂 popular music)¹⁹.”

This definition seems to understand the problems related to the terminology and to the influence of western music, but still lacks of the determination of the contemporary Chinese music identity, arousing the assumption that it could be a sort of mere imitation of western music. A step forward in a more accurate explanation of *xin yinyue* 新音樂 comes from Liu Jingzhi 劉靖之 perspective:

I use the term “new music” to denote an additional and entirely new category of Chinese music – westernized Chinese music composed by Chinese composers in European style during the 20th century with the following defining points in mind:

- a. In Chinese music, the manner of expression has been distinctly different from that of European music. In the long history of musical culture in China, music was not “composed” in the same manner as in Europe. However, Chinese composers trained in Japan, the United States and Europe started in the early 20th century to compose music in the European style, and this was indeed a fundamentally NEW approach towards music in China.
- b. Texturally Chinese music is extremely Chinese i.e. with distinct Chinese flavours and different from the European music’s contrapuntal and harmonic writing. Although Chinese elements at percent [*sic*] can be found in the new music, such as rhythmic patterns, intervals, melodic shapes, instrumental colours, *etc.*, the fundamental use of the techniques and concept of expression are quite different from that of European music. [...]
- c. Structurally new music in China is strikingly different when compared with the “traditional” Chinese music, *viz.* scholar’s music (文人音樂), religious music, court music, folk music and other type of traditional music such as regional *Xiqu* (地方戲曲). Western trained Chinese composers compose in structural terms a new genre: new music such as art songs with piano accompaniment, choral works, chamber music, symphonies, symphonic poems, *etc.*²⁰

I have to add that, when Chinese (as well as Taiwanese) composers started writing music in European style in the beginning of the XX century, their compositions were sometimes closer to the romantic tradition of western music; so in this sense their music was not *contemporary* comparing it with the western counterpart in that period, but more similar to our XIX century music. On the structural side, *xin yinyue*’s compositions show a large use of ternary forms or sonata forms, often combined with pentatonic scales and parallel motions of the melodies that give a characteristic Chinese flavor to the European style music writing. Piano music in the Taiwanese *xin yinyue*’s repertoire is a quite recent phenomenon generally related to the economic situation in the end of the 1950s and the consequent increase of the importation of western musical instruments. However, the first compositions for this instrument in *xin yinyue*’s style, were written starting from the early 1930s, according to the possibilities of each composers to have to his own disposal the instrument. Obviously, at that time none had a piano as private instrument

¹⁹ You Suhuang 游素風, *Taiwan xiandai yinyue fazhan tansuo* 台灣現代音樂發展探索 (Investigation of the Evolution of Contemporary Taiwanese Music), Taipei, Yue Yun 樂韻, 2000, p. 9.

²⁰ Liu Ching-chih (Liu Jingzhi 劉靖之), “The Development of New Music in China: Reflections on Past Research”, in Liu Ching-chih ed., *Papers and Proceedings...*, pp. 8 - 9.

and the only possibility to study and play the piano was to attend the schools that were provided of western instruments (i.e. the Canadian or English Church mission's schools cited above).

Taiwan New Music Piano Works: the Pioneers.

Chen Sizhi 陳泗治 [1911 – 1992]



The composer and pianist Chen Sizhi 陳泗治 was born near Shilin 士林 (Taipei) in 1911. After the elementary school, he entered the Danshui Middle School (1923) and one year later started studying piano with Mrs. Margaret Gauld. While student of the Taiwan Theological School (1930) he continued studying piano with Miss Isabel Taylor. After graduation he went in Japan to attend Tokyo Theological University and began a three years study in composition at the Ueno University with Kyoka Saburo 木岡三郎. In 1935 he came back to Taiwan

to participate at some special concerts held for earthquake relief and two years later started his ministry in Shilin. In 1947, together with Miss Taylor, founded the music department in the *Chun De* 純德 Girls School. In the followings years, he continued teaching and was appointed principal of some important school. In 1957 he went to Toronto to study composition with Oskar Morawetz at the Royal Conservatory. Then he came back and remained in Taiwan until 1981 when he retired and moved to America. His interest towards piano started in his early days, when he came in contact for the first time with the classical western music: according to his eldest son memories, in that period Chen Sizhi was animated by a strong passion towards this instrument²¹. Indubitably, his piano works hold a main position amongst his whole production. He's author of the following piano solo compositions chronologically ordered:

- *Huanxiangqu – Danshui* 幻想曲 - 淡水 (Fantasia – Danshui), 1938
- *Taiwan sumiao* 台灣素描 (Taiwan Sketches), 1939
- *Diedi yu wo* 爹地與我 (Daddy and I), 1945
- *Huiyi* 回憶 (Memories), 1947
- *Yequ* 夜曲 (Nocturne), 1950
- *Jiang D dadiao lianxiqu* 降 D 大調練習曲 (Etude in D flat major), 1958
- *Longwu* 龍舞 (Dragon Dance), 1958
- *Yogu – Amei kuangxiangqu* 幽谷 – 阿美狂想曲 (Deep Valley – Amis Rhapsody), 1978

²¹ “Before he [Chen Sizhi] was thirteen years old, he never had contact with western music and never saw a piano too: only when he entered the Danshui Middle School, under the illumination of Mrs. Gauld, he studied piano and started being infatuated with western music. At that time there were a lot students wanted to practice piano but the number of the pianos was limited, so was fixed the rule that every student could practice piano only one hour a day. Nevertheless, Chen Sizhi wanted to practice a lot so every day in the middle of night's silence, he furtively went to the piano room to practice; because he was afraid of being found out or of disturbing other persons, he covered the piano with a blanket and screened the window, avoiding the rays of light to leak outside. This kind of hard study's ambience made up his mind: in future I won't let next generations to suffer such an hardship!” Zhuo Fujian 卓甫見, *Taiwan yinyue zheren: Chen Sizhi* 台灣音樂哲人: 陳泗治 (The Philosopher of the Taiwanese Music: Chen Sizhi), Taipei, Wangchunfeng wenhua 望春風文化, 2001, p.28.

- *Shishou qianzouqu – jianpanshang de youxi* 十首前奏曲 – 鍵盤上的遊戲 (Preludes – Playful keyboard), 1980

What is possible to recognize after a general view on his piano works is the almost total lack of adoption of pentatonic scales: this kind of melodic expedient is only used sporadically in the *Dragon Dance*²² and in the beginning of the *Amis Rhapsody*. All these piano pieces are quite short and written in a rather free manner, generally with some thematic subjects that always receive a different developments. His first piano works, *Fantasia – Danshui*, is written in the XIX Century *morceau de salon* style although avoiding of showing off the typical *virtuoso* skills of the salon performer. However his use of some *acciaccatura* (in the main theme) and of lots *arpeggios* (in the central section) are distinctive of this kind of composition. His *Taiwan Sketches*, despite the title and the synopsis of the author²³, actually do not show anything that is possible to consider “musically related” to the Taiwanese context. It’s rather a sort collected pictures from the composer’s experiences through the island. They are not at all technically demanding; there’s a particular reflection on the rhythmic texture and, because of the simplicity of the structure and the aphoristic style, they sometimes remind some Schumann’s *Kinderszenen* or some pieces of the second volume of Bartók’s *Mikrokosmos*. *Memories* is a short piece written in ternary form with some interesting in the rhythmical patterns and musically related with the western romantic tradition²⁴. It’s possible to say the same for the first part of the *Etude in D flat major* especially for the evident similarities with the famous Liszt’s *Etude de concert “Un sospiro”*. The central section shows instead a more modern approach to the harmonization and the construction of melody links, particularly with the use of chromatics solutions, of second minor intervals and with an unusual coda. The *Dragon Dance*, as cited above, is probably Chen Sizhi’s only example of westernized Chinese music: it’s a short piece with different pentatonic figurations subdue to an incisive rhythmic pattern. In this sense, the composition is his closest exemplar to Liu Jingzhi’s 劉靖之 definition of *xin yinyue*. Although in the *Amis Rhapsody* the composers also makes use of pentatonic scales, the middle section is more complex than the preceding work because of the continue search of new sonorities. According to my opinion, I think that actually it was not always a successful search because the rhapsodic pattern seems do not allow him to develop some interesting musical ideas resulting, sometimes, in a sudden change in the mood of the piece, i.e. from an “impressionistic-like” to a pseudo-romantic one. His last composition for piano solo, *Ten Preludes*, shows the *summa* of the influences the composers assimilated from piano music of the western tradition: this collection of preludes is however different in his structure from the most famous collections of preludes for piano written by western composers (as Chopin, Scriabin, Debussy, etc): all of them (except n.9) are written using the same scale, E flat minor and, in the n.3 and n.5, he also combine two different scales respectively for the violin and the bass clef. As said above, these pieces are a sort of musical anthology of Chen Sizhi’s study on sonority and dynamic and it’s interesting to mention a general reference to Scriabin’s early works: i.e. the last of these preludes has a slight allusion of Scriabin’s *Poem Tragique*. Chen Sizhi piano works are amongst the first attempts of a Taiwanese composer to write music using western tools. His

²² This piece is written (probably not by chance) in D sharp minor; this solution allowed the composer to insert some *glissati* that are played only on the black keys (the easiest pattern of a pentatonic mode) of the piano giving a perfect example of Chinese flavour.

²³ “These short pieces were written one time when I was making a round the-island trip in Taiwan. Some of them are real pictures; some are purely from the imagination. For example, in the “Three little Ducklings and a Toad”, you can imagine the scene: three ducklings want to go for a swim; on the edge of the pond they see a huge toad, who begins to chafe them; you can hear laughter, and you can hear the drumming of the big toad’s tight tummy; the poor little ducklings lose their desire for a swim and return home; once they are out of sight, the big toad dives into the pool...and so on. I hope each of you will accompany the music with your imagination”. Liu Fengsong 劉峰松 (ed.) , *Chen Sizhi jinian zhuanji zuopin ji* 陳泗治紀念專輯作品集 – *Su-ti Chen Memorial Edition/Collection of Works*, Taibei, Taibei xianli wenhua zhongxin 台北縣立文化中心, 1994, p.159.

²⁴ The first theme shows some similarities with the second (in A flat) of Chopin’s *Trois Nouvelles Etudes* (1839).

piano music generally shows his intents of writing western music rather than westernized music, probably for several reasons, i.e. because of the strong impact the western music had in him in his early days as a completely new way of expression, and perhaps of a not complete awareness of the Taiwanese traditional music heritage as it will be in other later composers. However, his piano compositions hold a main position in the history of the XX century Taiwanese piano works.

Jiang Wenye 江文也 [1910 – 1983]



Jiang Wenye was the first composer to employ western music techniques to make music with Chinese flavour. Despite he was the first Chinese composer to receive international acclaim from the 1930s (he won several prizes in Japan and Europe), his role in the XX century Taiwanese music history is still a matter of debate, also (or mainly) because of his biographic events. He was born on 1910 in Danshui near Taipei and after six years his family moves to Xiamen 廈門. His well-off family allowed him to spend his childhood in a comfortable way, surrounded by learned persons, western missionaries, etc. This kind of atmosphere influenced his love for singing and poetry since his early years. In 1923 he went to Japan to continue

his studies. In 1928, because of his father's wish, he entered the Tokyo's Technological Institute and, at the same time, started to study at the Ueno Music Institute: this event signs the beginning of his music career²⁵. In 1932, against his family's wish, he gave up engineering to study music full day. In these years he started to be noticed by the music world attending successfully a lot of music competitions. 1934 is an important year for him because he had chance to visit his native land with the "Homeland Visit Music Team" (*Xiangtu yinyue fanwentuan* 鄉土音樂訪問團)²⁶ performing modern music in seven cities. Between 1934 and 1936 he studied occasionally with Russian composer-pianist Alexander Tcherepnin [1899-1977] and traveled with him in mainland China, coming into contact with China's traditional musical culture. Tcherepnin encouraged him in his effort of modernizing folk music and the results of his aim is visible since his first works²⁷, as a tribute to his homeland. In 1938 he left Japan for taking the position of Music Department Head at Beiping Normal University. In these years, he's involved in the study of Chinese traditional music²⁸ and folkloristic music: this became also more evident in the compositions since this period on, where these elements are often more and more combined with western music technique. Amongst his compositions, in this period he was author of some songs written for the 'New People's Association' (*Xinminhui* 新民會): although he afterwards rejected this works, they will become the apple of discord of his whole production²⁹. Because of this, soon after the victory

²⁵ Until that time, he was almost completely self-taught and even though he will have some chance to study in different institution with different masters, generally he always remained inclined to his self-taught method.

²⁶ Chen Yuxiu 陳郁秀, *Yinyue Taiwan* 音樂台灣 (Music Taiwan), Taipei, Shibao wenhua 時報文化, 1996, p. 66.

²⁷ *Taiwan wuqu* 台灣舞曲 (Formosan Dance op.1, 1934); *Taiwan shandi tongbao ge* 台灣山地同胞歌 (Song of the Taiwanese Shandi People op.6, 1935).

²⁸ The result of this research is a collection of essays on music in the Confucian epoch published in 1940 and today reissued in You Qing 尤清 (ed.), *Jiang Wenye wenzi zuopin ji* 江文也文字作品集 (Jiang Wenye's Collection of Written Works), Taipei, Taipei xianli wenhua zhongxin 台北縣立文化中心, 1992.

²⁹ "[...]In that period the enemy organization 'Xinminhui' (an enemy organization during the Resistance War against Japan, founded in Beiping on October 1937) urged on China and Japan friendship; Jiang Wenye, in this situation without alternative wrote the 'Xinminhui anthem', etc [...] with the result of a blemish that lies in the story of his life". Yan

against Japanese (1945), he was jailed for ten month; after his release in 1946, he started working in Beiping's Art School's Music Department (*Beiping guoli yishu zhuanke xuexiao yinyue xi* 北平國立藝術專科學校音樂系). The following years were relatively quiet and productive on the perspective of music composition. The difficulties started in 1957 when the "Anti-Rightist" movement accused him as a "Rightist Element" because of his past period of studies in Japan and because of his Taiwanese background: for this reason he was deprived of all rights to teach, perform or publish and his name became taboo. Despite these troubled circumstances, he persevered in composing³⁰ but, during the Cultural Revolution, he received the most severe blow both artistically and physically: his valuable scores, records, letters and two boxes of handwritten scores were all burned and thrown away, and in the beginning of the 1970s, while working on the farms, his physical condition worsened. In 1978 he suffered a stroke and because of wrong medications was permanently bedridden. In this last period his name and reputation were rectified from the past erroneous accusations and his professorship was reinstated. Looking at this biographical sketch, Jiang Wenye spent the most part of his lifetime in China. Because of this³¹ (and probably also because of the *Xinminhui* affaire), he was generally ignored by Taiwanese music world and his role was reduced to a shadow³². Only in these last ten years, Taiwanese music world started turning its attention to Jiang Wenye production. It was also generally stated by Taiwanese scholars (i.e. by the composer and musicologist Xu Changhui³³ 許常惠) that his contribution and influence on Taiwanese music is irrelevant. Even though his influence is still in discussion, it seems there's no doubt of his contribution to Taiwanese music history: his compositions skills allowed his to become the Taiwanese pioneer of many new music works: he was the first Taiwanese to write a symphony (1940), a piano concerto (1937) a symphonic poem (1953), ballet music (1940), etc. He wrote more than eighty compositions and his works for piano are the followings³⁴:

Tingjie 顏廷階, *Zhongguo xiandai yinyuejia zhuanlue* 中國現代音樂家傳略 (Concise biographies of Chinese contemporary composers), Taipei, Guojia wenhua yishu jijinhui zanzhu chuban 國家文化藝術基金會贊助出版, 1992, p. 179.

³⁰ Amongst the works written in these years, there were his arrangements for piano of one hundred Taiwanese folksongs he collected in his return to Taiwan on 1934. "To be able to preserve a small portion of folksongs for six million Taiwanese, I feel very content to be making a contribution to the world and doing my part for my Taiwanese brothers." From Han Guohuang, 韓國鎭, *Xiandai yinyue dashi, Jiang Wenye de shengping yu zuopin* 現代音樂大師, 江文也的生平與作品 (The Great Master of Contemporary Music, Jiang Wenye's Biography and Compositions), Taipei, Qianwei chubanshe 前衛出版社, 1988.

³¹ About this question, it's interesting to mention Wang Yuhe's 汪毓和 pun: he states that Jiang, from a "Japanese Taiwanese" (*Riben de Taiwan*) composer became a "Chinese Taiwanese" (*Zhongguo de Taiwan*) composer. Wang Yuhe's 汪毓和, *Zhongguo jin xiandai ...*, p.232.

³² Obviously there are some exceptions; one of them is the famous composer Guo Zhiyuan 郭芝苑 that, since he met Jiang Wenye for the first time (1943), he always had strong admiration and esteem for him. See: Guo Zhiyuan 郭芝苑, "Jiang Wenye de huixiang" 江文也的回想 (Recalling Jiang Wenye), in You Qing 尤清 (ed.), *Jiang Wenye jinian yantaohui lunwen ji* 江文也紀念研討會論文集 (Essays Anthology of Jiang Wenye Commemoration Symposium), Taipei, Taipei xianli wenhua zhongxin 台北縣立文化中心, 1992.

³³ Beside his main role as composer, he also studied the music of Taiwan national minorities. He states that all the music related to Taiwan written by Jiang Wenye, is abstract and, the so-called Taiwanese material he used, is the result of illusions. Consequently, he also strongly refuses Han Guohuang's (Jiang Wenye's biographer) comparison with Bartok's contribution to the circulation of the Hungarian folk tunes. See: Xu Changhui 許常惠, "Youguan 'Jiang Wenye yanjiu' de jidian kanfa" 有關「江文也研究」的幾點看法 (Views on some items of 'Jiang Wenye's research'), in Xu Changhui 許常惠, *Yinyue shilun shuqiao (yi)* 音樂史論述橋 (一) (Essays on the History of Music, vol.1), Taipei, Quanyinyuepu chubanshe 全音樂譜出版社, 2000², pp. 45-54.

³⁴ There are not few discrepancies out of all the available sources for the Jiang Wenye's works catalogue; for the piano works, the most reliable one is Liang Maochun 梁茂春, "Jiang Wenye de gangqin zuopin" 江文也的鋼琴作品 (Jiang Wenye Piano Works), in You Qing 尤清 (ed.), *Jiang Wenye jinian yantaohui lunwen ji* 江文也紀念研討會論文集, (Essays Anthology of the Jiang Wenye Commemoration Symposium), Taipei, Taipei xianli wenhua zhongxin 台北縣立文化中心, 1992. A good account for the whole catalogue is Wu Lingyi 吳玲宜, *Taiwan qianbei yinyuejia qunxiang*

Opus ³⁵	Title ³⁶	Date ³⁷
1	<i>Taiwan wuqu</i> 台灣舞曲 (由管弦樂改編) (<i>Formosan Dance</i> , transcription for piano from the orchestral piece)	1934
2	<i>Bailu de huanxiang</i> 白鷺的幻象 (White Egret Fantasy)*	1934
3-1	<i>Xiao sumiao</i> 小素描 (<i>Little Sketch</i>)	1934
3-2	<i>Tan shiqu</i> 譚詩曲 (Talked poem)*	1934
no number	<i>Wuyue</i> 五月 (May)*	1935
n.n.	<i>Mu'ouxi</i> 木偶戲 (Puppets)	1936?
4	<i>Wushou sumiao</i> 五首素描 (Five Sketches)	1934/'36
4	<i>Sanshou Xiamen mingge gangqin xiaopin</i> 三首廈門民歌鋼琴小品 (<i>Three Amoy Songs</i>)*	1935
7	<i>San wuqu</i> 三舞曲 (<i>Three Dances</i>)	1936
8	<i>Duanzhang xiaopin</i> 斷章小品 (<i>Eight Bagatelles</i>)	1935/'36
12	<i>Xiangcun wuqu</i> 鄉村舞曲 (<i>Danza Rustica</i>)*	1939
13	<i>Mandoulin zoumingqu</i> 曼都林奏鳴曲 (<i>Mandarin Sonata</i>)*	1940
16	<i>Diyi gangqin xiezouqu</i> 第一鋼琴協奏曲 (First Piano Concerto)	1937
22	<i>Beijing wanhua ji</i> 北京萬華集 (Anthology of Beijing Splendors)	1938
31	<i>Xiao zoumingqu</i> 小奏鳴曲 (<i>Sonatina</i>)	1940
39	<i>Disan gangqin zoumingqu [Jiangnan fengguang]</i> 第三鋼琴奏鳴曲「江南風光」 (<i>Sonata terza – Natura e vita a mezzodi</i>)	1945
39	<i>Gangqin xushi shi (Xinyang yueye)</i> 鋼琴叙事詩(潯陽月夜) (Epic Poem for piano – Jiujiang Moon night)	1951
51	<i>Zhongguo fengtu shi</i> 中國風土詩 (Poem on Chinese Customs)	no date
52	<i>Dianyue zoumingqu</i> 典樂奏鳴曲 (Ceremony Music Sonata)	1951
53	<i>Xiangtu jieling shiqu</i> 鄉土節令詩曲 (Native Place Festival Poems)	1950
54	<i>Disi gangqin zoumingqu (kuanghuan ri)</i> 第四鋼琴奏鳴曲「狂歡日」 (<i>Sonata quarta – Festa</i>)	1949
56	<i>Yufu chuange qixiang qu</i> 漁夫船歌綺想曲 (Recalling Song of Fishermen tunes)	1951
n.n.	<i>Gangqin zoumingqu (zhongji yong)</i> 鋼琴奏鳴曲(中級用) (Piano Sonata – Medium level)	1952
n.n.	<i>Du Fu zange</i> 杜甫讚歌 (Du Fu's Tribute Song)	1953
n.n.	<i>Yi Zhongguo mingge gaibian zhi 'ertong gangqin jiaoben'</i> 以中國民歌改編之「兒童鋼琴教本」(Children Piano Textbook on Revised Chinese Folk Tunes)	1952

台灣前輩音樂家群相 (The Group of Taiwan Old Generation Composers), Taipei, Dalu chubanshe 大呂出版社, 1996², pp. 34 - 47. See also Jiang Wenye's entry in Yan Tingjie 顏廷階 *Zhongguo xiandai yinyuejia* ..., pp.177-186 and Han Guohuang, 韓國鎭, *Xiandai yinyue dashi, Jiang Wenye de shengping yu zuopin* 現代音樂大師, 江文也的生平與作品 (The Great Master of Contemporary Music, Jiang Wenye's Biography and Compositions), Taipei, Qianwei chubanshe 前衛出版社, 1988, pp.37 - 43.

³⁵ Beside the few works without number, there are two pairs of works (op.4 and op.39) with the same opus number.

³⁶ The English titles in *italics* were provided by the composer in the manuscripts or come from the title page of the published editions (when available).

³⁷ Referring to the completion of the work or the year of publication.

*the score is missing

All these works were composed throughout almost twenty years and, on music style as well as on composition techniques, they show an evident evolution of his art. It's not possible to analyse here each single work³⁸ but I think that is possible to outline the stages of his evolution according to some of his most representative pieces. His first piano work, the piano version of the *Formosan Dance*, was written when the author was studying in Japan. In this work it's not yet possible to track down clearly the influence of the contemporary western music he was studying at that time; however there are some clues of the western romantic tradition and the Impressionist trend. Despite the homesick feeling that arises from the title, he adopts a musical structure derived from Japanese music tradition: it's the tetrachord³⁹ *miyako* (C, D flat, F) that, combined with other solutions i.e. parallel fourth intervals, allows him to produce a typical oriental flavour. The occasions of study with the Russian composer Alexander Tcherepnin deeply influenced the evolution of his style. Since this period on, almost each work shows the effects of this artistic encounter. The *Three Dances*, written short after the first meeting with the Russian composer, are an interesting example related to the combination of different musical techniques. The first and the second dance (marked *Allegro ritmico* and *Allegro scherzando*) have a keen rhythmic pattern and reveal one of Jiang Wenye's musical point of reference, especially for his early works: Bela Bartok. The third dance is instead closer to Tcherepnin's suggestions, particularly to his *Five ('chinese') Concert Études*⁴⁰ op.52 that were written almost in the same period (1934-36) of Jiang's *Three Dances*. In all the three dances there's also the adoption of pentatonic modes and, in my opinion, it's still possible sometimes to notice some difficulties of the composer in resolving the progression of the melodies. In the first dance there's also (only in few bars) the use of chromatic harmonisations that reminds the first of Prokofiev's *Visions Fugitives*. Jiang's *Sonata terza* follows the stylistic substance of the work above cited. Despite the title 'Sonata', the work doesn't show anything related to the western *forma-sonata* structure. This piece was written on the basis of some items taken from the *pipa* 琵琶 traditional song *Xinyang yueye* and proves the composer's assimilation of some elements of the traditional Chinese repertoire: the use of particular harmonies and of some technical expedients directed to reproduce the features of the Chinese traditional instruments, confirms a specific evolution of his composing art. The piece is dedicated to his master Tcherepnin whose traces are visible along the whole work. The *Epic Poem for piano*, with the same opus number of the *Sonata terza* is its reviewed version. There are few differences in the thematic subjects but, generally speaking, there's a better harmonization in the bass line and the composition has a more improvisational feature (more suitable according to the nature of the work) than the former *Sonata terza*. The *Sonata quarta* is the only one to adopt the European *forma-sonata* structure. The subject theme of the first movement is derived from the northern Shaanxi folk tune *Lanhuabua* 藍花花. The third movement marked *Rondo – Allegro vivace, festoso* recalls a little the atmosphere of Nikolay Medtner's *Danza festiva* op.38/n.3 but the texture is not as complex as the work of the Russian composer. The *Native Place Festival Poems* is a collection of twelve Chinese tunes arranged for piano solo. These compositions point up again composers interest towards traditional Chinese music; all the songs are characterized by pentatonic patterns and a strong folkloristic nature (*minsuxing* 民俗性). Generally speaking, in this pieces is quite evident the composers intention of trying to reproduce on the piano the Chinese traditional

³⁸ For further studies on Jiang's piano works see Liang Maochun 梁茂春, "Jiang Wenye de gangqin zuopin" 江文也的鋼琴作品 (Jiang Wenye Piano Works) and Guo Zongkai 郭宗愷, "Jiang Wenye yuequ zhi chuanguo jifa fenxi" 江文也鋼琴樂曲之創作技法分析 (Analysis on the Composition Techniques of Jiang Wenye's Piano Works) in You Qing 尤清 (ed.), *Jiang Wenye jinian yantaohui lunwen ji* 江文也紀念研討會論文集, (Essays Anthology of the Jiang Wenye Commemoration Symposium), Taipei, Taipei xianli wenhua zhongxin 台北縣立文化中心, 1992.

³⁹ In Japanese music, there are four fundamental tetrads called *minyoo*, *miyako*, *ritsu*, *ryukyu* characterized by a fourth interval whose inner sound is different in each of them.

⁴⁰ Alexander Tcherepnin, *Fünf Konzert-Etuden* op.52, Mainz, Schott, 1936.

percussion instruments sound. This kind of musical art was already employed in the past by composers such as Tcherepnin, He Luding 賀綠丁, Ding Shande 丁善德 and others but Jiang's work demonstrates a wider knowledge of the traditional music background and of the numerous nuances related to the traditional instruments. His last piano work is the *Du Fu Tribute Song*. According to the composer's project, it ought to have been a piano suite describing different stage of the illustrious poet life. Unfortunately the work remained unfinished and only the initial prelude was completed. The style is again in accordance with the characteristics of the Chinese traditional music.

Jiang Wenye piano works are characterized by a quite homogenous style. Although the first compositions are still permeated by different kinds of western music references (as Bartók, Prokofiev, Stravinsky, etc.), he was soon able to establish his own approach to composing. Looking at the Taiwanese music impressions in his piano works, it must be admitted that they refers only to some compositions of his early days as *Formosan Dance*, *White Egret Fantasy*, *Puppets* (that probably refers also to the *budaixi* 布袋戲 puppet show very popular in south-east China and Taiwan) and the *Eight Bagatelles*, written in the remembrance of his childhood in Taiwan. Related to this question, the scholar Su Xia 蘇夏 states: "He [Jiang] used his genuine heart to describe the emotions recalling his native land, [...] so that his music is characterized by deep love and a strong significance⁴¹". Beside this, all his piano works are the first great attempt in the production of new music and the author himself was, since his early days, aware of this: "I further want to be the pioneer of the pentatonic scales world⁴²".

Guo Zhiyuan 郭芝苑 [1921]



The author with M^o Guo Zhiyuan in his studio

Amongst Taiwanese composers, Guo Zhiyuan⁴³ is surely the first important witness of the evolution of Taiwanese musical environment since the Japanese epoch. Born in 1921 in Yuanli 苑裡, when he was fifteen, left Taiwan to study in Japan where he met for the first time western music that deeply impressed him. He entered the music department of Japan's University College of Fine Arts and started studying violin (he soon had to interrupt because of his hands' arthritis). In 1945 he came back to Taiwan: after the War of Resistance against Japan, Taiwan was "thirty years backwards (comparing to Japan); a desert of culture, especially for music⁴⁴".

⁴¹ Su Xia 蘇夏, "Lun Jian Wenye zaoqi de yinyue chuanguo" 論 江文也早期的音樂創作 (Discussing Jiang Wenye early musical compositions), in *Zhongyan yinyueyuan xueyuan* 中央音樂院學院 (Central Institute of Music), III/1996.

⁴² Guo Zhiyuan 郭芝苑, "Jiang Wenye de huixiang" 江文也的回憶 (Recalling Jiang Wenye), in You Qing 尤清 (ed.), *Jiang Wenye jinian yantaohui lunwen ji* 江文也紀念研討會論文集 (Essays Anthology of Jiang Wenye Commemoration Symposium), Taipei, Taipei xianli wenhua zhongxin 台北縣立文化中心, 1992, p.90.

⁴³ See Guo Zhiyuan 郭芝苑- Wu Lingyi 吳玲宜, *Zai ye de hong qiangwei* 在野的紅薔薇 (Red Rose in the Countryside), Taipei, Dalu chubanshe 大呂出版社, 1998; Chen Yuxiu 陳郁秀, *Guo Zhiyuan shamo zhong shengkai de hong qiangwei* 郭芝苑 沙漠中盛開的紅薔薇 (Guo Zhiyuan, Blossomed Red Rose in the Desert), Taipei, Shibao wenhua chuban 時報文化出版, 2001 and Wu Lingyi 吳玲宜, *Guo Zhiyuan* 郭芝苑, Taipei, Shibao wenhua chuban 時報文化出版, 2002.

⁴⁴ From private conversation with the composer.

As soon as he arrived in Taiwan, he bought a piano⁴⁵ and started teaching at the Xinzhu Superior School (*Xinzhu shifan xuexiao* 新竹師範學校) but he never felt at ease teaching music. In the 1950s he successfully took part to several music competitions and became member of numerous Taiwanese music associations established in the followings years even though he always kept himself away from academies and society life. Because he was born in a rich landlord family, he never suffered the hardship of finding a good job to earn the living but, aware of this privilege, it was always allowed him to continue studying music (that in the post-war Taiwan's common people view meant jobless future). Then he went for the second time in Japan in 1967 to pursue studies in composition at the National Tokyo Fine Art's University College of Music. When in Japan, he came under the influence of the so called 'French' school and of its points of reference, especially Ikenouchi Tomojirō and Yashiro Akio. Speaking about the former of his Japanese teachers, he said: "He was really an eminent theorist, a great pedagogue, but a poor composer. I wonder if he really never knew what it means 'to compose'⁴⁶". When he came back to Taiwan in 1969, the general situation on the musical perspective got better so he dedicated himself to composing. One of the events that deeply marked the composer's aesthetic on music was the discovery (in the years of his musical education) of Smetana's and Dvorak's works. He thought that even if he couldn't be a violin player, he could pay his tribute to his homeland in the same way of the above cited composers. So it was following this drive that he became aware of the importance of patriotism as crucial of his musical art. Even though he's sometimes considered a composer of the first generation, he never wrote music when he was in Japan (a characteristic of the first generation's composers) but he started in 1946, so when he was already returned to Taiwan. His works for piano solo are the followings (chronologically ordered)⁴⁷:

• <i>Gangqin zuqu</i>	鋼琴組曲	(Piano Suite)	1954
• <i>Taiwan gnyue huanxiangqu</i>	台灣古樂幻想曲	(Ancient Taiwan Music Fantasia)	1956
• <i>Gangqin xiaoku liushou</i>	鋼琴小曲六首	(Six Piano Pieces)	1964
• <i>Gangqin zoumingqu</i>	鋼琴奏鳴曲	(Piano Sonata)	1963
• <i>Taiwan gnyue bianzouqu yu fuge</i>	台灣古樂變奏曲與賦格	(Variations and Fugue on an Ancient Taiwan Music)	1972
• <i>Liushou Taiwan Jiaojiazai diao</i>	六首台灣交加仔調	(Six Taiwan <i>Jiaojiazai</i> Tunes)	1973
• <i>Qishou Taiwan Gezai diao</i>	七首台灣歌仔調	(Seven Taiwan <i>Gezai</i> Tunes)	1974
• <i>Sichuan minyao sishou</i>	四川民謠四首	(Four Sichuan Folk Songs)	1974

The *Piano Suite* includes four pieces: *Prelude*, *Village Dance*, *Impromptu* and *Dance Oriental*⁴⁸. The *Prelude* is characterized by a flowing and mobile bass line on a plain melody on the right hand. The *Village Dance* recalls a little Jiang's Wenye style and is written on a *nanguan* 南管 melody. The *Impromptu* is a quite fast piece written almost entirely on the black keys (then with its typical flavour). The *Dance Oriental*, even though the beginning recalls, on the method of writing, something of the Prokofiev's *Prelude* from the *Small pieces* op.12 or the Rachmaninov's *Prelude* op.32 n.12, is far from them because it sounds like an impressionistic work. In all these pieces

⁴⁵ "In that period, apart from school's music instruments, in the whole city there were only three other persons that own a piano. My piano was really a second hand piano that probably was owned in the past by Japanese. I bought it for seven thousand Taiwan dollars!! So expensive! At that time, with such amount of money, you could buy lots of lands!" From private conversation.

⁴⁶ See 39. According to the composer's memories, Ikenouchi was really crazy for his innumerable exercises on *contrappunto*.

⁴⁷ He also wrote some works for piano and other instruments i.e. the *Concertino for piano and strings orchestra* (1972), the *Sonatina for clarinet and piano* (1974) and several songs for voice and piano.

⁴⁸ *Dance Oriental* has a strong similarity with Walter Niemann's *Fest im Garten* (in *Alt China*, Leipzig, Edition Peters, 1919). See also Luca Pisano, "Intervallo di quarta? Reinventare la musica cinese in Occidente: uno sguardo retrospettivo sulla letteratura pianistica", in *Cher Maître: Studi in onore di Lionello Lanciotti*, Cafoscarina (not yet published).

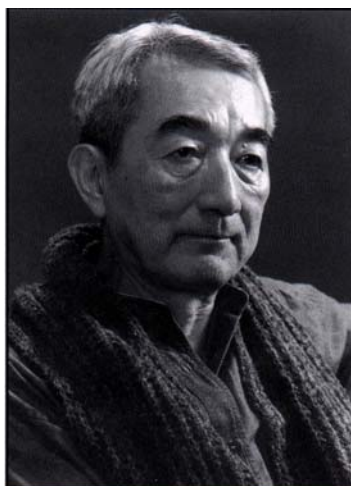
the composer employs pentatonic patterns that, instead of other composers' works till now cited, are not used in a too fixed way but placed in a harmonically more complex context. These pieces already show the composer's high degree of assimilation of western music in his individual style. The *Ancient Taiwan Music Fantasia*, despite the title, is written as a series of variations on a theme. The theme is a pentatonic melody that comes from a *beiguan* 北管 tune called *shuidiyu* 水底魚. In the second variation, the nuances produced by the sextuplets on the right hand seem to imitate the sound of ancient instruments as the *guzheng* 古箏 or the *pipa* 琵琶. Some difficult sections in the middle of the piece and the last variation with fast passages in octaves, make the piece as the most technically demanding of all his piano works. The *Six Piano Pieces* (*Imagine, Elegy, Burlesque, Cradle Song, Rustic Dance, Toccata*) are his closest piano works to the western impressionistic tradition: there are sometimes some traces of pentatonic patterns but all the pieces are mainly pervaded by extensive use of chromaticisms, harmonizations with second, fourth and fifth intervals and frequent passages from major to minor keys (and vice versa). Particularly worth of mention is the *Cradle Song*, written in C minor but with the mediant always swinging from E natural to E flat and then with a typical Gershwinian taste and the *Toccata*, whose beginning seems written under the shadow of Ravel's *Toccata* from *Le Tombeau de Couperin*. The *Piano Sonata* is divided in four movements: *Allegro, Adagio, Menuetto, Allegro*. It's composed in the western *formasonata* style and it's the most complex of Guo's piano works essentially because of the sonorities of all the movements: they seem to recall a bit of Hindemith's first *piano sonata* but sometimes there are more 'daring' dissonances and, the progression and the development of the subjects are seldom predictable. Beside the continuous shifting from harmonies and dissonances, the melodies are sometimes constructed on successions of one/one and half-tones intervals that recall the modulation of the pentatonic scales and that gives a slight oriental flavor to the whole work. The *Variations and Fugue on an Ancient Taiwan Music* is very similar in the writing style to the *Music Fantasia* and actually adds nothing new to the composer's musical vocabulary. Essentially pentatonic, the theme of the variations comes from a *beiguan* tune and the four-voices fugue's one comes from a *nanguan* tune. The last three collections of folk tunes written in the 1970s are a further contribute to his study of Taiwanese and Chinese folk songs. They are collected under the title of *Children Piano Pieces* so they are texturally very simple but, generally, the composer tends to elaborate the melody of reference instead of using the original plain one. Even though Guo Zhiyuan's piano works demonstrate his wide exploration of the instrument possibilities, he never felt at ease with it (his favourite instruments are violin and harmonica): anyway, he always admitted that is of the greatest importance for a composer to master the piano, especially considering it for composing or studying purposes (and reminding that all the greatest western composers of the past were pianists too!). Regarding his contribute to the New Music, is immediately clear looking at his whole works of art: the patriotic impulse, the interest towards the Taiwanese folk music and above all, the necessity of composing music for giving to his country music an international recognition are not only points of reference of his aesthetic of music but concrete elements of each one of his works; in particular his piano works, from the adaptations of Taiwanese songs to the advanced results of his *Piano Sonata*, always preserving a natural approach and a spontaneous language, free from artificiality and sophistications.

The Second Generation

The composers that belong to the so-called 'Second Generation' come from a different kind of back ground, comparing them to those cited above. Most of them received their first musical training in Taiwan and then continued their studies mainly in Europe or United States. The characteristics of their works are generally the development of a more individualistic drive and the adoption of XX century western composing techniques. The results are therefore a sense of

heterogeneity never seen before in the Taiwanese music environment, with different kinds of musical syncretism or purely western style works.

Xu Changhui 許常惠 [1929 – 2001]



The composer and musicologist Xu Changhui was generally considered one of the highest music authorities in the Taiwan XX century music. Born in 1929 in a small village in the middle of the island, when he was ten, was sent with his brother to study in Japan⁴⁹. The following year started studying violin. In 1945 he came back to Taiwan where he continued his studies. In 1949 he is enrolled in the music department of the Taiwan Normal Institute (*Taiwan shifan xueyuan* 台灣師範學院, forerunner of the Taiwan National Normal University (*Guoli Taiwan shifan daxue* 國立台灣師範大學)). In 1953 he graduated and the following year he entered the Taiwan Provincial Symphony Orchestra (*Taiwan sheng jiaoxiang yuetuan* 台灣省交響樂團) as violin player. In the fall of the same year, he passed the exam to enrol the *Ecole Cesar Frack* in Paris where he continued to study violin. In 1956 he started studying music in the Paris University with Andre Jolivet, Marc Honegger and Olivier Messiaen. As soon as he came back to Taiwan in 1959 he started his teaching career. In the followings years he was engaged in several activities to promote Taiwanese composers' music and the researches in national minorities' music. He was founder and chairman of several music organizations such as Chinese Composers' Forum (*Zhiyue xiaoji* 製樂小集 - 1961), Chinese Society for Contemporary Music (*Zhongguo xiandai yinyue yanjiuhui* 中國現代音樂研究會 - 1969) and Asian Composers League (*Yazhou zuoqujia lianmeng* 亞洲作曲家聯盟 - 1973). His engagement in the filed works for ethnomusicology was never interrupted, and on this aspect, he formed the Chinese Folk Music Research Center (*Zhongguo minzu yinyue yanjiu zhongxin* 中國民族音樂研究中心 - 1967) and the Chinese Folk Arts Foundation (*Zhonghua minsu yishu jijinhui* 中華民俗藝術基金會 - 1975). His extensive production includes numerous works for both western and Chinese instruments and several essays and books ranging from western music to Taiwan ethnomusicology. His piano solo works are:

- *You yitian ye zai lina jia* 有一天夜在李娜家 (*Un Jour Chez Mademoiselle Hellene*⁵⁰ op.9) 1960 - 1962
- *Wushou chaqu* 五首插曲 (*Trois [sid] Episodes pour Piano* op. 30) 1975 – 1984
- *Zhongguo mingge gangqinqu diyiben* 中國民歌鋼琴曲第一本 (*Chinese Folk Songs for Piano*, vol. I op. 34) 1980
- *Zhongguo mingge gangqinqu dierben* 中國民歌鋼琴曲第二本 (*Chinese Folk Songs for Piano*, vol. II op. 35) 1981

Un Jour Chez Mademoiselle Hellene represents, on the prospective of the style of the composition, something absolutely unseen before in Taiwan XX century music. The work includes three

⁴⁹ For further information on his biography see Qiu Kunliang 邱坤良, *Zuo zi hai shang lai* 昨自海上來 (Yesterday came from the sea), Taibei, Shibao wenhua chuban 時報文化出版, 1997 and also Zhao Qin 趙琴, *Xu Changhui* 許常惠, Taibei, Shibao wenhua chuban 時報文化出版, 2002.

⁵⁰ The French titles come from the title-page of the published edition.

different sections: a *Prelude et Fugue*, a *Fantaisie et Fugue* and the last *Fugue et Toccata*. The first *Prelude* is a composition principally based on dynamics, in which the same figure and its variants are repeated all along the piece with different degrees ranging from *ff* to *pp*, with the composer's purpose of imitating the *gong* sound (*avec l'effet de gong*). The four-voices *Fugue* employs some avant-garde solutions like the use of a dodecaphonic series as main subject and several changes in the bars duration. The *Fantaisie et Fugue* is principally established on the simultaneousness of different rhythmic patterns with an Impressionistic flavour resembling Debussy in the *Fantasia* and Milhaud in the *Fugue*; the last *Fugue* shows a lyrical mood with slight dissonances in the horizon and in the *Toccata*, is possible to notice another attempt to imitate Chinese traditional instrument (likely the *pipa*) because of the fast repeated notes of the piece. If we consider the pieces on the side of the composition techniques, though they reveal the strong influence of the composer's French masters, they surely stand as a turning point in the Taiwanese music situation. The *Episodes* were written almost twenty years later and are less experimental than the past works. There's a clear reference to the French contemporary music but the sonority, even if there no strict employ of pentatonic modes, has sometimes a more distinctive oriental flavour with romantic colours. The works, according to the foreword, is the neo-romantic expression of the composer's life: *Romance*, *Berceuse*, *Marche Funèbre*, *Affection*, *Recherche*. The *Romance* has a mood closer to Rachmaninov and Scriabin rather than to the French tradition. The *Berceuse* and *Affection*, instead, recall Francis Poulenc's or Jacques Ibert's style but with a distinctive oriental taste, the la piece, *Recherche*, can be considered like a new piano *etude* for the five fingers (*puor les cinq doigts*) *d'après Debussy*. His two book of folk songs for piano belong to the category of piano music for children: the texture of the music is quite simple and all the work is the result of the composer's interest in ethnomusicology. Even though Xu Changhui wrote only few works for piano, they all have a deep substance: the works written in the 1960s probably not yet shows an individualistic drive as the more recent *Episodes* but its influence, in the piano composition vocabulary, amongst the other composers of his generation, will be essential for the determination of the development of the *xin yinyue*. In this sense, the pieces contained in the later *Episodes*, are his mature expression of western music techniques and Taiwanese tradition in a new synthesis.

Ma Shuilong 馬水龍 [1939]



Ma Shuilong is the Taiwanese composer whose international acclaim has no rival not only in his country but also abroad: his works are extensively performed in Asia, Europe and United States and have received praises both from public and critics. He was born in 1939 in Jiufen 九份 near Jilong (also written Keelung) and, since his childhood, he has bent for music. Beside the traditional music, the first approach with western instruments happened in the junior school listening one of his teacher playing the piano. Because of his interest in it (and, of course, because of his good marks), it was allowed him to start training piano with the school's instrument. After the high school (1959), against his family wish, he decided to attend the music department's class (his teachers were Xiao Erhua 蕭而化 and Xu Changhui 許常惠) of the National Taiwan Specialization School of Arts (*Guoli Taiwan yishu zhuanke xuexiao* 國立台灣藝術專科學校). In 1964 he graduated and soon after the military service, he started his career as music teacher. In 1967 he introduced his *Taiwan Suite* for piano at the Sunflower Music Society (*Xiangrikui yuehui* 向日葵樂會) and in the followings years, he received some prizes for other compositions. In 1972, with the

scholarship of the Regensburg Music Institute, he went to study in West Germany with Oskar Sigmund. After the graduation, three years later, he came back to Taiwan and started an intense period of teaching and composing. In 1986, with the financial support of the Fulbright Program, he stayed one year in the United States for research activities and to introduce his works. On the composition prospective, he saw his reputation growing with more and more commissioned works and several chance to perform them. Amongst those ones, I remind in 1984 the performance of his popular *Bamboo Flute Concerto* under the worldwide famous cellist Mstislav Rostropovich's direction. On the teaching prospective, he held positions in several institutes and universities; now he is current director of the National Institute of Art (*Guoli yishu xueyuan* 國立藝術學院). His piano compositions are the followings:

<i>Fuge erzhang</i>	賦格二章	(Fugue) ⁵¹	1962
<i>Gudian zuqu</i>	古典組曲	(Classic Suite)	1962
<i>Huixuanqu</i>	迴旋曲	(Rondo)	1963
<i>Zoumingqu</i>	奏鳴曲	(Sonata)	1963
<i>Taiwan zuqu</i>	台灣組曲	(Suite Taiwan)	1965/66
<i>Yugang sumiao</i>	雨港素描	(A Sketch of the Rainy Harbour)	1969
<i>Zoumingqu</i>	奏鳴曲	(Sonata)	1973
<i>Bianzouqu</i>	變奏曲	(Variations)	1974
<i>Zhongguo mingge gangqin xiaopin ji</i>	中國民歌鋼琴小品集	(Piano Pieces on Chinese Folk Tunes for Children)	1980
<i>Guangdu suixiang</i>	關渡隨想	(Guangdu Capriccio)	2000

The most part of his piano works were written when the composer was still student, first at the University and then in his period abroad in West Germany. The two pieces written in 1962 are no more than modest musical attempts for his former teacher Xiao Erhua. The *Rondo*, even though strictly adopts a western technique of composing (scheme A-B-A-C-A-D), it has the typical flavour of the works written using pentatonic modes. *Suite Taiwan* was introduced on 1967 at the *Sunflower Music Society* meeting. It is divided in *The Temple*, *Religious Procession*, *Lion Dance* and *Lantern Festival*. About the first piece the composer reminds: “There was a short period I lived in Jilong, in the nearby of the *Zhongzheng* park. In a certain temple on the hillside, each morning around four o'clock started to recite passages from scriptures.[...], the *kou kou kou kiang*⁵² sound of the wooden fish and the one of the musical stones bothered so much that woke me up. As soon as it started, there was something I was not accustomed to, but gradually, the rhythm of the Buddhist chanting of prayers was like an hypnotic chant that drove me in a calm and sweet dream⁵³...”. In the beginning of the piece we can really hear the effects of that *kou kou kou kiang* sound and also the slight dissonance reproducing the musical stones. In the *Religious Procession* the composer instead tries to imitate the ancient court music. The *Lion Dance* is a vivacious

⁵¹ The English titles come from the title-page of the published edition, except for the *Guangdu Capriccio*, not yet published.

⁵² The sound is originally transcribed using the *Zhuyin fuhao* letters.

⁵³ Chen Hanjin 陳漢金, *Yinyue duxingxia Ma Shuilong* 音樂獨行俠馬水龍 (The Solitary Paladin of Music: Ma Shuilong), Taipei, Shibao wenhua 時報文化, 2001, p.102.

'humorous' piece based essentially on the rhythm of traditional percussive instruments. *Lantern Festival* is also a vibrant piece but with a different mood, marked rhythmic pattern and a tripping melody. The *Sketch of the Rainy Harbour* is his most popular of his piano works and it was already recorded several times. The rainy harbour clearly refers to the Jilong city harbour, that in the childhood the composer could see from his home on the mountain. The rainy element alludes to the main feature of Jilong's weather: in fact it usually rains about two hundreds and fifty days a year. These pieces were composed under the memories of his early days when the composers was accustomed to spend several hours looking the rainy Jilong's harbour from his window, thinking about his matters. Although there are some elements from traditional Chinese music, they are less obvious than in the *Suite Taiwan*. In the first piece of the cycle, *Rain*, the composers tries to reproduce the sound of the rain⁵⁴, from drizzle to downpour, with a sensible use of *crescendo* and *diminuendo*. The piece is based on the three open strings of the *pipa* and its relationship with the fifth intervals. In the second piece, *Harbour Views in Rainy Nights*, his writing has some affinity with the sonority of traditional plucked instruments, especially with the fast passages on the *guzheng* 古箏. The third piece, *The Girl who Picks Seashells*, is related to an episode happened at the Badouzi 八斗子 seaside with his future wife, the pianist Xu Zizhen 許子珍; its syncopated rhythm gives to the piece a slight swinging feature resembling the pedalling of the waves. The last piece, *At the Temple Gate*, according to the composer's memories, is the result of the music he heard in a rainy day (in the beginning it resembles a little of Debussy's *Jardins sous la pluie*) in a noisy street, nearby of a temple: in the middle section is possible to notice some elements derived from the traditional Taiwanese folk music *beiguan*. The 1974 *Sonata* was written when he was studying abroad, under the influence of his German masters. This work is written with the adoption of western techniques and was his attempt, as he states, to fight the prejudice that eastern composers' works are all written using pentatonic modes. The *Sonata* shows clear reference to Paul Hindemith's way of composing, with extensive use of chromaticisms, always fluctuant between tonality and atonality. The *Piano Pieces on Chinese Folk Tunes for Children* were written with an explicit didactic purpose: the composer, in his years of music teaching, became aware, in his country, the "Westernizing" phenomenon of Arts had its worst effects on music teaching: that means the most part of the music students of younger generations were more and more unaware of their music roots. Because of this, he started to promote amongst western music students, the learning of the traditional Chinese music and of its instruments; these piano pieces are addressed to piano beginners and want to be a valid alternative to the western didactic literature for children. These selection, edited with his wife, is a part of a wider project (not yet realized) that Ma Shuilong would like to complete in order to offer different degrees of difficulty to piano players together with a broad variety of Chinese folk tunes arrangements. His last piano solo work, written recently and after about twenty years from the latter, illustrates a new music vocabulary, nearer to his personal style developed in the 1990s.

Chen Maoxuan 陳茂萱 [1936]:

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|------------------------------------|----------|-----------------|------|
| • <i>Diyibao gangqin zoumingqu</i> | 第一號鋼琴奏鳴曲 | (Sonata n.1) | 1960 |
| • <i>Dierbao gangqin zoumingqu</i> | 第二號鋼琴奏鳴曲 | (Sonata n.2) | 1962 |
| • <i>Ersbou gangqin yequ</i> | 兩首鋼琴夜曲 | (Two Nocturnes) | 1989 |

Lu Yan 盧炎 [1930]

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|-----------------|------|
| • <i>Gangqin qianzouqu sishou</i> | 鋼琴前奏曲四首 | (Four Preludes) | 1979 |
|-----------------------------------|---------|-----------------|------|

⁵⁴ The sound of the rain is of strong importance in the formation of the composers music awareness; it's no wonder that, in middle school period he chose to adopt the penname 'rain sound' *yu sheng* 雨聲.

Lai Dehe 賴德和 [1943]

- *Nianjie zuqu* 年節組曲 (Suite for the Lunar New Year Festival) 1979

Chen Zhushui 陳主稅 [1942 – 1986]

- *Shuqing gangqin xiaopin ji* 抒情鋼琴小品集 (Lyric Short Piano Pieces) 1964/'75

Xiao Tairan 蕭泰然 [1938]

- *Chujiqu* 觸技曲 (Toccata op.75) 1995

The *Guangdu Capriccio*⁵⁵ alludes to the place where the composer currently lives up the hill in the nearby of Taipei, with a spectacular view on the city. The work is characterized by a thematic centre developed in a unbridled way, and the intimate mood lets the listener have a closer affinity with the real world rather than the other, more abstract works (for other instruments), written in these last ten years. Ma Shuilong's piano works have a quite heterogeneous quality. Since his first works, it's possible to identify the influence of traditional music, always present (except for the 'stands-alone' *Sonata*) and assimilated in recent years with a more complex and mature language, from the impressionist elements of the pre-abroad period to those of the German tradition in his recent writing techniques.

Other Works

In this section I would like to introduce some piano works written by other composers. They are not of less importance but I decided to place all of them here because I don't introduce their whole piano compositions but a selection of the most distinctive of their works according to the several trends of Taiwanese New Music.

Amongst the above cited composers, Chen Maoxuan is probably the most interesting from the perspective of the composing techniques: besides his intense effort in music teaching (with the publication of several didactic books), he is also author of remarkable piano works. Written one year after his piano graduation and during the period of study with Xu Changhui (at that time just came back from France), his *Sonata n.1* (in four movements: *allegro*, *andantino*, *vivace*, *andante*) has a plenty of pentatonic patterns, harmonized with second, fourth and fifth intervals. However there are sometimes the insertion of chromaticisms that shows an un-fixed way of using pentatonic modes. The *Sonata n.2*, written only two years later, stands as a turning point in the evolution of his style and make evident the composer's interest in experimental techniques in harmony structures. The *Sonata* is divided in four movements (*allegro con brio*, *andante cantabile*, *scherzo*, *allegro con moto*) and in the first, third and fourth movements he adopts a ten-tones scale (C – C sharp – D – D sharp – E – F sharp – G – G sharp – A – B flat), derived from the combination of two traditional pentatonic modes that, on the keyboard of the piano, results as a combination of white and black keys. In the second movement he instead adopts four different type of pentatonic (in this case it's better to say pentaphonic) modes, constituted by successions of different intervals. The first of the two *nocturnes* is characterized by the development of a thematic subject whose flowing melody in the right hand is resolved with particular relations with different intervals, technically resembling the *Sonata n.2*. The second *nocturne* generally makes use of modal (also called hexatonal) scales but, instead of causing similarities with the forerunner of this technical

⁵⁵ According to the composer's statement (from private conversation in 2002), materials from *Guangdu Capriccio* have been used in the composition of his Piano Concerto, subsequently premiered in Taipei on November 6th 2003 by National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan (Amy Chang, conductor - Jenny Lin, piano).

expedient (i.e. Debussy and other French Impressionists), it seems to be closer to the early Messiaen sonorities (i.e. to his *Préludes pour piano*), so with a more modern approach to the harmonic connections and its constructions.

The composer Lu Yan wrote the *Four Preludes* in the end of his fifteen-years long period abroad in the United States studying composition with Mario Davidovsky, George Rochberg and George Crumb. The first piece is based on polytonal scale with a three part counterpoint. The second piece is the elaboration of a five tones figure. Beside this feature, it has to notice Henry Cowell's influence with the use of clusters as element of compositional design in this piano work. The third piece is similar to the second with the expansion of a thematic nucleus with serial techniques too. The final piece is characterized by the *ostinato* figure of a *tritonus* (augmented fourth interval, that in Middle Ages was so-called *diabolus in musica*) on the left hand which appears twenty-one times⁵⁶.

Lai Dehe's cited work and Chen Zhushui's one belong to another kind of compositions. They represent a sort of didactic work for piano beginners and, even though this kind of pieces are usually not considered worth to be placed amongst so-called serious compositions, it's indubitable that they gave a significant contribute to improve the quality of this usually neglected literature. Lai Dehe's *Suite* is divided in eight different stages, each one representing particular activities related to the Lunar Year Festivals. Each piece, composed generally using pentatonic patterns, is preceded by a foreword so-called 'word for the teachers' in which are explained the main technical problems and the practise method. Chen Zhushui's collection is not presented as work for beginners but, even though more demanding of Lai Dehe's Suite, the compositions do not require particular technical skills in the performer. All the pieces are pervaded by a plain sense of peacefulness and gaiety; his writing techniques follows western classical rules of modulation, perhaps sometimes foreseen but never monotonous or repetitive. These works are a vivid example of the combination of lyrical language and the simplicity of music texture.

Xiao Tairan's *Toccata* is the piano piece that better demonstrates the reason why he's sometime called the 'Taiwanese Rachmaninov' or 'the last Romantic piano poet'. In fact his compositions show his points of reference in the Russian music tradition. Nevertheless this piece seems to be closer to Prokofiev or to the more contemporary Khatchaturian (but technically less demanding compared with the op.11 of the former or the op.24 of the latter) than to Rachmaninov. The work is characterized by the separation of the performer's hands range of action: this means that generally one hand plays on the white keys and the other on the black. This kind of writing technique easily allows the performer to play too close repeated notes without affecting the fast *tempo* of the piece.

***Xuanyinyaji* 璇音雅集 - Atelier de creation musicale "Formusica"**

The composers association *Xuanyinyaji* 璇音雅集 – 'Formusica' was founded in 1983 by the composer-teacher Chen Maoxuan and his students to promote the works written by the new generations of young Taiwanese composers. The association usually arranges one or two meetings a year, allowing the composers to introduce their works. Amongst them, a main role in the production of New Music is played by the compositions for piano solo. Because of this, the association started since 1994 to publish every year a selection of the most distinctive piano works. The last published volume⁵⁷ is the seventh (2002) and more than one hundred

⁵⁶ See also Barbara Mittler, *Dangerous Tunes – The Politics of Chinese Music in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China since 1949*, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz Verlag, 1997, pp.198 – 204.

⁵⁷ It seems there have been a slowing in the publication of the following volumes. At present (autumn 2004) the eighth volume is still not available.

compositions have been currently included in all. The characteristics of the pieces make evident their main purposes, both didactic and artistic (actually with a slight prevalence of the former). According to the choices that have driven my research till now and referring to the further analysis of the pianist-musicologist Ou Lingru⁵⁸ 歐玲如, I decided not take into consideration the didactic works but only those pieces whose artistic value is better concerned with the aim of my study. The composers whose works allow them to arise amongst the others are Lin Jinyou 林進祐, Xie Longguang 謝隆廣, Zheng Qihong 鄭啟宏, Yan Weiming 嚴尉明, Mo Genzhong 莫互中, Xiao Qingyu 蕭慶瑜.

Lin Jinyou seems to be the most prolific of the above cited composers especially considering also the large amount of didactic works he already wrote. The most interesting composition published in the collection is *Yinsbi sanshou* 音詩三首 (Three Music Poems): *Delivery*, *Untitled*, *Echo's Exploration*. The advanced sonorities resulted from the adoption of different techniques (serial, modal, etc.), connected with the careful indications of dynamics, give to these works the profound lyricism that emerges from the continuous struggle between tonality and atonality. Particularly moving is *Echo's Exploration* with its repeated notes on the upper part of the keyboard like a calling voice far away in the distance. In *Imagery "Five"* and *Shadow by Willows* the musical language seems to turn in a more intricate exposition. The former piece is characterized by a quintuplet figure in the left hand with a more and more complex melody line on the right sometimes interrupted by major second intervals leaping on the keyboard; the latter is quite similar to the former with a twirling line on the right hand and the melody line exposed by the left hand whose part is written on two staves with long *legatos* and echoing notes.

Xie Longguang most prominent works are *Da shijian* 大事件 (A Great Event) and *Gangqin zuqu: liangzhong xinqing* 鋼琴組曲:兩種心情 (Piano Suite: Two Kinds of Mood). The first composition, published in the last number of the collection, refers to the tragic earthquake that devastated the island the year before (1999/9/21). It starts from the quiet solemnity of the first part where the composers uses atonal structures, and then the atmosphere becomes more and more restless until the earthquake happens, pointed out by several clusters (marked *feroce* – ferocious) in the lower part of the keyboard. Soon after this, there a 'bridge' section (marked *patetico*) that illustrates the sorrow and the hardships of the survivors; it gradually changes its mood, lightening little by little, with tonal harmonies giving a sense of peace and tranquillity. The last part, turning again to atonality, sounds like a *memento* for the future. The first of the *Two Kinds of Mood* makes use of a particular hexatonic scale (with limitations in the shifting of modulation) created by the composer, joined with a fragmentary (and actually very hard to play) rhythmical pattern. In the second is possible to notice the simultaneous use of two very different features: the Chinese modulation and the gipsy scale⁵⁹. These last two pieces were written after the composer's journey in Europe on 1998 and they seem like a travelogue that reveals the musical contrasts of the musician with the European context and its possible resolutions.

There's another work that seems to remind the importance of the rain in the musical aesthetic of the contemporary Taiwanese composers: it's Zheng Qihong's *Ting yu* 聽雨 (Listening to Rains). The originality of this piece stands in the intentions of the composers that tries to express the different feelings of young, adult and elderly people in listening to the sound of the rain. The

⁵⁸ Ou Lingru 歐玲如, "Xuanyinyaji chuangzuo 'xin yinyue' gangqin zuopin zhi yanjiu" 璇音雅集創作「新台灣音樂」鋼琴作品之研究 (Research on the 'Taiwanese New Music' Piano Works written by the "Formusica" Composers), in *Gangqin yinyue sanbai nian: guoji xueshu yantaohui lunwen ji* 鋼琴音樂三百年: 國際學術研討會論文集 - The Proceedings of Piano 300 International Conference, Taipei, April 2001 (<http://140.122.89.98/conference/piano/index.htm>).

⁵⁹ A scale consisting of a whole tone and two neo-chromatic tetrachords, i.e., B-C#-D-E#-F#-G-A#-b. This scale is sometimes called 'Hungarian Minor'.

piece is so constituted by an introduction (bars 1-7), the theme of rain (5-16; 39-46; 84-94), the different perceptions of young (17-38), adult (47-85), elderly (95-109) people and the *coda*. In the composition there's the concurrent presence of tonal and atonal structures and the insertion of notes in small squares whose duration is indicated by the composer but that can be freely played by the performer in such interval of time.

Yan Weiming most interesting works are *Huoran* 豁然 (Suddenly) and *Jing* 境 (Atmosphere). The first piece, mainly atonal, has the particular feature of the cyclic recurrence of musical levels subdivided in four different sections: frustration (bars 1-7), emotion (8-69), harmony (70-104) and clarification (105-139). *Atmosphere* is based on the differenced occurring with the turn of the mood. It has a *Toccata*-like structure with a central section characterised by a four parts counterpoint. The fast repeated notes seem to remind that kind of composition aimed to imitate the sound of traditional Chinese instruments but the harmonization is really far from that category of works.

Mo Genzhong's *Fanzhou* 泛舟 (Rafting) shows a sort of *moto perpetuo* in the left hand (on the same wavelength as the *Berceuse* or *Barcarolle*-like style of writing) while the right hand has similarities with Xiao Tairan's cited work: in fact the main quality of the piece is that the two hands alternate themselves on moving respectively on black and white keys, resulting in unusual sonorities. His more complex work *Meng* 夢 (Dream) is the elaborated product of forth and fifth intervals harmonisations along a particular nine-tones scale based on five half-tones intervals and three whole tones.

According to the title of these works, Xiao Qingyu's *Sidu lianxiqu* 四度練習曲 (Forth Etude) and *Wudu lianxiqu* 五度練習曲 (Fifth Etude) seem belonging to the category of the didactic works. They have of course this aim too, but in my opinion they are, first of all, works of Art. These two compositions are obviously a contribute to the *Etudes* piano literature with particular reference to Debussy (that in this sense was a forerunner, writing, amongst his *Etudes* (1912), *l'Etudes pour les Quartes*). The *Forth Etude* has quite complex figurations concerning overlapping forth intervals that sometimes sound quite dissonant; the *Fifth Etude* instead is closer to the Impressionistic flavour and is written in ternary form with fixed thematic subjects based on the parallel motion of fifth intervals and the melody flowing around it. Following these examples, the *Two Short Pieces* published in the seventh volume are focused on the same kind of compositional problem: the first is on seventh and ninth intervals with a strong Scriabinian taste (especially that from etudes op. 42 and op. 65) and the second is a *toccata*-like piece on major/minor second intervals.

Conclusion

All the works introduced in this paper want to illustrate the general way covered by the New Music in Taiwan from the piano solo viewpoint. The main reasons of this choice stands on the extreme versatility of the instrument, shown by the wide range repertoire the Taiwanese composers have written for it. Then is possible to track the route of Taiwanese New Music on this side. In the early days, the compositions were all written in the shadow of the so-called religious music, when music was not yet considered as a kind of art itself. The epoch of the Japanese Occupation saw the birth of those that could be defined the "musician-travellers", at the beginning mainly in Japan and after the World Wars in Europe and United States too. These composers had, in different ways from one another, the opportunity to enter in contact with western music. The piano works written in this period denotes the composers' wish of using their own traditional music heritage through western compositional techniques (i.e. Guo Zhiyuan or

Jiang Wenye's works). In the end of the 1950s it's possible to notice another turning point marked by Xu Changhui's return to Taiwan and by a new kind of compositions that express the conflicts between western techniques and the inheritance of Taiwanese folk music. Because of this, several composers started to write very different works, sometimes strictly using western methods and so producing western-style works, or sometimes trying to find a way to the compromise, i.e. those pieces in which the composers attempt to reproduce the sonorities of the Chinese traditional instruments, so creating a westernized work but with a distinctive Chinese flavour. The awareness of this struggle brought the composers to find new solutions turning their attention on different instruments; this is the reason of the slight decrease in piano compositions since the 1970s. From the end of the 1980s on, there's an inversion of the tendency that allows to identify two main different trends in the New Music: the former is characterised mostly by works that stand in the same way of those written in the attempt of imitating traditional instruments. The latter illustrates the employ of a new compositional method based on the combination of western avant-gardes with the elaboration of Chinese traditional harmonisations. Even though, because of its complexity, the results of this latter works are not immediately understandable at first listening (but only after further analysis), these seem to be the most interesting products on the way of joining two different kind of music contexts in the turn of the century, on the way of the forthcoming Taiwanese New Music.

Selected Discography

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