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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

The Development and Conceptual Transformation of Chinese Buddhist Songs in the
Twentieth Century

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy

in

Music

by

Tse-Hsiung Larry Lin

Committee in charge:

Professor Nancy Guy, Chair
Professor Marcel Henaff
Professor Lei Liang
Professor Ping-hui Liao
Professor Richard Madsen
Professor Jane Stevens

2012

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Chair

University of California, San Diego

2012

*For a generation of Chinese and Taiwanese Buddhists and their devotion to the
development of Buddhist songs in the twentieth century*

This is also dedicated to my mother, Hsiao Yin Li-chiang

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NOTES ON ROMANIZATION AND TRANSLATION

Transliteration of proper names in Chinese is a task that has been approached differently by people from various Chinese-speaking areas and among scholars devoted to the research into Chinese history and related disciplines. Mainland China, Hong Kong (the former British colony), and Taiwan experienced different sociocultural developments under their respective political reigns in the previous hundred years. Different ways of romanizing Chinese names in these areas have come to serve their political ideologies, representing people's political and cultural identity. It is therefore my best hope that when I romanize individuals' names, I do so following their personal wishes. With this consideration in mind, I develop the following transliteration approach for personal names: names from the People's Republic of China are unanimously spelled in *pinyin*, be it from the pre-1949 or post-1949 periods. With names from Taiwan, I use the individuals' preferred spelling when I know it. Otherwise, I use *pinyin*. Spellings of city and geographical names are romanized according to what is best known in the West. For those lesser known names, for example, names of regional cities, *pinyin* is used regardless of their location in China or Taiwan. In some occasions, historical city names are necessary to reflect the political reality of the time. In those cases, the historically known spellings (in Wade-Giles or others) are retained. Therefore, Pei-ping (not Beiping) and Tien-tsin (not Tien-chin or Tianjin) are used when historically appropriate. Monastic names (or Dharma names), usually involving two Chinese characters, are spelled as two separate

elements when that is preferred by the individual, but are spelled as one word in *pinyin* when no preference is known. For example, Taixu, the name of the leader of Chinese reform Buddhism, takes the contracted form in *pinyin*, but Hsing Yun is in two elements. The same principle applies to names of organizations such as Fo Guang Shan (despite its being in *pinyin*) and Tzu Chi (despite its being in Wade-Giles) as preferred by the respective organizations.

Unless otherwise indicated, all translations of quoted texts are mine.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

When I began my research into the development of Chinese Buddhist music in Taiwan in the summer of 2007, I was able to connect myself to the Buddhist community through the help of devoted Buddhist Mr. Guo Liming, whom I encountered in one of my online searches. Under his enthusiastic guidance, I participated in Buddhist rituals and ceremonies of various kinds in temples of different schools that summer. The experience helped initiate me into the field with an overview of the various Buddhist musical genres and practices involved in these monastic and lay activities. It was also through Guo that I met Abbot Jueju of Huizhong Temple (惠中寺), a branch temple of Fo Guang Shan Monastery (佛光山寺) in Taichung, Taiwan. Abbot Jueju, after learning of my interest in studying Fo Guang Shan's musical practice, relayed my inquiries for research opportunities to Venerable Miaoyuan, who was at that time the executive director of Fo Guang Shan Foundation for Buddhist Culture and Education (佛光山文教基金會). Through the arrangement of Venerable Miaoyuan and Venerable Miaomin, I was able to meet with some of the most important informants in my later field research. To the people and friends mentioned above, I owe my most sincere thanks.

Interviews were central to my field research in both Taiwan and Shanghai, where the early stages of the musical development took place. Among my interviewees, Lin Qingzhi, Lin Xiumei, Zhang Cilian, and Lu Dafu from the 1950s Buddhist group in Ilan, Taiwan (the focus of chapter 3), generously shared with me

their memories and preserved materials, some of which they had not shown to anyone else. Mr. Zhang Zhao, also from the same group, untiringly helped me with the impossible task of locating the affiliated Buddhist composer Yang Yongpu's family, who had lost contact with the monastic group for nearly thirty years. My deepest appreciation extends to all the aforementioned members of the Buddhist music group. Without their help, the description of the early musical development would not have been possible. It is important for me to thank Mr. Yang Zizu, the second son of Yang Yongpu. Mr. Yang kindly allowed me to access manuscripts, family pictures, and personal documents, all of which he preserved after his father's death in 1984. To Mr. Yang, I promised that I would give a truthful account of his father's contribution to the development of the genre in the 1950s. Equally important are my thanks to Mrs. Wu Zhou Xiuyue (Mrs. Wu Chu-che) and their daughter, Ms. Wu I-te, for all necessary assistance in my research into the life story of Wu Chu-che. I am grateful for their trust in my ability to write about the late musician.

My research in Shanghai was made possible through the personal connection of Professor Lei Liang. Because of his help, I was able to meet with Qian Renkang, a surviving participant of Shanghai Buddhist music activities in the 1940s and 1950s. Qian is today professor emeritus of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music with a specialty in the history of Chinese school songs. He kindly received me at his nursing home room and shared with me his research findings regarding the origin of school songs, which greatly improved my knowledge about Buddhist song and its relationship with the educational genre. It was also because of Professor Qian that I

met with Mr. Sun Wenmiao, a leader of Sounds of Ocean Waves Choir of Shanghai in the 1940s and 1950s. Mr. Sun generously permitted me to duplicate the rare copies of his preserved songbooks published in the 1940s and early 1950s. These copies miraculously survived the massive destruction of the Great Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) under his protection. Without these materials, the reconstruction of the history of this early period would not be complete. I also wish to thank Professor Zhang Weidong of Shantou University for all of his assistance during my several visits to Shantou, China. In his company at various sites for data collection I was able to conduct my research in a city where an unfamiliar dialect of Chinese is used.

I would like to express my deepest thanks to my academic adviser, Professor Nancy Guy, who gave me unreserved support and guidance during my coursework at UCSD and the dissertation research that followed. She introduced me to the sociopolitical issues of music that became the direct cause for me to undertake this research. I also would like to thank Professor Richard Madsen, whose scholarship in Taiwan religions has inspired me to consider the many aspects of the changing society. Equal appreciation is given for Professor Jane Stevens, Professor Liao Ping-hui and Professor Marcel Henaff, who kindly advised me during the course of my graduate study and offered their invaluable critiques on my writings. Among my UCSD friends, I want to thank Satomi Saito, who generously offered linguistic assistance in my research into related music literature in Japanese. I also would like to acknowledge the meticulous work of Charlie Wilmoth, Nick McCollum, Aaron Gervais, Jason Ponce, Nick Leggatt, and Jonathan Piper in proofreading and editing the final version of my

dissertation. My special thanks are given to Dr. James Wicks and his family, whose friendship meant a great deal to me while I was away from home.

I feel most indebted to my family members. It is my mother who encouraged me and financially supported me in my pursuit of higher education in music abroad. I also owe a great deal to Chen You-Ming, who, during my long-term absence from home, took care of my mother and my canine family. You-Ming's love captivated my heart long ago. My unceasing love equally goes to Nini and Wawa (my canine children) who, with their unwavering loyalty, were the fountain of ever comforting joy during my loneliest hours of research.

In addition to the individuals aforementioned, I also would like to express my thanks to the people of Taiwan, the land that nurtured me. The educational fund administered to me through Ministry of Education of Taiwan and Chienkuo University allowed my study in the United States with much ease. Finally, I am grateful to the University of California for funding my studies through tuition scholarships and teaching assistantships.

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- “Mountain Songs, Hakka Songs, Protest Songs,” *Asian Music* (January 2011), 42(1):85-122.
- “The Development of Chinese Buddhist Songs in the Early Twentieth Century in Shanghai,” Presented at Taiwan Musicology Forum, National Chiao Tung University, Hsinchu, Taiwan, November 2011.
- “Zai xun yishu gequ de dingfeng: lun Li Zhong-he de fojiao gequ chuangzuo” (Accomplishing the New Height in Art Songs: Li Zhonghe and His Buddhist Songs) presented at Di shi jie Yinshun daoshi sixiang zhi lilun yu shijian (The Tenth Meeting for the Study and Practice of the Thoughts of Master Yinshun), Taoyuan, Taiwan, March 2011.
- “A Transnational Journey of Music and Identity” presented at East Asian Music and Modernity Conference, Luodong, Taiwan, August 2006.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Development and Conceptual Transformation of Chinese Buddhist Songs in the
Twentieth Century

by

Tse-Hsiung Larry Lin

Doctor of Philosophy in Music

University of California, San Diego, 2012

Professor Nancy Guy, Chair

This dissertation investigates the development of Chinese Buddhist songs in the twentieth century focusing on the creation of the genre in China in the first half of the century and its continued evolution in Taiwan in the 1950s and 1960s. Despite its significant role in the reform of Chinese Buddhism, research into the different aspects of the Buddhist musical genre has been, before this investigation, inadequate. This study, with its special focus, differs from the previous researches that centered on the

modern transformation of Buddhist ritual sounds and therefore supplements our knowledge of Buddhist music history.

Examining the historical processes, I identify two direct influences on the musical development: first, the introduction of Western musical form through Chinese school songs, and second, the concurrent culture movements beginning in the late 1910s. Through selected examples, I demonstrate how Buddhist musical culture adapted itself to sociopolitical changes of early to mid-twentieth century China and Taiwan.

The influences were first seen in Buddhist songs' adoption of the Western-influenced musical form of Chinese school songs used for educational reform in the earlier half of the twentieth century in China. I use music examples drawn from both genres to demonstrate their shared characteristics and the evolution of the Buddhist musical form on the basis of school songs. Lyric materials are crucial for identifying the various types of sociopolitical influences on the music. Analyses of the song lyrics correlated with a study of the changing sociocultural context help reveal the espoused ideals and goals of the era in music. In addition to the study of the transformation of the genre, its form and concept, this dissertation contemplates the rich meaning of these musical developments in connection with Buddhists' pursuit of a new cultural identity.

INTRODUCTION

My research into the history of Chinese Buddhist songs began in the summer of 2007 when I participated in a community Buddhist choir in a Taipei suburb. Stunned by the refined styles and the sophisticated compositional techniques, I was prompted to ask how this musical genre, which used to assume only a minor role in the general Chinese Buddhist tradition, had become so complex. What was the social and cultural development that supported the transformation of Buddhist songs? What was the original cause that led to the present diversity of form? What is the basis on which this development took place?

When these questions arose one after another, I first attempted to find my answers in existing literature, but was surprised to find that very little had been documented about Chinese Buddhist songs. In general, there was no information about when and how the genre developed. In contrast, there is an abundance of literature with a focus on the development of historical genres, including *fanbai* (梵唄), the Buddhist melodious chants, and *jing yinyue* (京音樂), the Buddhist instrumental tradition originating from the Ming dynasty. Among the few authors who dealt with contemporary Buddhist music, the majority chose to consider the issues regarding the transformation of Buddhist chants in the twentieth century in response to Chinese modernity. There are a number of inspiring articles from the 1990s and early 2000s belonging to this type by Chen Pi-yen. Other studies that do touch on Buddhist songs hardly broaden their discussion to cover the repertoires created in Taiwan before

the 1970s, despite the fact that the genre obviously grew and changed before that time. A survey of the available library resources worldwide reveals that the scarcity of preserved original documents and materials related to the development of Buddhist songs in the earlier half of the twentieth century likely contributed to the number of unsatisfactory studies in this particular field.

Gao Ya-Li, in her 1992 Master's thesis "The Development of Buddhist Music in Taiwan and the Transformation of Its Culture," devoted 11 pages to the discussion of contemporary Buddhist songs. The lack of original examples prevents her from elaborating on the development of the genre. The scope of her discussion is limited to a listing of events, each of which is covered in two to three lines. For example, Hsing Yun (星雲), a pioneer of Buddhist songs in Taiwan in the 1950s, and his musical work are covered with limited biographical and historical detail. The historical context in which the music in question developed is, on the whole, missing. We learn nothing about why he organized his musical ensemble or the intended purposes of the group's music.

Other studies that deal with similar topics likewise lack the support of proper musical examples and investigation of contexts. The two Master's theses by Miaole and Lu Huizhen, both descriptive, provide an overview of the music of Fo Guang Shan Monastery (佛光山, also Fo Kuang Shan), a monastic order created by Hsing Yun in 1967. Miaole, a cleric of Fo Guang Shan, provides an insider's perspective on fifty years of musical activities of the monastic group in her thesis "Fo Guang Shan's Buddhist Musical Practice" (2006a; 2006b), with an attempt to interpret the group's

music and musical activities according to Fo Guang Shan's reform Buddhist teaching. Lu compiled a list of all that Fo Guang Shan Monastery had done with its music, including audio and video publications and musical performances, over the past fifty years. Both theses are very useful for those interested in everything the Buddhist group has done. But both similarly lack attention to the contemporary social and political influences on the development of the monastery's music.

Unlike the aforementioned theses of descriptive nature, Lin Gufang addresses several critical questions regarding the recent development of Buddhist music in his article "From Form to Actual Transformation" (1998). He traces the present development and dilemmas of Chinese Buddhist music, introducing philosophical and aesthetic perspectives to the study of the genre in Taiwan. Lin argues that the eagerness to use Western procedures of music composition and forms of musical presentation has taken a toll on Buddhist spirituality in today's Buddhist music. Western musical form, used by contemporary Buddhist music practitioners for its progressive connotations, carries with it the irreducible characteristics of Western music that are not always in harmony with the original Buddhist ideals. At its worst, the market has further encouraged the integration of popular taste into Buddhist music, without sensible judgment on its suitability for the required religious functions under different circumstances. In another article, Lin concludes that the mass production of recorded goods (following the public taste for Western music style) has led to the degradation of the genre by matching irrelevant, but popularly appealing, melodies in Western style with spiritual texts (Lin 2002). He suggests a reexamination of these

issues and a reconfirmation of Chinese Buddhist religiosity and cultural characteristics as a remedy for the incompatibility between musical forms and Buddhist spirituality. Lin believes that a more positive and conscious engagement with both the practice of the religion and the practice of music may bring the genre to a new level.

Lin's remark reminds us of the inevitable conflict between the desire for progress (by way of Westernization) and a faith in tradition, a common experience that seems to be shared by all Chinese reformers since the beginning of the Chinese modernization movements in the mid-nineteenth century. Lin's work generally is more concerned with the aesthetic and ethical values of Buddhist songs than with the historical development of the genre, which is central to my study.

Despite its early beginning, my research project did not take a more definite shape with a specific research question until the summer of 2008. By that time, I was able to make several important steps in this project and collected a number of the earliest songbooks and documents published in Taiwan in the 1950s. These publications, some of which are in terrible condition and remain generally unknown to the public, were stored in different public libraries and private collections across the island and had attracted little attention despite their importance in the early development of Buddhist songs in Taiwan. As my own research progressed with more data available to me, and the picture of early Buddhist song activities of 1950s Taiwan became clearer and clearer, the evidence as revealed in the discovered scores further led me to the investigation of an even earlier stage of musical development in mainland China. During my various visits to the original sites in China where the

musical activities in question occurred, I successfully located important original publications, documents, articles, and songbooks published in the 1940s and 1950s. With their shared songs as evidence, I was finally able to establish the direct relationship existing between an Ilan Buddhist musical group in Taiwan in the 1950s and an earlier group in Shanghai.

As demonstrated in the previous paragraphs, the data collection process forms a vital part of my research into the history of Buddhist songs in the twentieth century. It includes research trips to four different sites in Taiwan and China: Shanghai, the original site where the earliest Buddhist musical activities took place in the 1930s and 1940s; Shantou, China, where Buddhist song activities (possibly) originating in Shanghai began to develop in 1941 and later were able to influence those in Shanghai;¹ Ilan, Taiwan, where pioneering Buddhist musical work began in the 1950s; and Kaohsiung, Taiwan, where Fo Guang Shan Monastery, a monastic order dedicated to musical/cultural work beginning in the 1970s, is located.

Between October 2007 and November 2011, I made several trips to my primary research sites. The study of the original Buddhist community in Ilan, Taiwan, included a two year (2008–2010) onsite observation of the life and organization of the Buddhist community in question. For two years I also took part in the Buddhist graduate program at Fo Guang University, a higher education institution affiliated

¹ The development in Shantou is not entirely clear to us at this point. Despite the fact that Buddhist songs used in Shantou were clearly influenced by the general school song movement beginning in the early twentieth century in Shanghai, their connection with the earlier Buddhist song development in Shanghai still requires further investigation. As far as we know, the development of Buddhist music in Shantou definitely influenced that in Shanghai in the 1940s, but the influence from Shanghai on the Buddhist musical activities in Shantou requires more evidence to demonstrate..

with Fo Guang Shan Monastery, to better prepare myself to discuss Buddhism-related issues. A special arrangement through the faculty members of the Fo Guang University allowed me, a layperson, a rare chance to take residence in Fo Guang Shan Conglin Men's College (佛光山叢林學院男眾學部), a cleric trainee college. The experience supplemented my study with an insider's perspective into the monastic life of the group and its reform Buddhist ideals in practice. During this period, I was able to interview several important leaders of the monastic order and persons associated with Fo Guang Shan Monastery, including Venerable Tzu Hui (慈惠法師), the former director of Fo Guang Shan Foundation for Buddhist Culture and Education (佛光山文教基金會), Venerable Miaoyuan, the Chief Executive of the Foundation, and the original members of the Buddhist choir organized in the 1950s in Ilan, Taiwan.

Two trips to Shanghai, the site of the initial development of Buddhist songs in the 1930s and 1940s, took place between December 2010 and March 2011 for conducting interviews and collecting original documents. The materials I collected include a personal memoir, musical publications, and pictures that survived the numerous political movements in Communist China in the 1960s and 1970s. These materials strongly evidenced the relationship between the Buddhist genres and the concurrent Chinese “new music” development, and that between Buddhist songs of the 1940s and 1950s in Shanghai and the songs developed in Taiwan in the 1950s and 60s.²

² *New music* (新音樂) was a word loosely used by contemporary musicians and scholars to indicate Western-influenced Chinese music of the early twentieth century, and especially that of the 1920s and

Between August and November 2011, I made two trips to Shantou, China, a city about 620 miles south of Shanghai. I was able to interview one surviving layperson who participated in the early Buddhist activities in Shantou in the 1940s. With help from Shantou University, I gained access to the materials preserved in the Shantou City Archives (汕头市档案馆) that evidenced the relationship between the Buddhist musical and educational activities in the city in the 1940s and those in Shanghai during the same period.

In accordance with the materials available from the field and in consideration of the significance of these materials in the contemporary Buddhist music history, this dissertation subsequently takes as its focus the development of Buddhist songs within a period of approximately 30 years, from the early 1930s, when the earliest known contemporary Buddhist songs were composed, through the late 1960s, when the next stage of development began. The late 1930s and 1940s was a crucial period for the initial development of the genre. During this period, different experiments were attempted before a more consistent form began to emerge in the late 1940s and early 1950s. After the transmission of the genre from Shanghai to Taiwan, it experienced a period of transition in which the repertoire continued to be cultivated in the style of Shanghai Buddhist songs while at the same time heading in a new direction. During

30s. Xiao Youmei, Chao Yuen Ren, Qing Zhu and Huang Zi were typical Chinese new music composers of this period. Their compositions, most of which were so-called Chinese art songs, were heavily influenced by the Western art music tradition. In a broader sense, *new music* could include all new genres developed since the beginning of the Chinese modernization movement and the term is as often applied to the description of Chinese school songs and earlier Western-influenced genres, which preceded Chinese art songs. However, consensus regarding the definition of the term is not yet reached among historians who research into related topics. In this dissertation, the term is used to indicate the general Western-influenced musical development beginning in the early twentieth century with Chinese school songs (Liu 2007, 1–30).

this time, more musicians trained in Western music joined to expand the new repertoire. Their work helped raise the overall level of Western compositional techniques involved in the songs. The 1970s witnessed a newer development of the genre, a new stage of growth supported by the expansion of Buddhist communities and stimulated by rapid social and cultural change. Influenced by the general change, new styles of Buddhist songs and musical activities appeared. I accordingly divide the dissertation into four parts. Shanghai Buddhist musical activities during the 1930s and 1940s, which initiated the development of Buddhist songs, will be the focus of chapter 2. In this chapter, I will examine the development of Buddhist songs and the influence of Chinese school songs (學堂樂歌), an educational genre during Chinese education reform. Furthermore, I examine how social and political influences helped shape the themes of Buddhist songs. Chapter 3 examines the further development of Buddhist songs in Taiwan after the relocation of the Chinese Buddhists in 1949. A case study of Hsing Yun's Buddhist group and its music activities in Ilan, Taiwan, illuminates the patterns and forms of Buddhist musical activities initially influenced by those in Shanghai in the preceding period. In chapter 4, I will pair the case study with a discussion of the two Buddhist musicians, Yang Yongpu (楊勇溥) and Wu Chu-che (吳居徹), associated with Hsing Yun's Ilan-based group. The personal stories of the two composers and their musical thoughts, accompanied with a score analysis of their Buddhist songs, further illustrate the technical development of Buddhist songs in the post-war period in Taiwan. The conclusion will contemplate and evaluate the development of Buddhist songs in China and in Taiwan in connection with a

discussion of the evolution of musical form and its meaning from a broader historical viewpoint. To achieve this goal, the development of Buddhist songs after the 1970s will be briefly covered in chapter 5 in hopes that a full picture of the development of Buddhist music in Taiwan might emerge and the meaning of the musical development in its entirety may be revealed.

Through the interpretation of music, scores and related texts, I hope we may better understand the multiple influences on the development of contemporary Buddhist music as well as the decisions and motivations of the individuals involved. In the chapter that follows, I begin with a discussion of the historical origins of Chinese Buddhist music and continue with a survey of the history of Chinese modernization, which formed the direct cause for the development of Chinese Buddhist songs.

1.

THE CONTEXT OF CHINESE BUDDHIST REFORM AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF BUDDHIST SONGS

Chinese Buddhist songs first developed as a part of the general Chinese Buddhist reform movement in the early twentieth century, which in turn was a result of pressure from the Chinese modernization movements that began in the late nineteenth century. Despite the fact that Buddhist songs are a comparatively new genre, the tradition of Chinese Buddhist music has a long history. In order to properly address the contemporary development of these songs, it is necessary to first begin with a discussion of the history of Chinese Buddhist music. We must note that the term *fojiao yinyue* (佛教音樂, Buddhist Music) is a modern invention.¹ Though the Chinese term *yinyue* is not exactly new in Chinese Buddhism, it traditionally means something else. Historically, there were only genre names. For example, *fanbai* (梵唄) is the melodious liturgy that was used in ritual services and ceremonial functions; the term *yinyue* (音樂, music) denotes an instrumental form of Buddhist music developed since the Ming dynasty (1368–1644); *ge* (歌) are Buddhist-themed songs.²

¹ As Chen Pi-yen argues, the term *fojiao yinyue* (Buddhist music), commonly used today, is an under-defined word that tells us nothing definite except for its close association with Western influence and Buddhists' adaptations that help reconstitute their "interactional resources," allowing the community to "participate in the communicative structure of modern cultural discourse" (Chen 2004, 79).

² Scholars have attempted different methods of categorization in order to better understand the different species of Buddhist music. Tian Qing categorizes Buddhist music as service music (法事音樂, mainly *fanbai* or any music for liturgical use) and folk Buddhist music (民間佛樂, including Buddhist songs) (cf. Tian 1997, 15–16). Gao Ya-Li suggested "devotional music" (供養音樂) as opposed to service

Despite its ambiguous origin, the history of Chinese Buddhist music may be as long as that of Buddhism in China. It is generally believed that the melodious chanting tradition was introduced to China during the same period when the Buddhist teaching was transmitted, around the beginning of the Christian era. Likely deriving its origin from the Pali word *bhasa* (lit. to speak), the name of the genre *fanbai* denotes its long historical association with the recitation of the Buddha's sacred words since its ancient origins in India.³ Occupying a position of religious and cultural significance in the history of Chinese Buddhism, the sutra-recitation tradition was not only influenced by Indian Buddhist musical culture, but also absorbed the musical cultures native to China over two millennia (Lai 2001, 101–04). Today, the sacred sound of daily morning and evening devotions (朝暮課誦) and that of special services on Buddhist holidays, which integrate elements borrowed from Chinese folk and other religious traditions, are among the most commonly shared experiences one may have in a

music (Gao 1990). In effect, service music is liturgical, while devotional music or folk Buddhist music (Buddhist songs) is non-liturgical, used by followers in folk religious festivals and social gatherings. Chen Pi-yen makes a distinction between Buddhist songs (佛教歌曲) and commercial Buddhist music (商品佛教音樂) in her discussion of the contemporary repertory (Chen 2004, 326). She maintains that Buddhist songs were a genre with a recent origin. It is basically non-liturgical, but is usually approved by the Buddhist monastic community and is commonly used by lay followers and sometimes by Buddhist priests in less formal occasions. Commercial Buddhist Music (some of which is vocal and sometimes similar to Buddhist songs in appearance), on the other hand, by its name denotes the commercial mass-production for the market. It is purchased by its consumers for a wide range of purposes, such as providing background music in a restaurant or creating a meditation environment. Commercial Buddhist Music does not necessarily have to be associated with any specific meaning related to Buddhism, but rather is closely connected with the imagination of its consumers, regarding what they believe to be Buddhist. In comparison, Buddhist songs have maintained a stronger connection with Buddhist institutions and are basically created for non-commercial use (Chen 2005, 270–280). However, in reality, the distinction between Buddhist songs and commercial Buddhist music has recently blurred.

³ The word *fanbai* is made of two Chinese characters, *fan* and *bai*. *Fan* means “purity” or something relating to India, while *bai*, deriving from the Pali word *bhasa*, means “to recite” or “to speak” the words of the Buddha.

Chinese Buddhist temple. These ritual/vocal activities are often, but not always, accompanied by instruments of different kinds.

In addition to this liturgical music tradition, *ge* (songs) are another type of Buddhist religious musical expression with an ancient origin. Rather than being liturgical and sacred, Buddhist-themed songs were a popular genre spontaneously developed by the laity as a means of personal expression. “My Testimony of Tao” (證道歌), written by Master Yongjia (永嘉大師, 665–713) of the Tang dynasty, is a rhymed poem (or a set of poems) that was sung for both personal cultivation and moral education. The composition of the historical Buddhist songs like “My Testimony of Tao,” developed by individuals and affected by historical and cultural factors were isolated musical activities despite the fact that the repertoire, with songs accumulated over centuries, is by no means small. In comparison with the liturgical tradition of *fanbai*, which was deliberately cultivated through the ages, these historical Buddhist songs did not lead to the emergence of a continuously developing artistic tradition.

In response to the general national reform of the early twentieth century, music was used to facilitate the reform of Chinese Buddhism. Just like the Chinese reformers who modeled their reform programs on the West, Chinese Buddhists copied Western missionaries in developing their own strategies to cope with changes in the modern era. In the 1930s and early 1940s songs were created to meet the needs of classroom teaching in Buddhist elementary schools and Buddhist-related social and cultural activities. The genre continued to develop with increased publications and

performances in the 1940s and 1950s. With imitation as well as innovation, the genre developed new forms and meanings that reflected the influences of the contemporary social and cultural movements. As it developed, this new Buddhist musical culture spread. In the form of broadcasts and publications, the genre enjoyed its first success in Shanghai and began to spread to other cities and regions along the east coast of China. From Shanghai, these songs went to Taiwan in 1949 with the Buddhists who fled Communist China near the end of the Chinese Civil War. In this newly adopted land, the Buddhist musical activities originally cultivated in Shanghai continued to develop into new forms in the hands of musicians from both China and Taiwan. Today, Chinese Buddhist songs are a genre of religious, cultural and social significance in Taiwan.

Unlike the historical Buddhist-themed songs, Chinese Buddhist songs of the twentieth century were persistently cultivated by enthusiasts into an ever growing repertoire. The songs, rather than remaining a means of individual expression, were used by the Chinese Buddhist community to serve multiple communal and social purposes. Although the songs are often used for religious functions—recent decades have seen attempts at integrating Buddhist songs into rituals—the songs, unlike the melodious liturgy (*fanbai*), are non-liturgical in nature. They are most often composed in collaboration between lay followers and clerics. They are often performed by a chorus, but solo singing is just as common due to Western influence, or, to be more specific, the influence of Christian musical traditions. In addition, the performance style normally involves piano accompaniment. They are typically not commercially

produced and are usually serious in nature.



Figure 1.1: Important cities in China and Taiwan that supported the development of Chinese Buddhist songs during the earlier half of the twentieth century. The arrows indicate the major transmission routes of the new Buddhist musical culture in the 1940s and 1950s.

Considering the remarkable development of the genre in China and Taiwan, its practitioners have attempted to name the new genre in order to better reflect its current state. The proposed names include: *fojiao gequ* (佛教歌曲 Buddhist songs), a generic term assigned no specific cultural and historical meanings (Chen 2005); *fohua gequ* (佛化歌曲 Buddhist thematic songs), a term used by the 1940s Shanghai Buddhists (Chen 1943); *chuangzuo foqu* (創作佛曲 creative Buddhist songs), a term used by the

1980s Buddhists in Taiwan specifying the particular creative quality of the new genre (possibly in order to differentiate itself from its folksong-styled or school-song-styled predecessors of the 1930s and 1940s) (Cai 2007); *fojiao shengge* (佛教聖歌, Buddhist holy songs), a term implying a competition with Christian *shengge* (Christian hymns) or Christianity in Taiwan in the 1950s (Ilan nianfo hui 1956); *foge or foqu*, short forms of *fojiao gequ* or *fuhua gequ*. Despite the strength of the different names in describing the characteristics of the genre, none of them appeals to all Buddhist song practitioners. Rather, this reflects the fact that the genre continues to evolve without a consensus on its stylistic elements. In my discussion, I opt to use the generic term *fojiao gequ* and its direct English translation, *Buddhist songs*. Despite its generality as a term, *fojiao gequ* tends not to arouse the unintended meanings associated with specific cultural/historical and stylistic implications as might the other terms. Unless otherwise indicated in my discussion, *Chinese Buddhist songs* means the Buddhist musical genre that has developed continuously since the early twentieth century in China and Taiwan under the influence of Western musical culture and Chinese reform movements. To further investigate the meanings and goals of Chinese Buddhist songs, it is necessary to review the historical development of the Chinese reform movement and the reform of Chinese Buddhism.

CHINESE MODERNIZATION MOVEMENTS AND BUDDHIST REFORM

As stated earlier, Chinese Buddhist songs were an instrument of Chinese

Buddhist reform, which itself was a response to the national reform movement.

Therefore, in order to properly consider the characteristics of the genre, one must also consider the nation-wide changes in China in connection with the various modernization movements beginning in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The many ideals upheld by the national reform activists in these movements similarly influenced Buddhist reformers and musicians. For example, rationalism, a doctrine held as true by the Chinese intellectuals, demanded that musicians produce “music that allows analysis” (學理上之優等者) (Fei Shi [1903] 1998, 191).⁴ Learning about the ideals of the national reform activists will allow a better understanding of the concurrent Buddhist musical development.

Chinese modernization movements resulted from China’s confrontation with the West beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. However, contact between China and the rest of the world began well before this. The early occurrences may be traced back as early as the Han dynasty (202B.C.–A.D.220), when merchants and travelers from Central Asia and South Asia followed the Silk Road to China. In recent centuries, the Jesuits who came by sea introduced their religion as well as their advanced scientific knowledge.

Unlike the merchants and Jesuits in the previous ages, the Western imperialist powers accompanied by warships in the nineteenth century did not assume China as an equal party for cultural exchange. As a response to foreign military aggression and

⁴ In his “On Reforming Chinese Music” (中國音樂改良說), Fei Shi praises the structure of ancient Chinese music to be “orderly” (秩然可尋) and Western music to be “excelling in theoretical construction” (學理上之優等) (Fei Shi [1903] 1998, 191).

economic exploitation, Chinese modernization movements appeared one after another beginning from the mid 1860s for the purpose of self-preservation. Liang Qichao (1873–1929), historian and leader of Chinese intellectual movements of the early 20th century, divided the history of Chinese modernization into three stages according to their respective emphases: the first stage (1861–1895) began with the effort of the Qing court to modernize its military forces after the defeat by the British Empire in the second Opium War (1856–1860). The second stage (1894–1917/1918) began slightly before the Sino-Japanese War in 1894 with a series of important government proposals for the reform of political and educational institutions. The third period (1915/1917– the 1930s/40s?) began with Chinese intellectuals advocating a thorough transformation of Chinese culture (Teng and Fairbank 1954, 270–71).⁵

The first stage of Chinese modernization began in 1861 with the Self-Strengthening Movement (自強運動), in which China strove to advance itself in Western technology, especially military technology, in order to effectively protect itself from foreign aggression. However, the reformers wished to accomplish this without sacrificing any bit of their traditional way of life. “Chinese learning for

⁵ Liang’s original document provided by Teng and Fairbank in their book *China’s Response to the West* did not give definite starting and ending years of the three stages except the second one, which Liang indicated as having begun in 1894 (the beginning of the First Sino-Japanese War) and lasting until 1917 or 1918 (at the end of the First World War) (Teng and Fairbank 1953, 270–71). I provide the dates of the two other stages according to the following historical facts. In 1861 (the proposed beginning of first stage), the Qing court adopted new foreign policy to regulate foreign powers in China, demonstrating its determination for change after its defeat by Great Britain in the Second Opium War. The defeat of China by Japan in 1894/1895 marked the failure of the first stage. Third period began in either 1915 or 1917. In 1915, *Youth Magazine* [later the *New Youth*] was published by Chen Duxiu. The magazine served as an important platform in which the intellectuals exchanged and discussed their revolutionary ideas that later initiated the New Culture movement. Among the most important publications was Hu Shih’s article “Some Tentative Suggestions for the Reform of Chinese Literature” (文學改良芻議), published in the *New Youth* in 1917 (Chow 1960, 372).

substance (*ti*), Western learning for function (*yong*)” (中學為體，西學為用),⁶ as proposed by Viceroy Zhang Zhidong (張之洞, 1837–1909), the leading reformer of the Qing court, may best describe the character of the movement. Government-funded industrial establishments, including Fuchou Ship Dockyards in Fuzhou and Jiangnan Arsenal, were erected and railroads and telegraph service were planned (Chou 1952, 37–38). The overall expectation was “the increase of national wealth and the strengthening of the national defense” (富國強兵). Despite the great effort of the reformers, their endeavor was only half-successful. Qing’s naval force, which stood as the major accomplishment of the more than two decades of effort in pursuit of advancement in military technology, was nearly completely destroyed during the war with Japan in 1894–1895. The resulting Treaty of Shimonoseki, according to which Taiwan was ceded, was signed in 1895, marking the end of the first stage of China’s modernization movement.

The defeat exposed the bureaucratic inability and corruption of the Qing government. The unreformed political institution of China, dominated by autocratic rulers, corrupt politicians and scholar-officials impractically trained in Chinese classics, effectively negated the progressive measures taken. On the failure of Chinese industrialization and capitalization in the first period, Teng and Fairbank (1956), apparently drawing inspiration from Max Weber, consider the causes to be innate in Chinese culture, particularly the family system from which the Chinese traditional

⁶ The phrase “Chinese learning for substance (*ti*), Western learning for function (*yong*)” is also commonly abbreviated as *ti-yong*.

political institution was derived. They write:

In this society, the individual was generally subordinated to his family group. The scholars and administrators, like the emperor above them, were expected to follow an ethical rather than a purely legal code of conduct. A Western-type individualism and supremacy of law never became established, nor the personal freedom under law represented by our civil liberties and institution of private property ... All this has affected the capacity of the Chinese state to follow the Western pattern of investment and industrialization ... China's modern industrial enterprises had to be under official patronage, if not control, yet the tradition was to invest one's personal savings in the land rather than in productive industry. All this undoubtedly impeded China's industrialization. (Teng and Fairbank 1954, 4)

The 1895 defeat by Japan pushed the Qing court to make a more radical move. But the second stage of reform must be considered to have begun before the war with a number of government proposals for institutional change presented to Emperor Guangxu of the Qing by visionary Qing officials including Kang Youwei in 1879. Supported by the emperor, the movement culminated in the “Wuxu Reform” (戊戌維新) in 1898. Proposed by progressive Qing officials and headed by Kang Youwei (1858–1927), the reform was meant to remedy the insufficiency of the political institutions and traditional popular lifestyles. Kang, inspired by the Meiji Reform that successfully transformed feudal Japan, aimed in particular at a complete reform of the government and educational system. However, the Wuxu Reform was truncated by political anti-reform forces, lasting only a hundred days and ending with bloodshed among the reform camp. Even so, its ideas, especially those of educational reform, spread and inspired the next generation of reformers. The civil service examination, a

thousand-year-old institution for the selection of Chinese government officials, was later revised and eventually abolished in 1905 under the pressure of public opinion, while a new education system (based upon Western models) was explored.

After the war with Japan in 1895, the Qing court was not able to resist any requests made by foreign powers. As conflicts between Chinese and foreign missionaries and exploitive capitalists became more and more frequent, the hostility against foreigners surged to an epidemic level and was expressed in various forms across the country. The “Righteous Harmony Troops” (義和團) was a group of Chinese boxers claiming to possess supernatural power. With their anti-foreign spirit, they soon attracted the attention of Empress-Dowager Cixi (慈禧太后), who was most ready to utilize them to carry out her revenge on the foreign powers. The attack took place in 1899. In order to protect their legation and citizens, the foreign imperialist powers sent in international troops. Within two or three months, Beijing was taken and a peace protocol was reached. Again, China would have to pay a large amount of indemnity combined with many unfair requests. The humiliation inflicted upon China was unprecedented. The Russo-Japanese War, which took place in Chinese territory in 1904–1905, was another warning to all Chinese; if no action was taken, the country would soon fall under the will of international powers. With the Self-Strengthening Movement failed and Wuxu Reform aborted, the Chinese people were disappointed by the inability of the Qing court to engineer the reform necessary for the protection of the nation. At this point, a revolution seemed to be inevitable for China.

The financial burden imposed by the overwhelming war indemnity, disputes over the Qing government's arbitrary decision on the fund-raising issues related to the massive national railroad projects that hurt private investors' interest, and the long-delayed implementation of a constitution, in addition to other minor issues, cumulatively led to the demise of the Qing court. The successful October 1911 uprising at Wuchang (武昌) won the sympathy of the people and local officials. It soon encouraged revolutionaries elsewhere in China and influenced more people to join. The Republic of China was officially founded on the first day of 1912. Sun Yat-sen, the leader of the revolutionaries, was inaugurated president of the new republic. Despite the great hopes associated with this new beginning, the republic was de facto under the control of regional warlords, a legacy of the late Qing's regional military forces. The realization of national modernization as expected through the revolution was unfortunately not in sight.

When all measures, including a violent political revolution, were exhausted and failed to bring the desired change to China, intellectuals contemplated the deep-lying causes of China's backwardness. The third stage of reform thus developed with the intellectuals' quest for a thorough change of Chinese traditional cultural values. In contrast to the efforts of the earlier modernization movements, the New Culture movement (新文化運動) generally distrusted the traditional culture of the old China for its incompetence in dealing with the changing world and was dissatisfied by its inability to cope with the imminent national crisis. The ideologies of the old China,

intellectuals believed, were impeding the progressive thoughts of the West from taking root in the new society.

The efforts of this stage can be traced to the publication of the provocative journal *New Youth* (*La Jeunesse* or 新青年) by Chen Duxiu (陳獨秀, 1879–1942) starting in 1915.⁷ Chen Duxiu and his colleague Hu Shih (胡適, 1891–1962), in response to his readers’ questions, made it clear that “old literature, old politics and old moral principles were members of one family. You can not sever your relationship with one, while wishing to retain those with others” (Chen 1918). In order to build a modern nation with new politics and social order, the traditional culture in its entirety, according to Chen, must undergo a reform. In “What is the New Culture Movement?” (甚麼是新文化運動?), Chen explains:

Culture (文化) is considered to be opposed to armed forces, and politics ... *New culture* is considered to be opposed to *old culture*. Culture must include science, religion, morality, fine arts, literature and music. The new culture movement is meant to improve upon the insufficient old culture by encouraging actions that lead to the development of new science, religion, literature, fine arts and music.⁸ (Chen 1920)

In search of a remedy for the nation’s problems, the activists emphasized the importance of Western-influenced ideas, such as science and reason, in the combat against traditional institutions, including religion. Confucian teaching and the

⁷ Chen Duxiao published *The Youth Magazine* in Shanghai in 1915, but renamed the magazine as *New Youth* later in 1916.

⁸ Italics mine.

traditional family system, which were believed to have caused the evils of the society, were severely attacked by Chen Duxiu and his colleagues. Filial piety, a key element of the Chinese familial system, was blamed for adultery, oppression of women, and the backwardness of the Chinese people (Chen [1915] 1994a, 26–29).

The movement was followed and further fuelled by a political movement, the May Fourth Movement (五四運動), in 1919, which began with a diplomatic dispute after the First World War and added a patriotic sentiment to the cultural movement.⁹ In 1914, when the war had just broken out in Europe, China reached an agreement with the Allies that would allow China to reclaim from Germany the sovereignty of the Shandong peninsula at the war's conclusion. However, the 1919 Versailles Peace Conference, ignoring the earlier agreement, resolved Shandong question in favor of Japan's appeal for succeeding Germany's privileged status in Shandong. The disputed resolution ignited protests in Peking against the injustice of world politics and the diplomatic inability of the Beiyang Government of China to protect China's rights.¹⁰ On May 4, 1919, students took to the streets and demolished the houses of the officials responsible for the lost diplomatic case. The slogan "exterior, to resist the great powers, interior, to remove the traitors" (外抗強權, 內除國賊) vividly

⁹ The May Fourth Movement has often been used synonymously with the New Culture movement for their shared political and cultural pursuits and their inseparable historical connection. However, there were different views about the definition of the two movements in regards to the difference between the May Fourth Incident (mainly the violent student reaction to the Shandong question and its settlement in the Versailles Peace Conference), the political May Fourth Movement that developed from May Fourth Incident, and the New Culture Movement that began with Chen Duxiu's cultural reform proposals in 1915–1917 (cf. Chow Tse-Tsung 1960, 2–5).

¹⁰ The Beiyang Government (or the Northern Government) that represented China between 1912 and 1928 was a result of the complicated warlord politics in northern China. It was not the only government that was ruling China in the late 1910s. At that time, the southern provinces (including Guanxi, Yunnan and Guangdong) were controlled by other regional warlords.

illustrated the common goals of the protestors (Zhou 1979, 46–47). While the passionate political movement continued, the New Culture movement nevertheless developed into a new form seeking a permanent solution to the intensified national crisis. On the nature of the cultural movements of this period, Chow Tse-tsung, author of *The May Fourth Movement*, writes:

Supported by the rising patriotic and anti-Great-Power sentiment of the public ... the students and new intellectual leaders promoted an anti-Japanese campaign and a vast modernization movement to build a new China through intellectual and social reforms. They stressed primarily Western ideas of science and democracy. Traditional Chinese ethics, customs, literature, history, philosophy, religion, and social and political institutions were fiercely attacked. Liberalism, pragmatism, utilitarianism, anarchism, and many varieties of socialism provided the stimuli. (Chow 1960, 1)

During this period, translated Western books became widely popular and helped introduce Western ideas to the Chinese. Among the most popular of these were Yan Fu's translations of Thomas Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* and Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*, while political ideas in John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* and Montesquieu's *L'Esprit des lois* were enthusiastically embraced by activists in their proposals for nation-building. Equally appreciated Western authors included Rousseau, Kant, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche, while the more recent John Dewey and Bertrand Russell were considered the inspiration of the new era (Spence 1990, 237). Influences of these Western-inspired new ideals were evident in all segments of the movement. The immense popularity of Darwinism and social Darwinism may serve as an example of the influence of Western ideas among Chinese intellectuals, as it often

became the focus of discussion in Chinese intellectuals' gatherings in teahouses or their living rooms and was widely applied in their work on social and cultural reform. Such inclination could also be found in Xiao Youmei and Cai Yuanpei, the two leading figures in the reform of Chinese music and music education.

In addition to Darwinism or social Darwinism, individualism was another important emphasis of this period. Stemming from liberalism, the individualistic ideal became the spiritual goal of the literary talents at the center of the cultural movement. They requested a self-liberation from the confining traditional moral system in their pursuit of 'love', 'freedom' and 'the beautiful'.¹¹ Constantly in pain, they groaned through their literary works about society's indifference to their sensitive minds and sighed for their inability to solve the problems of their nation, longing for recognition and acceptance. Yu Dafu (郁達夫, 1896–1945), the talented essayist, astutely pointed out the psychological and moral crisis felt by many literary persons of this period. He found life to be unbearably "superfluous." The sense of "superfluity" (零餘感) grew not only out of one's search for an existential meaning, but also out of one's guilt for not being able to take part in the national struggle for change and to positively contribute to society during a period of turmoil (Li 1979, 299–302).

Of the subcategories of the New Culture movement, the New Literature movement beginning in the late 1910s was the most important. Largely guided by Western-influenced liberalism, as introduced in the preceding paragraph, the literary

¹¹ 'Love', 'freedom' and 'the beautiful' are Hu Shih's comments on Xu Zhimuo's literary style. Xu Zhimuo (1897–1931), a popularly known poet of the 1920s and 1930s, was generally recognized a prominent figure of Chinese romanticism.

movement was initially an inwardly focused quest for a new form of Chinese literature that could work toward the liberation of the self and society from the confinement of traditional values. As described by Ou-fan Lee, it was a movement in which participants wrote against the ills of the traditional Chinese lifestyle through their subjective senses. The movement, Lee argued, was an “obsession of the self” with an “individualistic” leaning (Lee 2002, 143).

Chinese new music began to develop in the simple school song form in the 1900s. It used a hybrid musical form, combining borrowed Western tunes and creative Chinese lyrics to serve the need for school music teaching that formed a crucial part of the education reform proposed by the reformers of the late Qing. In the 1920s, the music movement was heavily influenced by the New Literature movement of the late 1910s and 1920s. When more and more Western-trained Chinese musicians returned from their study abroad, they introduced sophisticated (Western-influenced) compositional techniques to the Chinese. The Chinese new music of this period, as exemplified in Chinese art songs, was basically a musical equivalent of “new literature.” Like new literature, new music of the 1920s was similarly influenced by various European trends. Songs, like literary works, were often treated as a personalized means for the expression of individuals. Among the popular musical forms adopted were Western-influenced Chinese art songs and chorus music. As evidenced in typical titles such as “How Can I Not Think of You?” (教我如何不想他, 1926) or “Here Near the Origin of Yangtze River I Live” (我住長江頭, 1929),

Chinese art songs of the 1920s represented a pursuit of (European) romanticism shaped by the subjective experience of the individual in a changing era.

During the 1930s and 1940s, with the conflict between Japan and China escalating and a new sociopolitical environment quickly emerging, Chinese new music underwent yet another transformation, adopting new forms influenced by the sociopolitical movements of the time. In contrast to the compositional activities of art songs which were “nearly completely neglected by major composers during this period” due to the change, Songs for the Masses (群眾歌曲), meant to encourage the people in their anti-Nationalist government (反國民黨), anti-civil war (反內戰), anti-hunger (反飢餓), and anti-foreign aggression (反侵略) actions, became the mainstream style (Liu 2009, 321–24).¹² Choruses and other music groups, commonly supported by the government, political parties or private associations, were organized in large cities. When the Anti-Japanese War of Resistance (抗日戰爭, 1937–1945) escalated, these music groups eagerly involved themselves in community performances and nation-saving activities (Shanghai wenhua yishu zhi bianzuanweiyuanhui 2001, 538–58).¹³

¹² These goals were meant to be inclusive. Different political camps tended to support some or all of these four goals. However, the activities associated with the Songs for the Masses movement were mainly supported by leftists and political dissidents.

¹³ The war beginning in 1937 was called the Anti-Japanese War of Resistance by Chinese historians, and was popularly known to the West as the Second Sino-Japanese War, as opposed to the first war fought in 1894–95. After Japan’s successful reform and became modernized in the late nineteenth century, it had systematically developed its aggressive China policy in pursuit of economic exploitation and territorial control. Following the First Sino-Japanese War, Japan fought Russia in the Russo-Japanese War in 1904–1905 in order to seize control of Chinese Northeast. Among the most notorious in the republic era were the twenty-one demands of 1915, with which Japan requested its succession of Germany’s right in Shangdong Peninsula after the First World War, in addition to other requests for special privileges in China. During the 1920s, labor disputes between Japanese capitalists and Chinese

To further investigate the development of the cultural movement beginning in the later 1910s and 1920s, I intend to introduce the major thinkers of this period and their influential ideas regarding the modernization of China in the following section. Among the thinkers, I select Kang Youwei (康有為, 1858–1927), Liang Qichao (梁啟超, 1873–1929), Chen Duxiu (陳獨秀, 1879–1942), Hu Shih (胡適, 1891–1962), Zhang Junmai (張君勱, 1887–1969), Cai Yuanpei (蔡元培, 1868–1940) and Xiao Youmei (蕭友梅, 1884–1940) for further discussion.¹⁴ These intellectual leaders were all from southern and eastern provinces of China where the first traces of Western influence were found in recent centuries. In addition to their great knowledge in Western learning, they were all fully trained in Chinese classics. Many of them won degrees in the traditional examination system and held positions in the imperial court of the late Qing. But they were not confined by their traditional literati training and privileges and were able to move forward to welcome and introduce reforms. Despite their similarities, these individuals had different ideas and approaches regarding the modernization of China, representing the different perspectives of the various

workers led to policing incidents, large-scale strikes, and consequently armed repressions. In 1928, similar conflicts occurred in Ji'nan, Shangdong, which developed into military confrontations between the Chinese army and the Japanese army stationed there. The confrontation resulted in the brutal slaughter of Chinese government officials and civilians as well as that of Japanese citizens and businessmen living in Ji'nan. Japanese full-scale military action began in 1931 in Manchuria and 1932 in Shanghai. These actions prepared its invasion war lasting eight years from 1937 until the end of the Second World War in 1945.

¹⁴ The selection is not meant to be inclusive, but to present those important figures with cultural ideas that influenced Buddhist reform. Marxists, or some other similar social and political leaders, including Li Dazhao, though popular and influential in this period, are generally not relevant to my study of Buddhist music, and therefore are not included in the discussion. On the other hand, individuals who directly influenced the development of Chinese new music, such as Cai Yuanpei and Xiao Youmei (rather than Liang Shuming) are covered in the discussion.

ideological camps to which they belonged. Their thoughts equally influenced Buddhist reformers and their work beginning in the late 1920s.

Kang Youwei, the leader of Wuxu Reform, was a native of Guangdong, the southernmost province of China. Born to a Chinese traditional literati family, Kang was thoroughly trained in Chinese classical education and fully versed in officially recognized Confucian texts necessary for the civil examination for public service. During a visit to Shanghai, he was introduced for the first time to Western knowledge. Translated books brought him into contact with the thoughts of John Locke (1632–1704) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1776), as well as those of utopian socialists Charles Fourier (1772–1837) and Robert Owen (1771–1858). These thinkers' ideas about natural rights and the social contract and visions for an ideal human society influenced his philosophical masterpiece *Book of Great Unity* (大同書), written between 1884 and 1902.

His early works, including *The Study of Forgeries in the New Learning* (新學偽經考, published in 1891) and *the Study of the Institutional Reform of Confucius* (孔子改制考, written between 1892 and 1896), show the development of Kang's thoughts on Chinese reform. In these works, he sought support from Confucius' classic texts, such as *Spring and Autumn* (春秋), for his own reform ideals. By referring to the progressive and practical thoughts he found in those texts, he argued that his reform plan, though opposed by political conservatives, had roots in Confucius himself. He argued that the interpretation of Confucius' thoughts by the

philosophers of the Song dynasty, which was recognized by the imperial court of Qing as authoritative for civil examination, had resulted in a stagnant and oppressive culture and caused this distressing national crisis.¹⁵ With a return to Confucius's original (and progressive) philosophy centered on the concept of *ren* ("benevolence"), Kang proposed a series of reforms in government and education with which he meant to transform the entire ruling class of imperial China.

Kang Youwei's political thoughts are best found in his *Book of Great Unity*, in which he proposed a perfect political entity wherein humans are no longer bound by the abusive laws of government and oppressive traditions, and the dangers of nature are controlled by technological advances. Also in this book, Kang offered his critiques on the existing political systems of the world. Among them, he found that the political system of the United States appealed to him the most, but not without reservations. He pointed out that its limited capacity to deal with social inequality and the extreme individualistic bent of the society, which was contrary to the Chinese tradition of family, were not suitable for the development of an ideal society. In this particular respect, he admired Buddhism for its pursuit of universal equality and indiscriminate salvation.¹⁶ In constructing the world of "great unity," Kang demonstrated how one

¹⁵ Among the Confucian philosophers of the Song dynasties (A.D.960–1276), Zhu Xi (1130–1200) was particularly influential in the development of Confucian studies. His interpretation of Confucius' thoughts as contained in his *Annotations for "Four Books"* (四書章句集註) were recognized by the courts of the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties as the authoritative reference book for those who would like to undertake the imperial civil service examination.

¹⁶ Regarding his political stance in practice, Kang was often seen as a constitutional monarchist, whose proposal for the reform of China was unique, standing apart from both the revolutionists of Sun Yat-sen's camp and those traditionalists who attempted to preserve the entire Chinese tradition without modification. Kang was also an anti-imperialist and an anti-capitalist. Capitalism and imperialism, which encourage competition among individuals and countries, were contrary to the the fundamental

might integrate the principles of Confucius' thoughts and the value of "benevolence" with Western social and political thought. Kang influenced reformers and thinkers after him. Among them was Taixu, the leader of Chinese Buddhist reform. Kang's reform ideas played important roles in Taixu's work bridging Western philosophy and Buddhism.

Liang Qichao, a student of Kang Youwei, was also an influential thinker and intellectual leader during the late Qing and the early republic period. Like Kang, Liang was a Qing official who had passed the imperial civil examination. In the Wuxu Reform of 1898, he assisted Kang in one of his educational reform projects. After the reform's failure, he was forced to flee to Japan. With his continued work in advocating political and social reform in China in the form of his many publications, he built up enormous popularity and influence among reformers and revolutionists in China and overseas. After the new Chinese republic was founded, Liang returned to China. Between 1912 and 1917, he fully involved himself in Beiyang politics in order to pursue a national transformation.¹⁷ Despite his good intentions, his career as a politician was largely unsuccessful (Zhang 1981, 105–34).

During the May Fourth Movement, Liang's influence continued to grow among intellectuals. His anti-imperialist thoughts in particular were central to the development of the movement. Those who were highly influenced by Liang and actively participated in the New Culture Movement include Hu Shih, Zhang Junmai,

concept of *ren*, though he also believed that a strong monarchy and capitalist economic system would serve well in a transitional period before the future dawning of the world of "great unity."

¹⁷ Please see note 10 for Beiyang Government.

Zhang Dongsun and Ding Wenjiang, to name just a few. They were major leaders of the movement and were either admirers or associates of Liang. In the 1920s, Liang, disappointed by his political career in the Beiyang Government of China, began to turn his attention toward developing new educational projects, with which he hoped to inspire a more fundamental nationwide change. Supported by friends and former students, who were themselves equally important leaders of the cultural movements, Liang founded intellectual organizations including Gongxue Society (共學社) and Jiangxue Society (講學社). Both established in 1920, the societies were unfortunately short-lived due to a shortage of funds (Zhang 1981, 152–84).¹⁸

Among Liang's significant ideas, the concept of “new people” (*xin min*, 新民) immensely influenced his contemporaries. The making of “new people” (or, to “re-create a people”) may be achieved, according to Liang, through renewing the vitality of Chinese culture by learning from other civilizations, such as the West (Liang 1984, 211). To “re-create” (*xin* as a verb) the Chinese people, he further emphasized that there were works for China to undertake immediately: in order for China to be compatible with the rest of the world, the new people, in building their new nation, must first establish a public morality or a new social order (公德). He argued that a new morality of relations must replace the traditional social system based on the

¹⁸ The major achievements of the two intellectual societies included the translation of major Western texts in social and political sciences, funding students for studying abroad, establishing libraries and inviting recognized thinkers from around the world to tour around China and give speeches. The invited speakers included John Dewey, Bernard Russell, Hans Driesch, and Rabindranath Tagore (Zhang 1981, 105–134).

principle of the five relations (五倫) of traditional China.¹⁹ In addition, the new people, as idealized by Liang, must be a free people. Their freedom is fourfold: They should be (1) politically free, (2) economically free, (3) free to choose their own religion, and (4) free from the interference of foreign powers. Finally, the new people should also be a progressive people. In order to be progressive, they should sever their connection with the regressive past (Liang 1984, 213–48).

During the cultural movements of the 1910s and 1920s, Chen Duxiu, Hu Shih, Zhang Junmai, and Cai Yuanpei emerged as the leaders of the participating students and intellectuals. Chen Duxiu, for most of his life, believed that a comprehensive Westernization of China was the only remedy for the aging nation. Through his magazine *New Youth* (新青年), the ideas for a radical cultural change were first proposed. “Mr. Democracy” (德先生) and “Mr. Science” (賽先生), in Chen’s own words, would be the two guests to be welcomed by the Chinese to cure China’s illness of backwardness.²⁰ Chen believed that a democratic system would be able to help achieve a class-free society and prevent a corrupt government. Further, scientific pursuit leading to an understanding of the material world would not only be able to help satisfy China’s material needs, but would also lead to an understanding, and hence the improvement, of human society (Chen 1920). Ideally, science and

¹⁹ The five relations are (1) the relation between the ruler and his subject, (2) the relation between a husband and his wife, (3) the relation between a father and his son, (4) the relation between an elder brother and a younger brother, and (5) the relation between friends. There are expectations and obligations designated to both roles of each pair of the five relations. According to Confucian ideals, a harmonious society depends on its success in maintaining the five relations in harmony.

²⁰ According to historian Hu Qiuyuan, the two terms, Mr. Democracy (德先生) and Mr. Science (賽先生), were first used in *Xin min cong bao* (新民叢報) and *Min bao* (民報) (Hu Qiuyuan 1979, 246)

democracy, according to Chen, should be accompanied by a cooperative spirit, creativity, and an aesthetic mindset among the people (*ibid.*). Thus, the arts should be made available for all.

To cure the illness caused by traditional culture, Chen prescribed Western-influenced values as medicine. In particular, he influenced the development of liberalist movements in China. Chen advocated social change with an emphasis on the protection of personal rights while insisting that these rights should not lead one to neglect his or her responsibility to society. Chen advocated the liberation of Chinese women from the moral system of feudal China, which had deprived them of their freedom and welfare, turning them into the victims of society (Chen [1921] 1994, 188–91). Equally influenced by Marxism, Chen firmly believed that the material world was the basis of the evolution of human society and its culture. He influenced many who later joined the Chinese Communist party. Chen devoted nearly his entire life to advocate for and realize communist ideals in China, despite being rejected by the Chinese Communist Party in his later years.

Chen saw the nation's youth as the hope for future change. He eulogizes, “youth, like the lively early spring, like the rising sun, like the flowers competing to bloom, like a knife just sharpened on a grindstone, is the best period of one's life. And, the importance of a youth to his society is like that of a fresh and active cell to one's body” (Chen [1915]1994b, 1). In “Calls to Youth” (敬告青年) (*ibid.*, 1–7), Chen implores the young to build a new China by refusing the corruptive influence of the national culture and its oppressive tradition. He encourages the youth to “be an

independent individual without being enslaved”; “be progressive, not conservative”; “be aggressive, not submissive”; “be world-bound”, “not self-confined”; “be pragmatic, not indulging in useless literary games”; and “be scientific, not speculative” (ibid.).

Hu Shih was the initiator of the New Literary movement, a central part of the New Culture movement. This movement advocated written vernacular to replace the traditional writing style as China’s official written language.²¹ Likely influenced by the concurrent impressionist literary movement in the West, the initial idea for a Chinese literary revolution began to develop during his years in the United States in the late 1910s (Shen 2000, 106–07). In contemplating the strategy of teaching Chinese literary writing to young students, Hu came to realize the evils of using a dead language, the style of which could be dated to as early as the Han dynasty two thousand years earlier. In composing a literary piece following principles of classical literature, one must include references to previous eminent authors to show off one’s proper training in Chinese classics and literary tradition, and use a style that stipulates a fixed number of words in phrases to introduce a certain preferred poetic rhythm. As a result, the style forbids the normal function of a language for circulating information among the general population who do not have the luck to receive literary training in Chinese classical literature. More seriously, the essays in traditional form, with their overly embellished style and exaggerated use of language for the sake of beauty, often lead to a loss of focus. Subsequently, in 1916 he proposed his famous eight principles

²¹ For this particular goal of the New Literature movement, some activists used *Vernacular movement* (白話文運動) to more precisely designate their ideals.

for revolutionizing the Chinese written language (ibid., 99). According to Hu, a good essay in the new style must be “grammatically sound,” without deliberately “avoiding use of vernacular words and speech” and must “make a point” “without lavishing in useless emotions.” An elaborate form with “parallel constructions,” “incorporating cliché” or “classical allusions” and “imitating the styles of the past masters” is unnecessary.²² Hu’s proposal for a literary revolution was fully supported by Chen Duxiu and was published in *New Youth* in 1917 (Hu 1917). The article subsequently ignited the literary movement.

In contrast to Chen Duxiu and Hu Shih, Zhang Junmai, a philosopher educated in Germany, was known for his position advocating reconciliation between the Westernization enthusiasts and traditionalists. Though he never opposed Westernization, Zhang was rather wary of the unconditional acceptance of Western influence and the unique problems it would introduce. In particular, he strongly opposed the prevalent scientism of the period. In the 1923 article “Perspectives on Life,” he warned against such ideological error by stressing the importance of human conscience in pursuing positive social change. He said that the scientific concept was governed by the natural law of cause and effect, and its application to human life could be erroneous if human agency was not taken into consideration (Zhang 1993,

²² According to the eight principles proposed by Hu Shih, a good essay (1) should avoid the use of classical allusions (不用典), (2) should discard stale, time-worn literary phrases (不用陳套語), (3) should discard the parallel construction of sentences (不講對仗) (4) does not avoid using vernacular words and speech (不避俗字俗語), (5) must follow literary grammar (講求文法), (6) does not pretend to be sick or sad when the author does not feel so (不作無病之呻吟), (7) does not imitate the writings of the ancients but reflects your own personality (不模倣古人) (8) should have meaning or real substance (言之有物) (cf. Lee 2002, 158–59).

110–16). Contemplating the destructive European War, Zhang suggested a re-evaluation of Western civilization and a reassessment of Chinese trust in Western influence.

In finding ways to reform China, Zhang, like Kang Youwei, recognized the value of Chinese cultural heritage in its original form and similarly believed that the values preserved in the Chinese classics could serve as inspiration for modern life. Confucius' humanist philosophy of *ren* immensely influenced his approach to China's modernization. With appropriate adaptation of ancient teaching to the modern world, Zhang argued, one might find solutions for China's current problems (Zhang 1993, 373–502).

Cai Yuanpei, an important intellectual leader and educator in the Chinese republic era, had previously been a member of the prestigious Royal Academy of Scholars (翰林院) of the late Qing. As an ardent student of Western learning and an enthusiastic pursuer of national reform, he was able to retain his respected and influential social status after the establishment of the Republic. During the 1920s, he was the president of Peking University. With his extraordinary vision, Cai recruited eminent scholars to join the faculty of the university, regardless of their different ideological, and sometimes controversial, backgrounds. Among them were major thinkers and intellectual leaders of the period, including Gu Hongming, Hu Shih, Chen Duxiu, and Xiao Youmei.

Cai's thoughts on education emphasized the integration of aesthetic education into the school curriculum. According to Cai, art of the highest value could help its

perceivers to transcend the phenomenal world, so as to be in touch with the “world of ultimate reality” (實體世界). For such a power, he believed that arts would be able to assume the roles and functions of a religion and replace religions in the modern world (Nie 1984, 361). Cai was also an important figure in the development of Western-influenced music education in China. Not long after he assumed the position as the president of Peking University, he created the first university music program in China with the assistance of Xiao Youmei. In 1922, the music program evolved into a more permanent establishment, The Affiliated Institute of Music Studies of Peking University (北大附設音樂傳習所),²³ thanks to the great efforts of Xiao, who was subsequently appointed as director of the new program. Cai and Xiao were also responsible for founding China’s earliest professional music school, The National Conservatory of Music (國立音樂院), predecessor of The Shanghai Conservatory of Music, in 1927.

Influenced by the prevalent theories of cultural development of the time, Cai and Xiao considered that human culture developed, according to the law of evolution, from a primitive stage to a more advanced one. Xiao, applying this idea to the understanding and reform of Chinese music, believed that Chinese music needed a change in its form, notational system, instruments and educational infrastructure. He argued that Chinese musical culture stopped evolving after the Tang dynasty a thousand years before. Western music, he believed, was now more advanced and

²³ Xiao Youmei translated the title as “The Conservatory of Music of Peking National University” (Xiao 2004, 207).

therefore its influence on Chinese traditional music would bring fruitful results and help revitalize the national musical culture that had stagnated for centuries (Xiao 1990, 414–16). Cai similarly thought that with the “scientifically approved” Western musical form (which lent itself to analysis and therefore was compatible with the idea of “reason”), Chinese people might be able to improve their own national music and perhaps also their culture (Cai 1987, 93; 103). However, their ideas, though partly inspired by the Western cultural (evolutionary) theories, did not amount to a wholesale adoption of the Western model. They recognized as equally important the differences between cultures evolving in parallel. In designing their music programs, Cai and Xiao meant to introduce a curriculum that allowed a meaningful integration of the West and the East.

As leading figures in the Chinese cultural reform movement, Cai and Xiao’s importance in the development of new Chinese music is beyond doubt. Their opinions on the role of music in society and efforts in reforming Chinese music, stressing in particular music’s ethical values and social functions, were based on ideas developed since Kang Youwei’s time. For Xiao, music possessed the power to influence a person’s will, morality, and temperament, and therefore was an ideal medium for transforming both the individual and society (Enomoto 2003, 343–46). Xiao’s idea of music as an instrument of social education and discipline may also find its origin in Confucian ideas.

In addition to the aforementioned reformers, there were also traditionalists who wanted to preserve Chinese cultural heritage in its entirety. Among them, Lin Qinnan,

Yan Fu and Gu Hongming were the most important. Surprisingly, some members of this camp were among the most fully versed in Western learning in all of China at the time. Gu and Yan were both educated in the West and had occupied important positions and actively participated in reform programs of the Qing government during the early period of the Chinese modernization movement. Lin was another learned scholar whose most important contribution was his admirable work in translating over two hundred Western novels. His translation was rendered in classical literary Chinese with a refined style. It is hard to say that Yan, Gu and Lin opposed reform or Western influences in their entirety, but they certainly differed greatly from the more radical individuals mentioned above in their desire to guard Chinese tradition in a changing era. Considering their life work and actual contribution to the modernization of China, they were undoubtedly important. However, their influence was comparatively less relevant to Chinese Buddhist reform.

THE CRISIS OF CHINESE BUDDHISM AND TAI XU'S BUDDHIST REFORM

As already stated, Chinese Buddhist reform began as a reaction to the general national modernization movement that emphasized the Western values of science and reason. Under the pressure of the anti-religion movement, Chinese Buddhism, considered a superstitious institution, was facing likely eradication after a centuries-long decline. As early as the Song dynasty (A.D.960–1279), Chinese Buddhism had begun to experience a gradual downturn partly due to the pressure from the

remarkable development of neo-Confucianism, in addition to political reasons (Pan Guiming, Dong Qun and Ma Tianxiang 2000, 217–29). In the Ming dynasty, Chinese Buddhism was under further persecution due to the government's precautions against rebellious activities often associated with Buddhist temples. The first Ming emperor, Taizu, ordered temples to be relocated to the mountains and kept away from ordinary people. As a result, Chinese Buddhism had fewer and fewer interactions with the populace (*ibid.*, 340–41). When the Qing succeeded the Ming for the rule of China, it continued this policy. Over five centuries, Buddhism eventually became a religious institution hidden in the mountains with diminishing significance for the people. As the teaching gradually lost its original engagement and contact with the outside world, performances of ceremonies and rituals, primarily repentance rituals (經懺) and funeral services (佛事), for lay followers became the major forms of Buddhist services. Thus, when national modernization became the popular focus in the early twentieth century, Buddhist temples seemed to be no more than superstitious institutions and owners of estates, contributing nothing to the society (*ibid.*, 365–67).

Since the late Qing period, the anti-religious noise had been growing louder. The public sentiment against religion continued to grow after the new republic was established. Near the end of the 1920s, the situation became much more critical. During the New Culture movement, though Confucianism was the major target for criticism, Buddhism was not spared from the blame for the backwardness of China. The anti-religion officials in the Nationalist government went to great lengths to discourage religious activities with public means, while activists and ignorant

followers damaged Buddhist and Taoist temples. With the support of the public opinion, Temple Properties for Educational Purposes (廟產興學), first proposed by Zhang Zhidong of Qing decades earlier in the late nineteenth century, was revived in the 1920s. Whether the attempt was out of politicians' greed or in order to save an education system badly affected by the shaky national economy, the 1928 anti-religion policy, though later dismissed upon protest, manifested the government attitude toward Chinese Buddhism and indigenous religions (Luo 2005, 133-34).²⁴

In response to this crisis, Chinese Buddhists searched for a solution by forming a national congress in the same year (1928), which was reorganized in Shanghai the following year.²⁵ Among the leaders emerging to direct the new political body of Chinese Buddhism was the revolutionary monk Taixu (太虛, 1889–1947). Influenced by Western ideas, Taixu created a reform program that led to the emergence of modern Chinese Buddhism. Taixu was exposed to Western learning in his youth by reading translated Western books, which allowed him a perspective different from those of other Buddhist reform leaders. He had a great sympathy for the aborted Wuxu Reform led by Kang Youwei. During his late teens and early twenties, Taixu read Kang's *Book of Great Unity* (大同書) and *An Exposition on Benevolence* (仁學) by another reputed reformer of the late Qing, Tan Sitong (譚嗣同), in addition to other books

²⁴ In 1928, the Nationalist Government announced Regulations for the Management of Temples and Religious Institution (管理寺廟條例). This new law intended to turn temple properties into public social and educational functions (Luo 2005, 133–134).

²⁵ Though the organization Chinese Buddhist Association (Zhongguo Fojiao Xiehui [中國佛教協會] and later Zhongguo Fojiao hui [中國佛教會]) was originally established in 1911, it only became operational in the late 1920s in facing the crisis.

relating to the reform of China (Dongchu 1974, 955–56). Taixu found equally appealing the more radical political thoughts of Sun Yat-sen, the Chinese republican revolutionist, and later joined Sun's Revolutionary Alliance (同盟會), founded in 1905 (Xue Yu 2005, 37).

In reforming traditional Chinese Buddhist practice, which had been principally more concerned with self-cultivation and the afterlife, Taixu proposed “Buddhism for Human Life” (人生佛教) to redirect Buddhists' attention to the immediate needs of the people and to properly address the demands and problems of the modern world. According to Taixu, the new teaching, which “centers on the improvement of the human life” (Luo 2003, 54) directs one to reach out to the people, to provide service to those in need, and to participate in social and political arenas.²⁶ Writing that “those who are able to properly exercise his/her Mahayana wisdom [of compassion to carry out a world-serving task] would be able to accomplish his/her Buddhahood” (ibid.), he affirmed to his audience the merits of such pragmatic work.

In reforming the Chinese Buddhist community, Taixu proposed a plan that would address three areas: reform of monastic property management, reform of the monastic institution, and reform of Buddhist teaching (Luo 2003, 18–19). Buddhist temples and properties used to be privately owned, controlled and inherited by those recognized as lineage heirs. According to his reform plan, temples would come under the control of a unifying Buddhist central agency. The temple properties would then be made public assets for the benefit of the populace. In reforming the monastic

²⁶ He also believed that the monastic community should actively participate in politics and should have representatives in the government (Luo 2003).

institution, Taixu meant to restructure it according to practical needs.²⁷ Among the goals, the improvement of cleric education was the most urgent. He argued that the new cleric education must include a curriculum consisting of both the study of Buddhist sutras and modern subjects including Western literature and science (Xue Yu 2005, 38).

With ideological reform, he attempted to reinterpret the traditional Buddhist teaching so as to bridge its differences with modern (Western) thought. Taixu believed that Chinese Buddhism could be in harmony with modern ideas. He said, for example, that a good “reasoning mind” (理性) could be compared to one’s “Buddha nature” (佛性). But Taixu argued that perfect reason should find its basis in the Buddhist philosophy of *sunyata* or “emptiness,” which stresses co-existence or interdependent existence as its theoretical basis rather than Western ontological presumptions, such as the existence of a supreme god who serves as the source of the ultimate meaning (Luo 2003, 88–93).

Taixu, regrettably, was not able to realize his dream of restoring the glory of Chinese Buddhism during his lifetime. His legacy was nevertheless passed down to the next generation of Buddhists, in particular those who were associated with the cleric schools he established. His many publications also allowed his thoughts to reach a wider range of readers and future reformers.

²⁷ Taixu proposed a restructuring of the Buddhist institution into three divisions: the division of student clerics, the division of professional clerics in charge of Buddhist charities and social works, and the division of virtuous monks (Luo 2003, 135).

MUSIC AS A USEFUL MEANS: THE CONTROVERSY OF USING MUSIC IN BUDDHISM

Taixu and his followers effectively used cultural media to assist in Buddhist reform projects in significant ways. Taixu was in fact among the first to create and use Buddhist songs to promote reform ideas in the 1930s. However, the use of music in reform Buddhism for practical ends was not always considered to be in line with tradition by all Chinese Buddhists. Traditionalists argue that Buddhist songs in popular styles may exert negative influences on their practitioners or audience.²⁸ For instance, in *Sajyuktāgama*, the Buddha considered music, instead of freeing a person, to be analogous to the water poured on a rope tightening around one's forearms to make the knot even tighter. In *Dharmagupta-vinaya* the Buddha clearly prohibited the use of music because it could disturb the state of *dhyāna* (meditation). Today's conservatives cite evidence of the Buddha's disapproval, mostly from Buddhist sutras of the Theravada tradition, the oldest and perhaps most conservative tradition, to support their position.²⁹ In one of my research trip in summer 2007 to Jinglu Temple (lit. Temple of Purity and Discipline) in central Taiwan, a conservative meditation-centered temple, the general anti-music stance is commonly observable. Except for Buddhist chants, no form of music was heard within the Temple premise during my

²⁸ The anti-music stance was and is still very common today among participants of conservative communities across Taiwan. In strict meditation-centered temples, such as Jinglu Temple in central Taiwan where I conducted one of my field researches in summer 2007, no form of music is permitted. As believed by the participants, music negatively affects the state of meditation.

²⁹ Theravada Buddhism, the Doctrine of the Elders, is considered to be one of the oldest forms of Buddhism, which is comparatively conservative in its doctrine and practice. It is today the main form of Buddhism found in South Asia and Southeast Asia.

visits. As commonly believed by the participants, music negatively affected their cultivation.

The following excerpt from *Daśa-bhāṇavāra-vinaya* more systematically addresses the issues related to the use of music and its negative influences in the Buddhist community:

There were *bhikkhu* (Buddhist monks) who sang by themselves. Those *upasaka* (laities) who heard disagreed and remarked: *samana* (ascetics) of candid speeches and virtues sang like secular individuals. In the audience was a *dhuta* (virtuoso ascetic), who had overcome his desires. When he heard the news, he was displeased. He told the Buddha what he had heard about these *bhikkhu* engaged in singing. The Buddha therefore told all *bhikkhu*: from now on, *bhikkhu* should not sing. Those who did would be considered to be committing a minor offense. There were five consequences pertaining to the act of singing. The five consequences associated with singing were: causing the attachment of one's mind; causing the attachment of others; arousing disturbance in one's solitude; covering one's heart with desires; [encouraging] the younger *bhikkhu* to imitate [the behavior] and become attached.

(*Dharmagupta-vinaya*)

Though these rules might seem to only apply to those who chose to become a monastic in the Buddha's time, conservative groups today generally consider them to be equally valid for lay participants. Facing doubts of their creative practice, Buddhist song practitioners searched for passages to support their work from different canonical textual sources, particularly those associated with the Mahayana tradition. To establish the validity of their practice, they drew their inspiration from sutras, such as *Avgulimālika*, in which the Buddha demonstrates the idea of “useful means” or

“practical way” (方便法) to his monastic disciples. Since a monastic Buddhist is supposed to renounce the world, he or she is required to avoid “contacts with objects of the world” (習近世間物). This, however, is not always possible on a daily basis. In the story from *Avgulimālika sūtra*, the Buddha advises his distressed disciples to adopt an alternative approach, a “practical way,” to allow conditional application of flexibility if such a contact, though inappropriate by its original properties, is meant for a good cause (*Avgulimālika*). In accordance with this principle, the Buddhist song practitioners argue that Buddhist songs should be considered a useful means, therefore a legitimate medium, if the music used by the practitioners is to serve righteous ends. This idea has been commonly adopted by Buddhist reform clerics of the twentieth century, notably Hsing Yun. A firm believer of this principle, he has regularly integrated the concept into discussions of his reform work, including his Buddhist music programs.

To further support their practice, today’s Buddhist song practitioners seek support from passages in Mahayana texts in which music is given positive roles, such as:

Recruit a musician. Let him/her hit the drum and blow the horn
 Play the flute and the harp, amuse all with lute and cymbals
 Let him/her present the marvelous music to the Buddha
 With a joyful heart, we praise the Buddha’s merits with our voice
 With [the magic of] one single tone, we may achieve our
 Buddhahood

(*saddharma-pundarika sūtra*)

Typical of Mahayana Buddhist texts, which emphasize the universal salvation of all beings, this citation gives an account of music as a useful means for the benefit of others. Similar passages regarding the merits of using music to serve Mahayana goals of universal salvation can also be found in *Aparimitāyus-sūtra* and *Sukhāvatī-vyūha* (both Mahayana sutras). In the sutras, the Buddhist Pureland (淨土) is described as full of vocal and instrumental music as well as animal sounds that could be compared to music; these different sounds serve the same goal of purification and persuasion.

Beginning in the 1920s and 1930s, the Buddhist reformers built upon the Mahayana teaching a modern version of Buddhism that emphasized the pragmatic work of serving the world. It was therefore justifiable for reform Buddhists to use music as a useful means for the purpose of connecting common people to the teaching. However, when Buddhist songs increasingly integrated Western musical elements and idioms that tended to challenge the traditional perception of Chinese Buddhism, the controversy of using music in Buddhism was reignited. While some praised how the use of music might help build a Buddhist community, others questioned the use of Western-influenced songs in altering the original contents of Buddhist spirituality. When the integration of the Western musical form introduced new sets of aesthetics and consequently new sets of values into Chinese Buddhism, one wondered whether the new Buddhist sound and its associated aesthetic experiences ultimately transformed Chinese Buddhism. What were the new values and experiences introduced through the use of new musical forms? How did the changes occur and

how may we understand them? To answer these questions, I attempt to trace back the recent history of Chinese Buddhist songs and the genre's development in Shanghai and Taiwan in the twentieth century in the following chapters.

2.

THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF CHINESE BUDDHIST SONGS IN SHANGHAI

INTRODUCTION

The early development of Chinese Buddhist songs began in the 1930s in Shanghai and continued into the 1940s and early 1950s. Based on school songs, Buddhist songs remained strongly related to the educational genre throughout this period. Buddhist songs and school songs shared not only the use of Western-influenced song form but also their goals for effecting social and cultural change. With a special focus on the relationship between these genres, the present discussion is carried out in two parts. The first part investigates the origin of Buddhist songs and the genre's connection with school songs. I want to know how school songs, with regards to their musical structure and their functions, influenced early Buddhist songs. In tracing the origin of Buddhist songs, it is necessary to also introduce the history of school songs in connection with educational reform in China, namely the development of school songs as an instrument of the reform. The Chinese modernization movement and its ideals, which are covered in the previous chapter, will be reviewed whenever necessary

The second part is a case study of songbooks and Buddhist songs that will help illustrate the influences of social and cultural changes on the development of Buddhist music. The discussion is divided into three sections roughly corresponding to the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. I base my discussion of each period on one particular songbook from that time. Songbooks demonstrating the various influences of the different periods include *Songs of Serenity* (清涼歌集, 1936), *A Handbook for Buddhist Self-Cultivation at Home* (在家學佛要典, 1943) and *The Sounds of Ocean Waves*, vol. 1 (海潮音歌集第一集, 1950) and *The Sounds of Ocean Waves*, vol. 2 (海潮音歌集第二集, 1953).

The discussion of the second part begins with Li Shu'tong's Buddhist-themed school songs of the 1930s. Li, the most important pioneer of the genre, will be considered first, as his personal artistic growth was central to the early history of the genre. The Songs of Serenity, in addition to his other Buddhist-themed songs, serve as examples for analysis of the influences on the musical style developed in this period. The late 1930s and 1940s witnessed the increasing influence of Nationalist politics, leftist movements and the war against Japanese aggression. To demonstrate the change in style, I use songs drawn from the music section of Chen Hailiang's *A Handbook for Buddhist Self-Cultivation at Home* as examples. Buddhist songs aimed for the education and mobilization of Buddhists, influenced by the concurrent Songs for the Masses movement (群眾歌詠運動) and the New Life movement (新生活運動), will be the focus. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, the development of the genre

diverged into two paths, one on the mainland and the other in Taiwan, after the end of the Chinese Civil War. The 1950s development in Shanghai witnessed the political influence of the Chinese Communists on Buddhist music, which will be demonstrated with examples drawn from *The Sounds of Ocean Waves*, volumes 1 and 2. The development in Taiwan will be covered in detail in chapter 3. At this point I feel a need to restate the main purpose of study in this chapter in order to clarify the goal of the discussion: I do not analyze songs from these songbooks as if they represent all songs from this period, though they are significant and meaningful in their respective repertoires. The purpose of this study is rather to show how the social and cultural movements influenced Buddhist repertoires of this period with stylistic and lyric evidences derived from music examples.

Some details of my field research are worth mentioning here. The discovery of the 1943 original edition of *A Handbook for Buddhist Self-Cultivation at Home* by Chen Hailiang, once a missing link between the musical development of the 1930s and that of the 1950s, in the University of Chicago library helped me clarify the origin of some of the songs included in later songbooks, including the 1950 *The Sounds of Ocean Waves*. *The Sounds of Ocean Waves*, vol. 2 (1953), not found in any library in the world, is at present preserved in private collection. This historical document requires our special attention because it tells us more than any other Buddhist songbooks about the influence of the Chinese Communist party on Buddhist music during the beginning of its rule in the 1950s. In general, songs from both volume 1 and 2 of *The Sounds of Ocean Waves* are very rich in their sociopolitical meanings.

They will serve as primary examples in my discussion of the different social and political influences on Buddhist songs in the 1940s and 1950s in China.

Despite the focus on the 1930s, 1940s and early 1950s in Shanghai, the investigation will trace further back to the publication of Li Shu'tong's earliest Buddhist-themed school songs in 1906, in order that a fuller picture of the evolution of the genre may be revealed. The discussion ends in 1955 when the Shanghai Buddhist activities were forced to discontinue due to the intervention of the Chinese Communist party.

EDUCATION REFORM AND THE CHINESE SCHOOL SONG

Western influences followed imperialism to China beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. Thanks in part to unequal treaties, concessions were made, foreign settlements were established, ports (including Shanghai and Shantou) were opened for foreign trade, and missionaries were allowed to proselytize without restriction. The impact, both political and cultural, on the course of modern Chinese history was tremendous. Under the increasing pressure of foreign military intimidation and economic exploitation, the Chinese attempted reforms to save their country from foreign aggression. After the defeat of the Qing court in the First Sino-Japanese War in 1894, Chinese reformers became increasingly concerned about the compatibility of Chinese traditional culture with the modern world as currently represented by Western

civilization. The leading Qing reform official Kang Youwei's 1898 proposal to Emperor Guangxu outlines the kind of reform he desired.

The elites of the country are blind, deaf and useless. This is caused by the thousand-year-long self-confinement. Our nation has been avoiding change, fully content with what we have, as though we are still living in ancient times. Since the reign of Emperor Jiaqing,¹ we were surprised to learn of the invention of steamboats ... The competition among nations demands equal emphasis in the development of [modern] political institutions, technology, literature, and all species of human knowledge. Only when they are treated equally can they thrive in the presence of others. If any nation did not comply with this law, it perished ... (Kang [1898] n.d.a, 222–23)

The Chinese reformers were impressed by the progress Japan had made and realized that Japan's success in modernizing itself was the result of its dedication to a nearly complete transformation of its society. Kang's proposal for a new education system, modeled after Western countries and Japan, was meant to introduce Western learning, ideas and culture in general, which Chinese intellectuals believed would help materialize a thorough national modernization. It would include the study of modern subjects, such as mathematics and cosmology. Music was also included. Kang wrote:

European and American countries began to educate their people during [the time of] our Ming dynasty ... The King of Prussia Frederick the Great created universal education. He ordered the establishment of an elementary school in every town. All citizens older than seven years old had to attend. In the school, literature, history, arithmetic, geography, physics, and music were taught. The entire course of study took eight years ... (Kang [1898] n.d.b, 217).

¹ Jiaqing (嘉慶) was the fifth emperor of the Qing dynasty of China after the conquest of China by Manchurians in 1644.

Recognizing the role of music in facilitating social change during the Meiji Reform of Japan (1867–1889), Kang and like-minded Chinese reformers likewise intended to use music as a medium for the introduction of new ideas. Music was made a subject of study in 1903 at the government-financed Affiliated Elementary School of Nan Yang College (南洋公學附屬小學) (Shen 1990, 35–37) in Shanghai. Shen Xin’gong (沈心工, 1870–1947), Zeng Zhimin (曾志忞, 1879–1929) and Li Shu’tong (李叔同, 1880–1942) were among the most important school song pioneers. Shen, the most passionate school song composer, was once a Chinese student in Japan and had taught at the aforementioned elementary school since its establishment in 1901. He learned about Japanese school songs during his study in Tokyo and began to write songs in the same manner. Between 1904 and 1937, he produced no fewer than 180 songs.² Li, also once a student in Japan, was not only a leading composer in school songs, but also an important figure in the development of contemporary Buddhist songs. When more students trained in the West and Japan returned to China in the 1920s and 1930s, the repertoire of school songs continued to expand in the hands of musicians including Xiao Youmei (蕭友梅, 1884–1940), Chao Yuen Ren (趙元任, 1892–1982), Huang Zi (黃自, 1904–1938) and others with refined Western compositional techniques.³

² They were published in 14 songbooks, including three volumes of *Anthology for School Singing* (學校唱歌集) (Shen 1990, 38).

³ Huang Zi was a leading musician of the early Chinese Republic who taught at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music in the 1930s. He was also the composer of a number of the most well known

The popular themes commonly found in school songs of the early twentieth century include patriotism, social reform, women's liberation, personal moral cultivation, and themes related to youth education. The repertoire created by Shen Xin'gong is exemplary. "Yellow River" (黃河) (Shen 1990?a, 49), by describing the powerful Yellow River and the magnificent landscape surrounding its source in northwest China, arouses a patriotic sentiment. "Turtle and Rabbit" (龜兔) (ibid. 1990?b., 74) encourages perseverance in following life goals by learning from the turtle who, though slow, wins the race with the rabbit. But there are also songs with simple melodies and lyrics that mean to inspire a sense of purity and innocence in the minds of school children who sing these songs. Huang Zi's "The Message of the West Wind" (西風的話, [1935] 1958) is illustrative of this particular quality:



Figure 2.1: The first six measures of "The Message of the West Wind" by Huang Zi ([1935]1958, 7–8).

Chinese art songs of the early twentieth century. Chao Yuan Ren was one of the earliest Chinese students in the United States and an accomplished linguist by profession. However, because of his extraordinary talents in music, he occupied a prominent position in the history of Chinese new music in the early twentieth century. Chao became a well-known musician for his many songs in the style of Chinese art songs and school songs.

When I came last year, you had new cotton coats
 When I returned this year, you had all grown stronger and taller
 May I remind you
 The lotus flowers in the pond turned into seed cases
 Without lamenting over the lack of colors due to few flowers [in the
 garden]
 I reddened the leaves of trees
 (Huang, "The Message of the West Wind")

If we compare the lyrics of this song ("Message of the West Wind") with
 Percy Bysshe Shelley's early-nineteenth-century poem "Ode to the West Wind," it is
 not difficult to find the similarities between the two. A look at the following stanza
 from the poem by Shelley is revealing:

O Wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being
 Thou from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
 Are driven like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing ...

The school song and the poem both use similar metaphors, such as leaves and
 other natural objects, to introduce the authors' impressions of "change." As one may
 further notice, the passing of time, as symbolized by the changing seasons and the
 contrast between *last year* and *this year* are the themes of both the poem and the
 school song:

Of the dying year, to which this closing night
 Will be the dome of a vast sepulcher,
 Vaulted with all thy congregated might

And also:

The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

(Shelley, “Ode to the West Wind”)

This inevitably invites one to think about the direct influence of the earlier European poem on this school song written during Chinese modern period. One must also note the implication of the notion of “West Wind,” as that expression in Chinese often symbolizes the influence of the West.

Most often consisting only of quarter notes and eighth notes, the melodies of school songs, as demonstrated in Huang’s song, in comparison with Chinese melodies in traditional styles, are not overtly embellished or complicated. They were supposed to avoid the melodic and rhythmic softness that characterized Chinese traditional melodies. With the use of simple and regularly recurring rhythmic patterns, school songs were ready to arouse an uplifting emotion, inspire a positive lifestyle and encourage a new social morality in the emerging era. Much admired by its practitioners, this style was considered in this particular period of national reform as suitable for the education of Chinese youth.

“The Message of the West Wind” also demonstrates the power of school songs in shaping the cultural identity of the Chinese people. When education reform became more widely spread, songs, an inseparable part of the curriculum, were popularized through the education system and became a shared memory, first among students and later among the general public. For example, when Taiwan’s Folksong movement (民

歌運動) began in the 1970s and 1980s, this song was repeatedly employed by university student singers to address their concerns for the future of their nation. The song, a memory shared by all, successfully served as a common expression of the shared life experience of the people and their collective will. The influence of school songs on the later cultural development in China is summarized by Qian Renkang as follows:

- School songs have become a common heritage, part of the shared memory of all Chinese.
- School songs inspired listeners to pursue a positive life and contributed greatly to the education of China's youth.
- School songs initiated the development of the Chinese *new poem* (a form of new literature of the 1920s in the New Culture Movement).
- School songs were the musical source material and inspiration for the new genre of *revolutionary songs* that greatly influenced the nationalist movements of later decades (Qian 2001, iii–iv, italics mine)⁴

Revolutionary Song (革命歌曲) was a genre originating from the Songs for the Masses (群眾歌曲) of the 1930s and 1940s, which in turn derived its form from school songs. Though Qian is writing about the development in China, his

⁴ Qian Renkang categorizes the influence of school songs in the early sociocultural development of modern China into eight types. Only the four most relevant are included here (Qian 2001, iii–iv).

observations also apply to that in Taiwan. Qian, a musician fully trained in the Western tradition and today a professor emeritus in musicology of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, was himself a participant of the school song movement (as well as the Buddhist song movement). He composed songs and compiled songbooks, but also dedicated himself to the research of school songs. Despite the fact that some of the conclusions appear to be political rather than purely scholarly in nature, they tell us the significance of school songs in contemporary Chinese history: in the collective effort aiming for a change in education, traditional values, and ways of life, music assumed an instrumental role.

BUDDHIST SONGS AND SCHOOL SONGS

Like their Japanese predecessors, many Chinese school songs were created by combining foreign (mostly Western) tunes and native-language texts. However, when more professionally trained musicians, many of whom, like Huang Zi, were students returning from abroad, joined in the composition, more songs with newly composed melodies appeared. Inspired by school songs, Buddhist musicians created songs for achieving similar goals to serve in their community. As a result, most Buddhist songs, like school songs, fit into one of four categories:

1. *Songs with new lyrics set to borrowed tunes.* A good example is “Praise the Buddha” (讚佛歌) (See Figure 2.2) by Chen Hailiang (lyricist), which derives its tune from the melody of “Dreaming of Home and Mother,” originally by

the American composer J. P. Ordway (1824–1880) (Chen 1950, 16).⁵

According to Qian Renkang, Ordway's melody was introduced to Chinese school-song composers through the Japanese school song "Longing for Home in a Journey" (旅愁 or Ryoshu) (Indo [1907] 1908, 33–34), published in 1907 by Indo Kyukei (泉童球溪, 1879–1943), who first borrowed the tune. The melody soon became as popular in China as in Japan (Qian 2001, 236–39).

2. *Songs with classic texts set to borrowed tunes.* "Peaceful Retirement" (安養) (Shanghai shi fojiao qingnian hui shaonian bu 1950a, 24) from *The Sounds of Ocean Waves* ingeniously pairs a melody ("In the Gloaming") by Anne Fortescue Harrison (1850–1944) with lyrics derived from the Buddhist text "The Pure Land Poems of Xi Zhai" (西齋淨土詩). The melody was used earlier in the popularly received school song "Friendship" (友誼) by Shen Xin'gong (Qian 2001, 234–35).
3. *Songs with classic texts set to newly created tunes.* "In Every Day Life" (在日常生活中) (Shanghai shi fojiao qingnian hui shaonian bu 1953b, 5) matches lyrics adapted from the *Huayan Sutra* (華嚴經) with a newly composed melody. In another example, "Vows" (誓願歌) (Shanghai shi fojiao qingnian hui shaonian bu 1953a, 8) borrows its lyrics from a classical Buddhist chant, "Four Grand Vows" (四弘誓願), and also matches them with an original

⁵ For interested readers, one more prominent example can be found in "My Repent" (我的懺悔), with lyrics by Huang Zhilong and a melody borrowed from a song by Benjamin Godard. The song is from the same songbook, vol. 2, page 9.

melody.

4. *Songs with new lyrics and newly created tunes*. Examples include “Mountain Bird Saving the Forest from Wildfire” (山雞救林火), an original song by Qian Renkang (Qian 1950, 22). This category also includes the five original songs from *Songs of Serenity* (清涼歌集) (Hongyi 1936) by Hongyi (lyricist) in collaboration with his students.

Andante ^{bE調} 讚佛歌 ^{4/4 J.P.Ordway作曲}
 陳海量作詞

5 3 5 1 - | 6 1 5 - | 5 12 3 21 | 2 - 0 0 |
 宇 宙 間, 佛 最 尊, 大 雄 大 慈 悲!

5 35 1 . 7 | 6 1 5 - | 5 23 4 . 7 | 1 - 0 0 |
 世 尊 永 久 常 存 在, 無 處 不 現 身。

6 1 1 - | 7 67 1 - | 67 16 65 31 | 2 - 0 0 |
 衆 生 苦, 誰 能 救? 唯 有 我 世 尊!

5 31 1 . 7 | 6 1 5 - | 5 23 4 . 7 | 1 - 0 0 |
 我 今 得 聞 無 上 教, 虔 誠 誓 歸 依!

5 35 1 - | 6 1 5 - | 5 12 3 21 | 2 - 0 0 |
 從 今 後, 勤 奉 行, 自 利 復 利 他,

5 35 1 . 7 | 6 1 5 - | 5 23 4 . 7 | 1 - 0 0 ||
 法 喜 充 滿 樂 無 倫, 大 哉 我 佛 恩!

— 16 —

Figure 2.2: “Praise the Buddha” (Chen 1950, 16) in the original edition of *The Sounds of Ocean Waves*, vol. 1. Cipher notation was commonly used for both school songs and Buddhist songs of this period. In the upper left, the tonality is given as bE (instead of Eb) without indication of its being minor or major. This particular tonality marking was used since the early days of school song movements and had been in use until the 1950s and 1960s in Taiwan. The unusual tonality marking was likely used to help singers determine the starting pitch of a given song. In this consideration, the indication of a musical mode (major or minor) is not a huge concern.

The four categories of school song composition were emphasized differently by musicians and songbook compilers. For example, the fourth category (songs with newly composed lyrics and tunes) accounts for most of the songs from *The Sounds of Ocean Waves* 1 and 2, the first category (songs with borrowed tunes set to new lyrics) for slightly less, and the second and third categories for fewer still.⁶ The following chart shows the percentages of the different categories of songs from the *Sounds of Ocean Waves* and reveals more about their comparative quantitative significance:

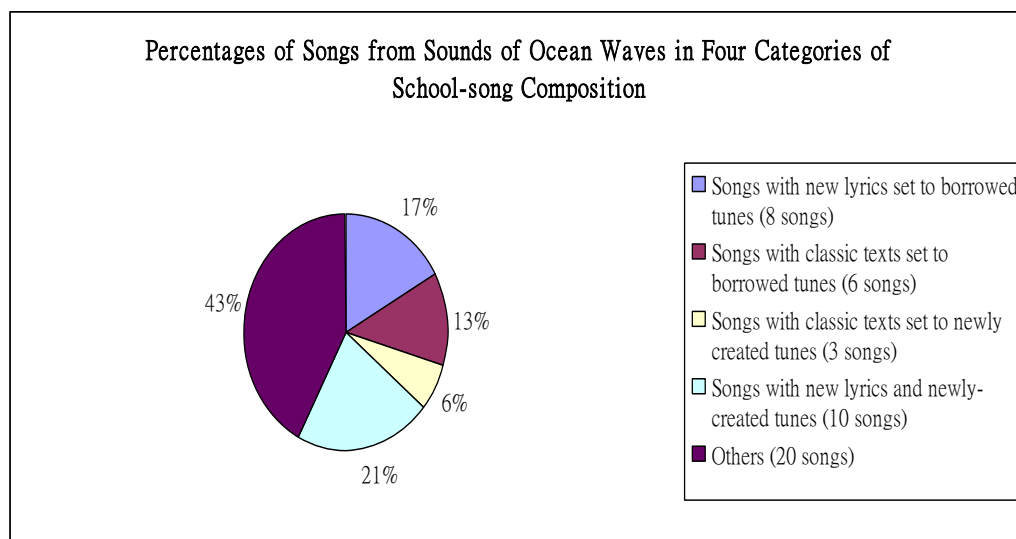


Chart 2.1: The percentages show the different emphases on the four school song compositional methods as applied to the Buddhist songs from *The Sounds of Ocean Waves*. The category “Others” includes Buddhist-themed songs borrowed from other Chinese contemporary genres and songs whose origins are so far not identified.

⁶ The calculation is made in accordance with the information supplied by the editor of *Sounds of Ocean Waves* in the postscript of the publication (Shanghai shi fojiao qingnian hui shaonian bu 1950). In the postscript, the editor mentions three out of four types of songs included in this edition: “Original lyrics and original music” (原詞原譜, 11 songs); “Well-known melodies matched with texts by renowned authors” (名曲配上名人詩詞, 5 songs); and “Well-known melodies matched with lyrics by editors” (名曲編者配詞, 7 songs) (Shanghai shi fojiao qingnian hui shaonian bu 1950, 36–37). The section of “Children Songs” in *Sounds of Ocean Waves*, vol. 1 was excluded in the calculation. The actual number of each type as presented in the postscript of the songbook is an important source of reference for calculating the percentages of the four categories as demonstrated in the chart.

This uneven distribution of songs in different categories entails not only the preference of the musicians who participated in creating the repertoire, but also factors associated with the general development of Buddhist musical culture during the late 1940s and early 1950s. In comparison with the 1930s and early 1940s, the 1950s saw more professionally trained musicians joining the composition of Buddhist songs. This fact is reflected in the increase of songs with both new lyrics and newly composed music (category 4). Songs in category 3, as they borrowed or adapted lyrics from Buddhist sacred texts, were more likely arousing opposition from the traditionalist camp and therefore had a smaller presence.

In creating their songs, many Chinese school song composers did not borrow their melodies from the original Western repertoires but derived them from Japanese songs. Following the models of school songs, Buddhist musicians did not borrow their melodies from their original Western repertoires, either, but appropriated Western melodies derived from the Chinese school song repertoire for their own use. This is often observed by comparing the scores of songs from different genres utilizing the same melodies. As a matter of fact, many Chinese school songs borrowed not only their melodies from the Japanese school songs but also Japanese modifications of the original Western tunes. Let us consider “Praise the Buddha” by Chen Hailiang, mentioned above. The song utilizes the original melody from the nineteenth century minstrel song “Dreaming of Home and Mother.” At the end of each musical phrase of the new song, the *appoggiatura* in Ordway’s original version is missing. The same modification appears in Chinese school songs of roughly the same period that

similarly utilize Ordway's melody, including Li Shu'tong's school song "Seeing off a Friend" (送別) (Li 2001, 236), which might have served as the model for "Praise the Buddha." We can further trace the modification to an even earlier source. As previously mentioned, this melody was introduced to Chinese musicians through the Japanese school song "Longing for Home in a Journey" (Ryushu) written by Indo Kyukei. A comparison of the scores shows that Li might have derived from Indo's song not only the melody (originally by J. P. Ordway) but also the modifications of Ordway's original appoggiaturas (*ibid.*) (see Figure 2.3a–d).

Dreaming of Home and Mother

Moderato Semplice J.P. Ordway
Arranged by A. LaMeda

Dream-ing of Home, dear old home! Home of my child-hood and mother;

Oft when I wake' tis sweet to find, I've been dream-ing of home and moth-er.

Figure 2.3 a: "Dreaming of Home and Mother" (Ordway 2001, 237) reproduced from the original score by J. P. Ordway.

旅 愁
“Dreaming of Home and Mother.”

With feeling. From the “American Song.”

Piano

Voice

Piano

Figure 2.3b: “Ryoshu” by Indo Kyukei ([1907] 1908, 33–34). Original score adapted from its second print in 1908. The appoggiatura in Ordway’s original is already removed.

Moderato semplice

1. 长亭外, 古道边, 芳草碧连天。 晚风拂柳笛声残

2. 长亭外, 古道边, 芳草碧连天。 孤云一片雁声残

夕阳山外山。 天之涯, 地之角, 知交半零落。

日暮乡关何处是。 但使愿无违, 与君长别离!

Figure 2.3c: Li Shu'tong's “Seeing off a Friend” (2001, 236).

Praise the Buddha

Andante

Music by J. P. Ordway
Lyrics by Chen Hailiang



Figure 2.3d: “Praise the Buddha” by Chen Hailiang, reproduced in Western standard notation (1950, 16). Please refer to Figure 2.2 for the original printing of the score in cipher notation as it originally appeared in the Buddhist songbook *Sounds of Ocean Waves*, vol. 1.

The similarity and difference between these examples suggest that Indo’s “Ryoshu” (Figure 2.3b), which first utilized Ordway’s melody (Figure 2.3a), removed the appoggiaturas before the composition of the Chinese school songs modeled after it. The melodic transference of modifications from school songs to Buddhist songs was highly possible in light of the historical relation between the two genres. This is further testified by Shanghai Buddhists who participated in the early Buddhist song activities of the 1940s and 1950s. According to their accounts, Buddhist songs were created on the basis of school songs (Qian Renkang, interview with author, Shanghai, 27 December 2010; Sun Wenmiao, interview with author, Shanghai, 10 March 2011).

Chinese Buddhist songs shared with school songs not only their form but also ideological characteristics shaped by the sociocultural and political environment during the age of Chinese modernization. As the school song was used to aid in the cause of modernization, the Buddhist song was similarly conceived to connect Chinese Buddhism to the new era. Buddhist songs often had themes that were similar

or even identical to those found in school songs. As the following discussion and its examples from this period will soon demonstrate, Chinese Buddhist songs were seen as a means of disseminating Buddhist reform ideals and, like school songs, as an instrument for introducing social reform. The songs reflected Buddhist moral principles while advocating new values influenced by Western ideas. The Buddhist song is thus not only a genre of religious musical art, but a Buddhist response to national modernization, aspiring to help recreate a religion as well as a nation.

BUDDHIST SONGS IN SHANGHAI: THE DEVELOPMENT BEGINNING IN THE 1930s

Shanghai and its adjacent areas have been an important location for the development of Chinese Buddhism and Buddhist culture since ancient times. Beginning in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Shanghai was one of the treaty ports, perhaps the most important one, open for international commerce and foreign cultural influences. The rapid economic and cultural growth of the city was definitely important to the Buddhist activities in the city (Shanghai zongjiao zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui 2001, 61–62). When the reform of Chinese Buddhism took place in the early twentieth century, the city naturally became the center for such an endeavor. In 1929, the Chinese Buddhist Association (中國佛教會), the central Buddhist reform agency, was organized in the Garden of Enlightenment (覺園), Shanghai. During this period, numerous Buddhist organizations of educational, charity

and missionary functions were also established in the city. Despite the chaos of the new republic that affected everyone within its borders, Shanghai, as a city with incomparable resources, continued to flourish. With its generally free and diverse cultural environment, the city allowed religious activities without restriction. It is thus no surprise that the early Buddhist song activities began to develop in this city (*ibid.*, 128).

Buddhist music activities benefited enormously from the city of Shanghai and its various resources. Without strong support from Shanghai, it would have been impossible for similar experimental cultural programs to take place. In the recent history of China, the first traces of Western musical influence were found in Shanghai. Following the arrival of Western imperialists, Christian churches were built beginning in the late 1840s and 1850s in Shanghai. The first Western schools, such as the Pure Heart School for Chinese Girls (清心女中), were established in the 1860s (Enomoto 2003, 6). Military bands associated with Western troops stationed in foreign settlements in Shanghai, Beijing and major cities of China also helped introduce the Chinese people to Western military band music. For example, in 1879, one of the first brass bands in China was organized in Shanghai;⁷ in 1907, it was reorganized and became Shanghai's first symphony orchestra (*ibid.*, 97-101). As a result of the combined foreign musical influences of these specific types, Chinese songs from this period often appeared to be chorale-like, incorporating some degree of the rhythms of military music that were meant to inspire public participation in social movements.

⁷ There was another brass band organized by an Irishman, Robert Hart, in Beijing in 1885. Unlike the one in Shanghai, the members of Hart's band were Chinese.

Equally important for the development of Buddhist songs was the beneficial cultural environment of the city. Shanghai, the national center of culture and commerce, was always keen to all kinds of political and social changes. Writers, artists and musicians were commonly attracted to the city. Here, they organized their professional and amateur clubs and associations. With their creativity, they enriched the cultural life of the city and from there they spread their influence to the entire nation. In responding to the political and social changes, they were the ones to voice their discontent and to lead the many sociocultural movements. Their ideas and thoughts were visible through literature, music and other popular art forms and were able to influence the general public and its cultural development.

The Initial Development of Buddhist Songs in the 1930s

The 1930s witnessed important changes in Chinese politics, which in turn influenced sociocultural development. The North Expedition of the Nationalists (北伐, 1926–1928), the conflicts between the Nationalists and Communists, leftist social and political movements that followed, and increasing Japanese aggression cumulatively shaped the cultural landscape of this period. Beginning in the mid 1920s Chiang Kai-shek and his National Revolutionary Army launched the so-called North Expedition, which succeeded in removing several powerful warlords controlling East China. The civil war concluded in 1928 with Chiang and the Nationalist party controlling cities and regions of political, economic and cultural significance, including Shanghai. The

peace resulting from a unified nation provided a window for national restoration. During this time, universities, teachers' schools, and schools of all levels were established and student enrollment increased. The literacy of the general population improved, while the implementation of new public school curricula, including subjects such as music and vernacular literature, began to cultivate a new generation that viewed the world differently. This period also witnessed the rapid growth of national infrastructure including the development of modern communication technologies and public transportation systems. The establishment of radio stations and newspaper and journal agencies in great numbers largely affected the overall cultural development of the nation, while new railroads were constructed.

Similar to the national development, new media technologies (radio broadcasting and audio recording technology in particular) played increasingly significant roles within the Shanghai Buddhist circle. The mass media technologies allowed Buddhist songs and singers to reach wide audiences, serving multiple social and cultural purposes associated with lay activities of various kinds including Buddhist propagation, cultivation and recreation activities. Buddhist chants and songs were included in its broadcast programs. In 1941, Shanghai Buddhists produced the earliest known Buddhist records, one with each of the following three themes: popular lecture (通俗演講), Buddhist chant (梵唄歌詠) and Buddhist songs (佛化歌曲) (Zheng 1943, i).⁸

⁸ Zheng Songying, 1943, "Miao yin ji xu" *Miao yin ji*. Shanghai: Shanghai luyuan foxue hui, pages 1–2.

One of the most important developments within Buddhist circle was the establishment of schools created by Buddhist groups for the education of the new generation of Buddhists. In the 1930s and 1940s, there were more than ten schools of different levels in Shanghai alone. Unfortunately, these schools generally ceased to operate before the end of the 1940s, likely due to the escalating Anti-Japanese War of Resistance and the ensuing Civil War (Shanghai zongjiao zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui 2001, 145–150).

Beginning in the 1930s, Buddhist songs and related musical activities began to appear no later than the early 1930s. As briefly mentioned earlier, this happened in connection with the establishment of Western-style Buddhist schools, part of the general national development of the 1930s. To teach music in an elementary school context, Buddhist educators created songs with Buddhist themes in a style similar to that of school songs. In addition, Buddhist societies and associations began to popularly use songs for social and cultural functions during this time. However, it is hard to say that a new genre began to develop solely due to one single cause, nor can we say that it began with any specific work or composer. But certain early works of the genre became better known and have been better remembered. According to available evidence, Li Shu'tong's Buddhist-themed school songs appear to be among the earliest Western-influenced "Buddhist songs." These songs include some of his early school songs and songs from *Songs of Serenity*.

Li Shu'tong was born into a rich family in China in the 1880s. He began to show great interest and talent in both arts and literature from an early age. As a young

man, he became a great sympathizer of Chinese reform movements. In 1898, when the Wuxu Reform took place, Li explicitly expressed his personal support for Kang Youwei, the leader of the reform. He would often say, “The gentleman Kang from the South Sea (Guangdong province) is my mentor” (Lin 1994, 18). In 1905, Li went to Japan, first to study painting at Tokyo School of Fine Arts (東京美術學校 or Tokyo Bijutsu Gakko), but later became involved in music and dramatic performances. Before long, Li began to write songs after the model of Japanese school songs. Among his early works are a number of well remembered school songs written by 1906, including “My Country” (我的國), “Racing in the Spring Field” (春郊賽跑), and “Willows on the Sui Dyke” (隋堤柳). These songs borrowed melodies from different foreign and domestic sources. To promote Western music among the Chinese for the purpose of reforming the country, Li published *The Little Magazine of Music* (音樂小雜誌), an introductory publication, in Tokyo in 1906. The foreword of this publication conveys his ideas on music and its use in promoting social change:

The origin of music may be traced back to the beginning of ancient civilizations ... Since then, there have been musicians and schools who attempted to develop new ideas and theories. Their accomplishments surpassed what was achieved by their predecessors ... [Today,] Europe and America are leading the trend, while East Asia admires their accomplishments and follows their path. Music improves one’s mind, promotes social integrity, cultivates one’s personality and touches one’s soul with the language of the beautiful. The positive influence [of music] is beyond any limitation. (Li [1906] 1998, 222–223)

In this excerpt, Li demonstrates the approach shared by his contemporary reformers toward music as a technology of change. The same approach may also be seen in Li's work in Chinese new drama (新劇), which began about the same time as he started to write his school songs, and his accomplishment was equally impressive (Lin 1994, 40).⁹ It was popularly believed (although certainly not completely true) that the history of Chinese new drama began with the works of the Society of Spring Willows (春柳社) organized by Li. He apparently was the central figure of the group (ibid., 40–44). Following Li's early experiments, troupes, both professional and amateur, began to emerge in Shanghai and major cities in China. Some of these groups were actually led by former members of Spring Willows (Ma 2006, 98–106).

After his return from Japan in 1910, Li taught at several schools in China, including Zhejiang First Normal School (浙江省立第一師範學校) in Hangzhou, where he was able to first realize his ideas in music education (Lin 1994, 58–59). Hangzhou, a city only a few hours away from Shanghai even in the old days, was equally a cultural center of the area. Zhejiang First Normal School was a school staffed with progressive literary figures and artists like Li. It supported new culture and new literature movements of the 1910s and 1920s with students actively participating in the iconoclastic movements of this period (Chow 1960, 306–07). While teaching in Zhejiang, Li continued to compose new songs and used them in his classes. Some of his students, including Liu Zhiping and Feng Zikai, also became

⁹ *New drama* (新劇) was a Western-influenced dramatic art form, like new music, that was similarly intended for the promotion of national cultural reform.

leading figures of the national cultural reform during the coming decades. In addition to being an influential artist and educator, Li's role in the culture movements in China through his critical writings and songs was significant. Historians, including Nishimaki Isamu (西槿伟), believe that Li's critical writings, such as those early works from *The Little Magazine of Music*, influenced the direction of the Chinese culture movements (Enomoto 2003, 29).

As already stated, the early development of Buddhist songs may have begun with some of Li's Buddhist-themed school songs, including some of his earliest songs such as "Willows on the Sui Dyke." These songs, with their Buddhist-influenced themes, should at least be considered the forerunners of contemporary Buddhist songs if they were not yet Buddhist songs in a technical sense. In general, a Buddhist-themed song might not automatically be a Buddhist song if it is not originally intended to serve Buddhist functions or purposes in a Buddhist community, despite the similarities between the two genres in form and content.¹⁰ However, the similarities between Buddhist-themed songs and the later Buddhist songs are worth noting in tracing the origin of the Buddhist genre in question. Among the most important is that they both used the school song form and similarly served extra-musical (Buddhist) purposes.

"Willows on the Sui Dyke" will help illustrate the shared characteristics of these Buddhist-themed songs. Composed during the first decade of the twentieth

¹⁰ However, a Buddhist-themed song can potentially become a Buddhist song if it is adopted by a Buddhist community and used for Buddhist functions. For a more thorough definition of Buddhist songs, please refer to chapter 1, pages 12–15.

century, the song, like many of the school songs of this period, has newly composed lyrics set to a borrowed Western tune. The Buddhist-inspired lines, such as “old dreams of a floating life” and “contemplation on the rising and falling of the human world,” carry the specific aesthetics closely associated with Chinese literary tradition and its sophisticated taste for elegance and gentleness. The Buddhist philosophy of *impermanence* (or Taoist surrealism influenced by the idea of *change*) is introduced through the use of words that imply the dialectic parallel of reality and illusion, a primary thesis of Buddhist philosophy. A similar literary style with a strong Buddhist (and/or Taoist) inclination may also be found in “Seeing off a Friend.” In this song, Li writes:

Outside the pavilion [where we were to part]
 And beside the ancient trail [on which you took the trip]
 The fragrant plants thrived and the emerald green color [of
 the plants] spread to reach far and merge into the sky
 The evening breeze caressed the willows
 While the music of a flute was dying away in the dusk
 A setting sun was leaving us for mountains away¹¹

The Buddhist flavor is especially felt in Li’s use of contrasting metaphors with juxtaposition of opposing philosophical ideas. Compared with the permanently standing “pavilion” and “ancient trail,” the humans who participate in the scene are transient, and their relationship seems short-lived and sad. The symbolic staging of human life in this picture is further dramatized by being set against the vastness of nature, the permanent: the “fragrant plants” of “emerald green color” that spread to

¹¹ Only partial lyrics are given.

reach the constant “sky.” The verse ends with a contrast between the music of a flute that is dying away (symbolizing the finitude of human existence) and the free and constant evening breeze, and between a setting sun and everlasting mountains.

The lyrics of both songs were conceived in the Chinese traditional literary style, which was associated with the Chinese literati class, and was commonly visible in lyrics of school songs from this period. The lyrics can be described as elegant, delicate, and tender. However, Li’s songs, unlike other school songs that inspire positive thinking and action, present a detached stance (evoked in lines such as “old dream of a floating life”) or even carry a sense of fatalism (as in “the music of a flute that is dying away”) originating from their Buddhist-related themes.

Li Shu’tong became a monk in 1918 at Hupao Temple (虎跑寺) in Hangzhou, where he was given his dharma name (法號, a monastic name), Hongyi (弘一) (Yuan 2003, 18–19). After Li became a monk, his creative life as an artist and musician was slowed. “The Song of Triple Gems” (三寶歌, 1930) may be considered Li’s first Buddhist song in a stricter sense (see Figure 2.4). Written in collaboration with the Buddhist reform leader Taixu (who provided lyrics), the song, unlike his earlier poetic Buddhist-themed songs, was apparently inspired by the desire for the positive functioning of Buddhist songs. We must note that functionality was an important consideration for Buddhist songs. It was meant to help popularize Buddhism and to mobilize Buddhists into action in the time of crisis for their religion.

The song, which similarly follows a typical school song style with a borrowed tune paired to newly composed lyrics in the traditional literary style, demonstrates the

multiple influences of a period within a changing cultural environment. The lyrics of the song, as translated below, may give us some additional ideas:

In the long everlasting night of the sentient world
 And the darkness of the universe
 Who can be the one to show us the direction of a luminous future?
 To the human life within the house in blaze¹²
 And all its sufferings
 Who may be the one to bring the comfort and solution?
 Of the great compassion
 The immense wisdom
 And the unsurpassed heroic power
 Is the Buddha!
 His revelation has enlightened all creation
 And nurtured the living beings
 The virtue of the Buddha is not to be fathomed
 Now, I know
 This is the only way
 The only place to rest my soul
 I want to devote my body
 And mind to the teaching
 Follow and practice with full dedication.

(Taixu, “Song of Triple Gems”)¹³

¹² The symbolic use of “house in blaze” in Buddhism implies “the present world with its unceasing sufferings.”

¹³ Only the first stanza is given.

三 寶 歌

Adagio

太虛大師 作詞
弘一律師 作曲

C調 5/4 5 · 6 5 3 | 3 · 2 1 2 | 3 5 2 · 4 | 3 — — 0 |

1. 人 天 長 夜, 宇 宙 路 間, 誰 啓 以 光 明;

5 · 6 5 3 | 3 · 2 1 2 | 3 5 2 · 2 | 1 — — 0 |

三 界 火 宅, 衆 苦 煎 迫, 誰 濟 以 安 寧?

1 · 1 6 6 | 5 · 1 3 — | 2 5 5 · 5 | 5 — — 0 |

大 悲 大 智 大 雄 力。 南 無 佛 陀 耶 彌 陀 耶,

Figure 2.4: “Song of Triple Gems,” (first three lines) with an additional alto line added by later Buddhist composer Wu Chu-che. (Hongyi 1977, 29)

The melodic flow of the borrowed melody, typical of school songs, is to be sung in a moderate-slow tempo to evoke a sense of devotion, while its simple, regularly recurring rhythmic pattern, again, is meant to inspire proper moralities for the reform age. The lyrics equally demonstrate the strong influence of Christian missionary songs. Words and phrases such as “the only way,” “the one to show us the direction of a luminous future” or “the unsurpassed heroic power” inevitably remind us of similar worshipful lines that one may encounter in Christian hymns.

Hongyi’s *Songs of Serenity* was another important work of the 1930s.¹⁴

Published in 1936, it is a set of five Buddhist (*chan*) poems that were set to original music by Liu Zhiping, a student of Li, and his students (Zhifeng 1936, 46).¹⁵ As

¹⁴ Chen Pi-yen translated the songbook as *Musical Anthology of Serenity* (cf. Chen 2005, 273).

¹⁵ The dating of the completion of these poems by Li and music by Li’s students needs to be further verified. According to Zhifeng, who wrote an explanatory essay on the songs upon the request of

evidenced by their creators' documented conversation, the songs were not originally intended as Buddhist songs, but rather as school songs for use in classrooms. Their creators intended for the songs to counteract the negative influence of pop songs (Chen 2007, 89–91).

The lyrics of the five Songs of Serenity, similarly written in the traditional literary style, are basically meant for providing spiritual guidance. However, in an individualized voice, the songs relate the personal experience of an artist's spiritual life in such a manner that they may be compared to an inwardly oriented art song. Formally, these songs also adopted a musical style similar to that of Chinese art songs, following the general musical practice of the 1920s. Stylistic influences from Chinese art songs include the use of a solo vocal line supported with a piano accompaniment in certain left hand patterns typical of Western music. Commonly adopting European song forms, they could be as short as a repeated phrase, as in the case of "Serenity" (清涼), or as long as a three-part song, as in the case of "Watch the Mind" (觀心) or "Mountain Colors" (山色).

"Worldly Dream" (世夢) (Hongyi 1936, 10–13), as translated below, exhibits some qualities common to all Songs of Serenity.¹⁶ In comparison with Li's earlier

Hongyi says in the "Additional Remark" of the songbook that the draft of his (Zhifeng's) explanatory essay was completed in 1930. Apparently, Li's poems were written by that date. Zhifeng also mentioned the completion of the music in 1934 by Liu Zhiping and other students of Hongyi. (cf. Zhifeng 1936, 46).

¹⁶ The songbook includes five Songs of Serenity. "Worldly Dream" (世夢) prompts the question regarding the meaning of our existence in the material world; "Mountain Colors" (山色) addresses the deceptive nature of our physical senses for the pursuit of meaning; "The Fragrance of Flowers" (花香), contrasts the world of ultimate truth with the world of humans; "Watch the Mind" (觀心) deals with the distinction between the knowledge of transcendence and the knowledge of the material world; while the

songs (e.g., “Willows on the Sui Dyke” and “Seeing off a Friend”), which are rich in metaphor and poetic expressiveness, the song is a combination of a *chan* poem and a Buddhist admonition.¹⁷ With comparatively explicit and instructional language (and with a lesser degree of traditional literary style), the song, with phrases such as the plea “let’s take a look” and interrogation “isn’t that truly a dream?” or “is there an ending?” was meant for a practical purpose, not personal artistic expression alone.

Let’s take a look at the material world
 It is like a chain of events in one’s dream
 A human life passes from infancy to adulthood
 from adulthood to senility, from senility to death
 a while ago from death to birth, just a little later from birth to death
 Is there an ending?
 When we were born, we knew nothing about where we were from
 When we die, we know nothing about where we will go
 Unconsciously, subconsciously, we have been coming and going
 without knowing why
 Isn’t that truly a dream?

(Hongyi, “Worldly Dream”)¹⁸

song “Serenity” (清涼) means to inspire a pursuit of the Buddhist “true permanence” (真常) to relieve ourselves of worldly burdens.

¹⁷ *Chan* poem or *Zen* poem (禪詩) is a genre that exemplifies the use of metaphorical phrases with contrasting and contradictory meanings.

¹⁸ Only partial lyrics are given.



Figure 2.5: “Worldly Dream” (Hongyi 1936, 10–13)
(the first page) as it appears in the original edition
of *Songs of Serenity* by Hongyi.

As in other *Songs of Serenity*, this song, though generally adopting a Western form, features the deliberate incorporation of traditional elements (the lyric style especially) into a Western form. It may also be considered as exemplary of Li’s approach to Chinese modernization, which, shared by some of his contemporary reformers, emphasizes a meaningful balance between Western influences and Chinese traditional heritage. Despite his being a pioneer in school songs, Li valued and guarded Chinese tradition, and attempted to protect the tradition through his art and writing. In this respect, Li was both a traditionalist and reformer in his approach to the modernization of Chinese music.

The Development in the 1940s

The cultural development in Shanghai during the late 1930s and 1940s reflected the increasing political intervention of the Nationalist party, which became the legitimate government of China after its North Expedition, as previously discussed. Despite the nation-building projects that brought hope to the recovering society, the corrupt government and constant threats of Japanese aggression were equally affecting people's life and society at large. During this period, the schism between the Nationalists and Communists became more and more serious. The Nationalist party, controlled by Chiang Kai-shek, initiated political and military struggles with its opponents and dissidents, mainly the liberalist writers and leftist activists. To control the influence of the literary dissidents' activities in cities such as Shanghai, Peiping (Beijing) and other major cities, the Nationalists policed suspected activities and imposed severe censorship, which often resulted in arrests and persecution. The members of the literary circle soon found themselves facing threats not only to their right of speech, but also to their personal security. In the meantime, the Japanese military's activities against China increased and their plan to conquer China neared execution. These internal and external changes led China's intellectuals to contemplate their relationship to their society and nation, which in turn effected a change in the focus of their literary work.

As the political oppression became more severe and anti-Japan sentiment continued to rise in the 1930s, the individualistic leaning of the literary style in the 1920s began to transform into a new style with a collective pursuit of the liberation of the nation from despotic government and foreign aggression. As stated by Ou-fan Lee, “It was in this momentous decade ... that art became inextricably enmeshed with politics and the romantic temper of the early twenties gave way to some somber reassessments of the writer’s social consciousness” (Lee 2002, 196). Literature for (leftist) intellectuals was a tool not only for social reform, but also for arousing “people’s revolutionary consciousness,” as believed by writers of the period (ibid., 197). One such writer, Cheng Fangwu (成仿吾, 1897–1984), claimed, “If we wish to shoulder the responsibilities of revolutionary intelligentsia ... we must make our [literary] medium close to the idiom of the masses” (ibid., 198).¹⁹

In 1937, Japan attacked northern China. The coastal regions including Shanghai and other treaty ports were soon under the control of Japan and its puppet regimes. In response, anti-Japan activities and protests organized through the collective effort of underground political activists and civilians were a frequent occurrence in Shanghai. Inspired by the patriotic or leftist activities that became more and more common and popular in the 1930s, songs meant to inspire the masses to bring change and to save the nation became prominent. After decades of the

¹⁹ Cheng Fangwu, who was educated in Japan, was a recognized educator during the Republic Era (1912- 1949). He joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1928. In the 1930s, he actively participated in the China Leftwing Writers Association (中國左翼作家聯盟) and was a prominent figure of the leftist literary club Creation Society (創造社). After the Chinese Communists took control of China in 1949, he was able to retain his highly regarded status and continued his work in education.

integration of school songs in public school education, they became an instrument of the masses. They were now the powerful representation of the collective will of the people. The Songs for the Masses movement (群眾歌詠運動), largely mobilized by leftists, quickly developed with Shanghai as its base, but similar activities could also be found in other major cities.²⁰ Numerous chorus performances, some including over a thousand singers, were organized by government and private sponsors during the Anti-Japanese War of Resistance in Shanghai, Chongqing and other major cities (Liu 2007, 204). Despite good intentions, the movement was subject to much political manipulation. Chinese Nationalists and Communists, who were at that time struggling against each other for power, were eager to use music to influence the people.

In contrast to the leftist anti-government movements, the New Life movement (新生活運動, 1934–1949) launched by Chiang Kai-shek, in an attempt to introduce social reform as well as to consolidate his rule with both Western-influenced ideals and especially traditional Confucian values, also had a major impact on the development of Buddhist songs in this period. According to Chiang, the movement meant to “revolutionize the everyday life of the people, to inspire a positive and moral life, so as to achieve the salvation of the nation” (Gao 1991, 37). This government-sponsored movement largely depended upon the government administrative system and the school system, which was under government supervision, to carry out its work.

²⁰ The musical movement was initially a spontaneous movement that rose among workers and college students as part of the extended project of the general social and cultural movements since the period of the May Fourth Movement. According to the participants, the movement involved enthusiastic young people who spontaneously joined together and improvised music on the streets of Shanghai to encourage the people to unite in the war against Japanese (cf. Hsiao Huyin, interview with author, Taipei, 10 December 2011).

Buddhist songs in Shanghai during the 1940s were very much under the influence of this general cultural and musical development as described above, which may be detected in the rich variety of musical styles in songs. Closely connected to the efforts of a younger generation of Buddhists in Shanghai, among whom Chen Hailiang (陳海量, 1909–1982) was the most enthusiastic, the influence of the new genre began to spread through publications and mass media. Born in Zhejiang Province, Chen became a disciple of Master Hongyi (Li Shu'tong) at an early age and was immensely influenced by Hongyi's revolutionary thoughts and Buddhist musical practice (Shanghai foxue tushuguan 1943, i). Among his many accomplishments, in 1943 Chen published *A Handbook for Buddhist Self-Cultivation at Home*, a compiled book covering a variety of topics including a significant portion devoted to Buddhist songs. This book became highly popular and influential. The songs contained in this book were mainly derived from a songbook published in Shantou, Guangdong province.²¹

Forty out of the total forty-three songs contained in Chen's book were derived from a repertoire created by Lin Shiyuan (林師遠) in collaboration with one of his colleagues, Luo Songyun (羅宋雲), at Jueshi Elementary School (覺世學校) in Shantou, Guangdong. Lin was a graduate of Chizhi University (持志大學) in Shanghai. During his studies, possibly in the 1920s, he might have been influenced by Shanghai's musical activities. After he returned to Shantou, he became the central

²¹ The songbook in question, *Anthology of Buddhist Songs* (佛化歌曲集) published in 1941(?), was lost and has not yet been recovered.

figure of Shantou's Lay Buddhist Association (汕頭佛教居士林). In 1941, the Buddhist association established the aforementioned school and Lin was made the principal. Under Lin's direction, activities involving song singing for educational and religious purposes formed a central part of the curriculum. As evidenced by available documents preserved in Shantou and Shanghai, these songs had been used both in classrooms and in students' Sunday worships. The latter were apparently modeled on those of Christians (Lin 1942?).²²



Figure 2.6: Student choir in rehearsal, Jue Shi School in Shantou, Guangdong (Lin 1942?). Use by permission of Shantou City Archives.

²² The Buddhist musical activities in Shantou are still not completely clear to us and require more thorough investigation. Those who are interested may refer to Lin's *The Special Issue for The Anniversary of the Establishment of Jueshi School*, possibly published in 1942 (Lin 1942).

The Buddhist songs contained in Chen's book were in a style similar to that of contemporary movement songs, emphasizing the spirit of the masses. The lyrics of the songs, in sharp contrast to Hongyi's refined art song style and the use of classic literary language with rich metaphors, were in vernacular. As discussed in chapter 1, vernacular, influenced by the new literary movement of the earlier decades, gradually became a popular literary means among the new generation in this period. The 1920 educational policy that recognized vernacular as a proper instrument and subject for national language course in elementary school significantly influenced the development of new Chinese culture and new art forms as more and more writers and musicians educated in vernacular joined to create their works in this new medium (Zheng 2000, 51–55).²³ Written in this common people's language, songs such as "The March of Great Hero's Disciples" (大雄奮迅團進行曲) (Chen 1943, 352) and "March On" (精進) (Lin 1943a, 351) were unmistakably meant to provoke a collective action. The lyrics of "The March of the Great Hero's Disciples," as translated below, may serve to illustrate the shared affect of Buddhist songs of this period.

In the world of sentient beings
Everywhere are found evilness, darkness and wickedness

²³ Efforts in promoting the use of vernacular in the public education system began as early as 1902, but it was not until the late 1910s and early 1920s that government policies concerning vernacular teaching in elementary schools materialized. The most important development took place with a 1920 government announcement in which elementary schools were ordered to implement a new national language course for learning vernacular speech in place of one designed for learning the literary style of speech. In the following years (from 1920 through 1923), more new government decisions concerning vernacular speech education were announced.

We are the fearless disciples of the Great Hero [the Siddhartha
 Buddha]
 We must unite, follow the truth of six paths (六度)
 And practice the ten thousand ways of Buddhism
 Armor ourselves with full devotion to hard work
 March on with no fear.
 With the torch of wisdom
 We march with no fear
 Hold up our club to subdue the evil force
 We march with no fear
 Come!
 Break through the darkness of the human world
 Awake the sentient beings from their illusive dreams
 Turn the world of five filths into a Buddhist land of purity
 (“The March of Great Hero’s Disciples”)

C 調 4/4 大雄奮迅團進行曲 無念作詞 容殿字作曲

5 1 . 1 1 1 3 | 3 5 — . | 1 . 2 3 5 0 5 6 5 |
 在這 繁雜的 衆生, 蒼茫 宇宙
 0 3 2 — . | 5 1 . 5 1 2 | 3 — 1 6 — |
 之間, 處處都顯示着: 險惡!
 1 5 — 2 . 3 | 1 — 0 — | 5 . 6 5 3 |
 黑暗! 癡迷! 我們既是
 1 . 1 6 6 | 2 2 1 . 6 | 5 — 0 — |
 大雄無畏釋尊的弟子,
 2 2 . 3 5 5 | 1 . 1 6 5 | 1 2 3 6 5 |
 應該實行奮迅結團, 勤修六度

Figure 2.7: “The March of the Great Hero’s Disciples”
 (Chen 1943, 352) (first five lines) on its original page in
 Chen Hailiang’s *A Handbook for Buddhist Self-
 Cultivation at Home*.

The apparent influence from the movements of the masses is observable in the particular style of its melody and lyrics. The song, with a newly created melody and lyrics, is structured in a quasi-three-part song form with some degree of variation in recurring phrases. With minimum melodic and rhythmic complication (except for occasional syncopations), it is suitable for group participation. With the use of particularly urgent wording such as “must” and “march with no fear,” and the call to action “come!” the song demands both performers’ and audience members’ resolution to take immediate action on the cause for change.

Equally influenced by the movement songs, “March On” provides another example with a direct reference to the concurrent social and political movements. The song both borrows the tune from and closely imitates the lyrics of “March of the Volunteers” (義勇軍進行曲), effectively replicating the original’s “Songs for the Masses” character.²⁴ The following is the translation of the lyrics of the two songs situated side by side for easy comparison.

Rise, those who wished not to be reborn.
 With the truth of the Buddha
 We brighten our truthful eyes of heart
 We are now facing the ending phase of the world
 Every single one is forced to expel a cry for liberation
 Rise! Rise!
 We must unite as one
 Study the truth of the Buddha, March on

²⁴*Jingjin* (lit. zeal and progress), the original Chinese title of the song “March On,” is considered as one of the six qualities or tools (六度) necessary for a devoted Buddhist to possess in order to achieve his/her enlightenment. I translated the original title as “March On” in order to reflect the intention of the lyrics to recast the fighting spirit of the “March of the Volunteers” in the Buddhist song through the heavy imitation of the original lyrics.

Study the truth of the Buddha, March on
March on, March on, on

(Lin Shiyuan, “March On”)²⁵

Rise, those who wished not to be enslaved.
With our blood and flesh
We build a new Great Wall
The Chinese people are now facing the most dangerous moment for
its survival
Every single one is forced to expel a last cry
Rise! Rise!
We must unite as one
Brave the enemy’s gunfire, March on
Brave the enemy’s gunfire, March on
March on, March on, on

(Nie Er, The March of the Volunteers)



Figure 2.8: “March On” (Lin 1943a, 351) as it appeared in its original page in *A Handbook for Buddhist Self-Cultivation at Home*.

²⁵ The last phrase *Jingjin*, which is also the song title, of the Buddhist song is translated into “march on.” I use the same translation for the last phrase *qianjin* (前進) of “March of the Volunteers.” Both phrases are similar in meaning, but with a slight difference.

“March of the Volunteers,” the theme song for the leftist film “Children of Troubled Times,” was written by two communists, Nie Er (聶耳, 1912–1935) and Tian Han (田漢, lyricist, 1898–1968), in 1935 during the White Terror period in Shanghai.²⁶ “Children of Troubled Times” popularly explores the theme of the “spiritual pollution” of Western bourgeois culture in Chinese cities and the fight against it. The story line follows two young men who are caught between their obligation to serve their country in combat against foreign invasion and the opportunity to lead a decadent lifestyle in a city of Western influences.²⁷ With a reference to the national struggle against Japanese invasion, the movie with its anti-Japanese aggression theme was meant to provoke a popular awareness of the country’s imminent danger and to inspire sympathy and participation among the masses to resist foreign powers.

In addition to the obvious anti-foreign-influence theme, the film was also anti-Nationalist politics. Contrary to the popular resistance against Japan, the ruling Nationalist government, instead of taking action to stop Japan’s invasion, was ready to repress any form of anti-Japan civil activities in seeking a “peaceful” solution with Japanese imperialists. Upon Japan’s request to stop large-scale protests against Japanese exploitative industries and military aggression, the Nationalist government

²⁶ Possibly originating in the French Revolution, “white terror” refers to a despotic, counter-revolutionary government’s use of terrorism through public instruments (cf. Dalbert-Action [1965] 2000 and Lewis 1973). The term is commonly applied to the study of the modern history of China in regards to the persecution by the Nationalist government of the Communists and political dissidents in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai and 1950s Taiwan.

²⁷ “Spiritual pollution” is a term employed by Paul G. Pickowicz in his discussion of Chinese films in the 1930s (Pickowicz 2010, 43–45).

policed popular activities and censored public media, including books, music, and films, which expressed an anti-Japan sentiment.

To rebuff Nationalist politics and persecution, sympathetic (leftist) writers organized and operated the China Leftwing Writers Association (中國左翼作家聯盟) and China Leftwing Dramatists Association (中國左翼劇作家聯盟) in Shanghai in the 1930s for the promotion of leftist cultural activities. Among the members were leading figures from literary and dramatist circles, including Lu Xun, Tian Han, Xia Yan, Qu Qiubai and others. Nie Er was one of the founding members of a modest music unit organized to support leftist movements within the China Leftwing Dramatists Association (Liu 2009, 159-160). Cinema, like literature, was considered an important medium that helped break through the Nationalist censorship blockade to reach the people at large. Among their goals, leftist film makers meant to bring to the general attention the reality of the poor and unfortunate of a society devastated by war, to expose the corruption of the Nationalist Nanjing government, and to encourage the people to fight against foreign influence and imperialist invasion. In contrast to musicians devoted to the development of European-influenced art music, which characterized the new music of the previous period, “the leftist musicians” leading the Songs for the Masses movement, as described by historian Liu Jingzhi,

continued the tradition of school songs, organizing music activities of the masses and popularizing songs of the masses in school song form among workers, farmers, students and soldiers ... They no longer used lyrics which were inwardly focused (內向), resorting to gentle sentiments. Instead, with lyrics that were optimistic and aggressive,

they encouraged the listeners to fight for a better future. (Liu 2009, 159)

In addition to the influences of the leftist activities of the masses, other social and political influences, including those of the Nationalist government policies, may be felt in songs from Chen Hailiang's *Handbook*. As previously mentioned, government policies commonly relied on public means for their execution. Buddhist songs used in Buddhist schools were under government supervision and were particularly susceptible to government policies. The New Life movement was one important influence on the development of Buddhist songs in this period. Chen's *Handbook* contains songs with related themes, including "Practice Buddhist New Life" (實行佛化新生活) (Lin 1943b, 343), "Early Rising" (早起) (ibid.1943c, 336), and "Treat Your Neighbors Well" (睦鄰) (ibid. 1943d, 350). "Early Rising," with the typical theme of self-discipline, best fulfills the particular goal of the New Life movement. The lyrics translated below reveal some common characteristics:

I love morning
 I love working hard
 In the early morning, I pay respect to the Triple Gems
 And tend to flowers for the offering to the Buddha
 Then, I will clean the house
 Mother will be delighted and father will enjoy the healthy environment
 (Early Rising)

In rectifying the traditional Chinese lifestyle, the New Life movement aimed to create a new way of life that was "productive" (生產化), "artistic" (藝術化) and, in particular, "militarized" (軍事化) (Jiangxi sheng xin shenghuo yundong cu jin hui

1936, 11–12). Citizens of the forthcoming progressive society were to keep themselves clean, punctual and tidy and to avoid drugs, wasteful living and habits or customs that grew out of ignorance. Songs were important instruments for the promotion of the movement. They were the means to introduce the ideals to people of all levels across the country. “New Life” (新生活), “Good Citizen” (好國民), “Practice New Lifestyle” (實行新生活), to name just a few, are songs that advocated the goals of the movement. In the Buddhist songs (collected in Chen’s *Handbook*), the proposed reform ideals suggested by these movement songs were reinterpreted into Buddhist ones. Comparing titles between the Buddhist genre and these movement songs, we easily find similarities and even equivalences. As might be expected, “Practice Buddhist New Lifestyle” is a Buddhist version of “Practice New Lifestyle.” In this iconoclastic age, “Treat Your Neighbors Well” and “Practice Buddhist New Life,” which both encourage a new superstition-free Buddhist lifestyle, helped support government social reform programs and promote reform Buddhism.

The Development during the Late 1940s and Early 1950s

Not long after the end of the Second World War, China plunged into more political and social chaos. The failed land reform, corruption, and the deteriorating national economy led to widespread discontent toward Nationalist rule. The struggle between the Nationalists in the Nanjing government and the Communists, then controlling part of northern China, soon escalated and developed into large military

confrontations beginning in 1947 (Spence 1999, 455–66). The struggle concluded with the Nationalists losing the war after a number of decisive military confrontations in Pingjin (Beijing-Tianjin), Xubang (South Shandong, North Jiangsu and Anhui provinces), and Liaoxi (Manchuria). By the end of 1949, the Nationalist government was forced to retreat to Taiwan.

During this later period, Shanghai Buddhists, despite the threat of civil war, were able to continue their work. In 1946, Chen Hailiang organized the Shanghai Buddhist Youth Association (上海佛教青年會) for the recruitment of young people (Shanghai wenhua yishu zhi bian zuan weiyuanhui 2001, 277–78). Chen found music to be an effective tool for achieving this goal. He once explicitly expressed his admiration for the positive influence of the Christian hymns that inspired his work in new Buddhist music:

Christians have been smart to use music to spread their religion. *The Universal Praises* (普天頌讚) published by The Society for Diffusion of General Knowledge (廣學會)²⁸ in Shanghai includes translated songs of different periods by many different composers of the Western world, totaling 550 songs. These songs inspire reverence, courage and [religious] excitement. Those who sing these songs would naturally become enthusiastic and passionate. I believe that Christians' accomplishment in their missionary work is inspired by their music. (Chen 1950, v)

²⁸ The Society for the Diffusion of General Knowledge (1887–1956) was an organization established and supported by several government officials and missionaries in China, including some important names in the history of modern China. Timothy Richard (1845–1919), Robert Hard (1835–1911), W. Muirhead (1822–1900) and Young John Allen (1836–1907).

With such conviction in the positive function of religious music, Chen was unsurprisingly an enthusiastic promoter of Buddhist songs. In 1947, a music division within the youth association was created, marking an important step in their endeavor. The new unit offered piano lessons and a voice-training course, while a choir was taking form (Shanghai shi fojiao qingnian hui shaonian bu 1953, i–ii). The associated Buddhist choir, Sounds of Ocean Waves, was officially established in 1951. The group attracted music lovers from the city and nearby towns. Huang Zhilong and Sun Wenmiao, both accountants based in Shanghai, emerged as leaders of the music group. In addition to their successful leadership, Huang and Sun composed new songs in response to their increasing performing opportunities and popularity. In the early 1950s, the choir was active with weekly rehearsals and a performance schedule including regular Sunday radio broadcasts and live performances (Sun Wenmiao, interview with author, Shanghai, 28–29 December 2010).²⁹

In 1950, the group published their first songbook *The Sounds of Ocean Waves*, volume 1, while the second volume was published three years later in 1953. With songs that were “action-inspiring” (奮發) and “uplifting” (活躍), they aimed at winning new converts (Chen 1950, v). The songbook consists of thirty-two songs in the first volume and fifteen songs in the second volume, making it larger than any previous Buddhist music publication. Like most of the Buddhist songbooks, this book

²⁹ This information is derived from multiple sources, including: Sun Wenmiao (interview with author, Shanghai, 28–29 December 2010); and Shanghai wenhua yishu zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (2001, 156).

contains older songs as well as newly composed songs, chiefly by Huang and Sun.³⁰

While the practice of borrowing and imitating Western songs, popular in the 1930s and 1940s, was still valid, the songbook features more songs with newly composed lyrics and music.

The continued social and political influence on Buddhist songs, particularly on their thematic material, became even more prominent during this period. Four of thirty-two songs in the first volume and six of the fifteen in the second volume of *Sounds of Ocean Waves* have explicit socially and/or politically oriented themes, while similar themes expressed in a less conspicuous manner are also found in other songs. In the early 1950s when the Chinese Communist regime was consolidated, political control became more and more reinforced. The use of particular language as required by the party's ideology reflected the influence of the new politics on Buddhist songs. In the following, I take *Sounds of Ocean Waves* vol. 1 and 2 as a case study for an analysis of the concurrent sociopolitical influences on Buddhist songs in the late 1940s and early 1950s in Shanghai. Five theme types can be identified: (1) Buddhist songs that serve Buddhist community functions; (2) Buddhist songs that reflect Buddhist reform ideals; (3) songs that represent new personal and social ethics; (4) songs that reflect a wartime ethic; (5) songs that explicate the influence of the Communist party ideology. Each of these types is analyzed with a distinct musical example from the songbook. Information pertinent to each song is provided to

³⁰ The authorship of most of the songs is not revealed in the songbook. The information was provided by original members of the group in interviews conducted between 26 and 30 December 2010 by the author in Shanghai. It was considered an accepted practice by Buddhists not to include authors' names on the score to show one's humbleness.

demonstrate the intimate relationship between songs of this period and their unique social and cultural context. In these examples, I also try to explore the meanings of the music from the perspective of the Buddhist musicians and Buddhist song practitioners to see how they understand and interpret their musical work.

Buddhist songs that serve Buddhist community functions. For example, “The Big Family Song” (大家庭歌) (Shanghai shi fojiao qingnian hui shaonian bu 1950a, 14), composed with Henry Bishop’s early-nineteenth-century melody “Home Sweet Home,” symbolized the united spirit of the Shanghai Buddhist Youth Association as well as that of the Shanghai Buddhist community at large. Influenced by the Songs for the Masses movement in which songs became a medium of the people, this song is an example, illustrating how Buddhist songs assume important roles in Buddhist social activities.



Figure 2.9: *The Sounds of Ocean Waves* (Shanghai shi fojiao qingnian hui shao nianbu 1950), published in 1950, was one of the first attempts at a comprehensive collection of contemporary Buddhist songs for reform purposes.

A big family is a great joy
 The parents are nice and kind
 Sisters and brothers are united with one mind
 We help each other and the happiness is unbounded
 Hold onto the principle of Buddhism
 We meditate and cultivate our wisdom
 Without letting ourselves relapse even for a moment

As “science” was commonly idealized as the remedy for China’s backwardness, Buddhists found it necessary to establish a superstition-free practice through the scientifically valid reinterpretation of the original Buddhist doctrine in transforming traditional Buddhism. The reformers argued that the original teaching of the Buddha was a practical way for spiritual liberation. In seeking such liberation, one should exercise his/her innate power to achieve that goal without resorting to mythical rituals. They emphasized, according to their interpretation of the Buddha’s original teaching, “self-help” (自力), rather than “assistance from the other world” (他力), as more important in developing such a power. In recent development, reform Buddhists argued that Mahayana Buddhism in its pure form, founded upon the Buddhist fundamental philosophy of *sunyata* – emptiness – and the practice of bodhisattva’s compassion that develops from it, encourages “benevolence” (仁), a Confucian idea, or “universal love” (大愛), originally a Christian idea.³² Buddhist social and cultural works that improve lives in direct, material ways were thought to best fulfill the goals of the Buddha’s original teaching.³³ In other words, reformers saw Buddhist

³² *Ren* (“Benevolence”), though a Confucian concept, has been commonly employed in the reinterpretation of the Buddhist idea of “compassion” (慈悲) in Chinese Buddhism and has been frequently referenced by reform Buddhist masters including Hsing Yun in their lectures. In the “Buddhist Wedding Song” (佛化婚禮祝歌), a collaboration of Hsing Yun and Yang Yongpu, Hsing Yun incorporates this idea in elaborating on the virtues of a Buddhist gentleman. Translation of the wedding song can be found in chapter 4 of this dissertation at page 186. Similarly, *ai* (love), a Christian concept, was also introduced into Buddhism to create *da ai* (universal love or greater love), a modern equivalent of Buddhist compassion. It is popularly used in Taiwan today and is a key concept of the reform Buddhism promoted by the Tzu Chi Foundation (慈濟功德會).

³³ The anti-superstition argument can be commonly read and heard in writings and dharma talks by reform masters in China and in Taiwan during this revolutionary period of the earlier twentieth century. Yinshun’s *The New Treatise on Pureland Buddhism* (淨土新論) may be considered the most important work dealing with the issues concerning the ritual-centric tradition of Chinese Buddhism. Most remarkable was his repulsion against the Amitabha belief of Pureland Buddhism (a school of traditional

modernization not only as a path to progressive change but, more importantly, a return to the original Buddhism, which is equally a practical religion sharing common ideals with Confucianism and Christianity.

Songs that represent new personal and social ethics. Personal modernization was a prominent, and even foundational, theme of the social movements working toward modernization on a national scale. “Self-Reliance” (自立歌) (Shanghai shi Fojiao qingnian hui shaonian bu 1950b, 31) was apparently a musical restatement of this ideal. In remedying the illness of the family-based cultural practice, reformers considered *independence*, believed to be lacking in Chinese tradition, to be a cure.

Shed one's own sweat
 Eat one's own rice
 One's own business should be taken care of by oneself
 One's own business should be taken care of by oneself
 Relying on the kindness of others
 relying on the mercy of the gods
 or relying on the fortune passed down from one's ancestors
 is not fit for a decent person!

(“Self-Reliance”)

The song was originally a 1927 school song named “To Be Independent and Helpful” (自立立人歌) (Chao 1987, 53). It was a collaboration of Tao Xingzhi (陶行知, 1891–1946), an educator of the early Republic, and the widely known Chinese art-

Chinese Buddhism emphasizing Amitahba's name chanting for rebirth in the west Pureland), which Yinshun claimed had originated from ancient Indian sun god worship. Yinshun's conclusion incurred sharp criticism. Because of his “attack” on this popular tradition, Yinshun was later forced to publicly admit the “errors” he made in this book.

song musician Chao Yuen Ren, who composed the music. In response to a critical review of this song, Tao remarked:

My intention in this song was to inspire among the younger generation a sense of dignity and to encourage them to break away from the habitual weakness of being a dependent person, indulging oneself in being one's parents' protected boy or girl. The song definitely does not encourage individualism in the way that some might think. In extreme form, such individualism may result in selfishness. [In this song,] the "self" could rather be interpreted as more than just an "individual." The "self" can be understood, in an extended sense, as a family, a neighborhood, a nation, or any group with common interests. The "self" should also devote the best of him/herself [to the society] without waiting to be served. (Tao 1991, 53-54)

In order to tie this idea to Buddhist thought, Buddhist reformers commonly referred to the Tang dynasty Buddhist reformer Baizhang (百丈, A.D.749–814). In building a self-sufficient Buddhist community, Baizhang advocated the independence of the monastic economy. "No work, no food" (一日不作一日不食), as advocated by Baizhang, encouraged his monastic fellowmen not to rely upon the laity for support.

Songs that reflect a wartime ethic. Exemplary of this style, "Let's Unite" (大家團結在一起) (Shanghai shi Fojiao qingnian hui Shaonian bu 1953d, 3) represents a Buddhist form of patriotism rising during the Anti-Japanese War of Resistance. Somewhat contrary to the earlier image of Buddhists as pacifists, some Chinese Buddhists of the 1930s and 1940s actively participated in the war against Japan.

We are the protectors of world peace

Let's unite, standing against wars and keeping the world at peace
 Come! My Buddhist fellows
 Let's unite, standing against wars and keeping the world at peace
 for the sake of attaining enlightenment

(“Let's Unite”)³⁴

When the Anti-Japanese War of Resistance escalated, Chinese monks were pressured to join as the government was in dire need of a new source of draftees. How a Buddhist might remain true to his faith and at the same time not neglect his duty in the national struggle required not only a proper response to the national calling but also a reinterpretation of the Buddhist doctrines. In accordance with his reform Buddhist ideas regarding participation in public affairs, Taixu believed that a bodhisattva with great compassion would do everything possible to destroy evil forces in order to protect the innocent. Killing therefore could be justified if it was to serve a righteous cause (Xue Yu 2005, 39). With this new interpretation, some Chinese clerics found it possible to temporarily renounce the Buddhist precept of non-killing for the sake of creating future peace (ibid., 47–49).

Songs that explicate the influences of the Communist party ideology. With its “politically correct” theme, the early 1950s song “Production and Cultivation are Equally Important” (生產修持兩不忘) (Shanghai shi fojiao qingnian hui shaonian bu 1953, 12) best exemplifies this type.

Ding Dang, Ding Dang
 The burning iron shines with a red glow and flying sparks dance
 around

³⁴ Only the first stanza of the lyrics is given.

Ding Dang, Ding Dang
 Casting the iron and chanting the Buddha's name are to be put in
 one's mind with no preference toward one or the other
 Ding Dang, Ding Dang
 Building our fatherland and making it a strong nation

(“Production and Cultivation are Equally Important”)³⁵

After the takeover of China by the Communists, ideological struggles and political movements had a great impact on the Buddhist community in Shanghai. Buddhist organizations and groups were pressured to reorganize in a way that eventually resulted in the dissolution of the community. The Shanghai Buddhist music group Sounds of Ocean Waves and its activities in general came to a halt when Chen Hailiang and Zheng Songying, the two leaders of the Shanghai Buddhist community, were accused and persecuted by Chinese Communists in 1955 for being “anti-revolutionary” (Shi Guoqing 2010, 291). It was not until the Great Cultural Revolution ended in 1976 that the original members of the group were able to resume their activity.

Beginning in the 1930s, music that was used in movements against imperialist aggression and capitalist exploitation gradually became a political instrument with which both Nationalists and Communists could promote their own ideologies and mobilize people. Songs under the Communist rule further became means of thought control (Liu 2007, 324). In the late 1950s, the Anti-Right movement (整風反右運動)

³⁵ Only the first stanza of the song is given.

動),³⁶ introduced by the Communist party to regulate creative activities, had a lasting impact on the arts. The leading Communist official Lu Ji (呂驥), who was in charge of various thought control agencies of the party, outlines the official attitudes that artists and musicians faced.

We must unite and educate musicians in large numbers for the purpose of nation-building. The actual work [of the united group of musicians] must be to encourage workers, farmers and all laboring people to devote themselves to production, to build our nation, to create civilization and good life, and to improve cultural level in the people's army ... All in all, [the work of musicians] must reflect people's production and their work in nation building, serving workers, farmers and soldiers. (Lu 1959, 2)

With this political context in mind, it is not too hard to imagine the situation of Buddhist musicians during this period. According to its composer, “Production and Cultivation are Equally Important” was written just after the Communists had “emancipated” Shanghai. In this song, the Communist ideology overshadows the Buddhist themes. As required by the Communist political campaign, the song was meant to support the state ideology of the “unification of workers, farmers and soldiers” (Liu 2007, 331; Li 1959, 181–91).³⁷

³⁶ During the Anti-Right movement (整风反右运动), writers, artists and political dissidents were requested by the Communist party to present their opinions about the government, which were later used as proof of their betrayal of the Communist revolution. The movement is not to be confused with the Rectification Movement (整风运动) of the 1940s in Yan'an, despite their similar titles in Chinese.

³⁷ The information was derived from an interview conducted by author with the composer of the song on 28 December 2010 in Shanghai. The interviewee wished to remain anonymous.

CHINESE BUDDHISM AND BUDDHIST SONGS IN TAIWAN IN THE 1950s

Upon their defeat by the Chinese Communists, the Nationalists began to retreat from most of the provinces on the Chinese mainland that had been under their control to the island province of Taiwan by the end of 1949. With the support of the U.S. government, Taiwan subsequently became a separate political entity, controlled by the Chinese Nationalist government. During the retreat, between 1 and 1.5 million mainland migrants of different professions and from different provinces relocated with the Nationalist government to Taiwan.³⁸ Among them were monks from different groups and schools of Chinese Buddhism, ranging from the eight orthodox schools of Chinese Buddhism to the esoteric Tibetan and Mongolian Buddhist orders, who attempted to reestablish their churches in Taipei. The Chinese Buddhist Association, originally organized by Taixu, was reestablished in Taipei as soon as the relocation of the government was completed.

While Chinese Buddhists on the mainland suffered a great deal of destruction from Communist political intervention, the White Terror period began in Taiwan under the rule of the Chinese Nationalists. In order to secure their last piece of territory, the desperate regime severely censored the media while policing civilian activities. During this period, no form of civil activity could escape the regime's

³⁸ Since the ports of entry to Taiwan were not fully regulated by the government despite the fact that identification was required to enter Taiwan at that time, the number could not be correctly estimated. Some estimated that, between 1946 and 1952, the number of Chinese immigrants to Taiwan was no less than two million and in the two years 1949 and 1950 alone, there were one million arriving with the retreating Nationalist troops (Li and Lin 2006, 311).

political force. Despite the restrictive situation, Buddhist activities in Taiwan were able to continue.

In the first few years after the relocation, the Chinese Buddhist Association was under the leadership of several reform clerics closely associated with Taixu's group. Dongchu (東初, 1908–1977) and other disciples of Taixu were especially important in instigating changes within the Chinese Buddhist community in this period. With their support, a number of Buddhist music groups associated with relocated monastic and lay Buddhist associations began to emerge in the early 1950s in Ilan, Kaohsiung, Penghu, and Taichung. In 1953, Hsing Yun, a young mainland monk who claimed to be a faithful follower of Taixu, came to Ilan, Taiwan and attempted his own reform influenced by Taixu's ideals. His musical work, beginning as a form of Buddhist youth activity, paved the way for the later development of a new Buddhist musical culture in Taiwan. Hsing Yun and his musical work in Taiwan will be further described in greater detail as a case study in chapter 3.

CONCLUSION

Seeking a transformation of Chinese Buddhism, Taixu, the leader of the Buddhist modernization movement, envisioned a reform of both traditional Buddhist ideology and its communal lifestyle. Buddhist songs became the symbol of the new rationalized Buddhism and an effective means to unite the Buddhist community and to serve society at large. The songs, conceived as a technology for performing practical

functions, were commonly used in Buddhist activities and youth education beginning in the 1930s. In addition to the publication of songs and songbooks, Buddhists also organized choirs modeled on Christian musical practices.

Following the compositional principles of school songs, Buddhist musicians began pairing existing melodies, sometimes imitations of Western melodies, and Chinese Buddhist texts to create their own songs. These borrowed Western melodies, which were already popularized by school songs, became the best means for achieving Buddhist reform. In introducing progressive ideas through the borrowing of Western musical practice, Buddhist musicians sometimes had to compromise the original meanings of their songs. The songs thus reflected the influences of the concurrent social and political movements. Despite the shortcomings of these composition methods, Buddhist songs effectively served to promote Chinese Buddhism.

In the 1940s and early 1950s, the repertoire of Buddhist songs began to expand when more musicians joined in the work. During this period, we see a dramatic increase of newly composed songs. In addition to the improved compositional techniques, the style of lyrics also changed to a large extent. The refined lyric style of Hongyi and the particular taste and aesthetics associated with the Chinese literati class was gradually replaced by the new vernacular style. It reflected the lasting influences of the literary movement from as early as the late 1910s and 1920s.

Further, the political change and social and cultural movements of the 1940s, in particular, had a major impact on the evolution of Buddhist song form. The Songs for the Masses movement that emphasized the mobilization of common people for

achieving social and political goals had a tremendous influence on the songs. In response, the Buddhist genre developed a new style comparable with the music of the mass movements.

It is also worth noting that the use of Buddhist songs in reform Buddhist activities allowed the reform teaching to create for itself a new identity distinct from that of its cultivation-based traditional counterpart, which was normally associated with the sound of sacred ritual chants. With the proper naming of *ge* or *gequ* (songs), connoting secular genres, in opposition to *zan* (praises) or *ji* (rhymed verses) of ritual chants, Buddhist songs (*fojiao gequ*) became a perfect medium for bridging reform Buddhism to the “world of the people” (器世間).³⁹ The “naming” not only helped introduce a new image to reform Buddhism but also helped activate a change within Chinese Buddhism itself. Though contradictions between the reform Buddhist musical practice and Buddhism’s anti-music rationale may persist, Buddhist songs today continue to acquire new meanings through their practitioners’ experiences in actual musical practice.

To further investigate the continuing musical development of Buddhist songs in Taiwan, I devote the next chapter to a case study of Hsing Yun’s Buddhist group and their experimental practice of Buddhist songs in the 1950s and 1960s

³⁹ The original Buddhist term *qishijian* means the world where the beings of “six ways” (六道) live in illusions. The world originally alluded by this term is larger than the world of people, who are one type of beings among the six, but are one of crucial importance.

3.

THE POST-1949 DEVELOPMENT OF CHINESE BUDDHIST SONGS IN TAIWAN: A CASE STUDY OF THE EARLY MUSICAL ACTIVITIES OF LEI YIN TEMPLE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter takes as its subject Hsing Yun and his early Buddhist work at Lei Yin Temple in Ilan, Taiwan as a case study to allow an understanding of the historical origin of Fo Guang Shan's achievement in music. However, Hsing Yun's group, i.e. Fo Guang Shan, was not the only reform Buddhist group in Taiwan, nor is it the only group dedicated to the development of Buddhist music. The importance of the study of Hsing Yun and his music group lies with the historical significance of their early efforts in the post-war period that helped introduce the new development of Buddhist music in Taiwan.

The chapter means to illustrate the characteristics of the continuing development of Chinese Buddhist songs under the unique social and political influences in Taiwan after 1949. As evidenced, Hsing Yun, the central figure in this process, was responsible for the initial ideas and creative work that allowed the genre to quickly develop in Taiwan, though not without the support of his followers in Ilan. The period described in this chapter covers roughly a decade, from 1953, the year

Hsing Yun arrived in Ilan, until the early 1960s, when he moved away to further develop his Buddhist work in Kaohsiung, a city in southern Taiwan. The chapter begins with the early life of Hsing Yun in mainland China with a focus on his ideas and work in reform Buddhism. Following Hsing Yun's biography, a significant portion of the chapter is devoted to the discussion of the activities of his musical group in Ilan in the 1950s. Examples of their activities documented in news articles from the 1950s help to illuminate their musical style and the form of their activities in connection with their Buddhist work. Among their musical work, the compilation and publishing of songbooks, which lasted more than twenty years, was important for the furtherance of Buddhist songs in Taiwan and is a significant focus of this chapter. I will contrast three different editions of their publication *The Buddhist Holy Songs* (佛教聖歌集), which I believe represent their work in three different periods, to reveal the evolution of the genre in Taiwan.¹ The closing section contemplates the meaning of Hsing Yun's Buddhist work within a historical framework. By reconsidering the particular historical context of post-war Taiwan in connection with his work, I hope to achieve a greater understanding of Hsing Yun's group and its accomplishments.

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

¹ Though three editions of *The Buddhist Holy Songs* printed respectively in 1956, 1960 and 1977 will be the focus, the now lost 1954 print, the first publication of the songbook, will be discussed according to materials available from different sources.

The history of Buddhism in Taiwan did not begin with the relocation of the Chinese Buddhist community in 1949. In fact, Taiwan had its own form of Buddhism as early as the late Ming when Koxinga (1624–1662) took over Taiwan from Dutch colonialists in the seventeenth century. Since then, Taiwan had been a major immigrant destination of the Chinese from the southeast mainland coast. During this early period, temples began to appear, especially in Southern Taiwan (Cai 1989, 74). In the following centuries, Chinese immigrants continued to arrive in Taiwan in search of rich soil and the chance for a better life. The earlier Chinese immigrants brought with them their native religions, among which were different forms of Buddhism, including Vegetarian Teaching (齋教) and orthodox Chinese Buddhism of the southeast China tradition. These two practices and their derivatives attracted numerous followers and became influential by the end of the nineteenth century (Jones 1999, 3–30). Buddhism has since been an important part of daily life and Buddhist temples have served as centers of social and political functions. It grew as the Chinese immigrant society in Taiwan expanded.

Despite the strong cultural and historical connection between China and Taiwan, through these few centuries, Buddhism in Taiwan changed significantly under the influences of different ruling authorities. Among them, Japanese colonialism, which began in 1895, was important. During the fifty years of Japanese colonial rule, Buddhist belief in Taiwan was cultivated within a very different social and political context. At times, it was pressured by the colonial government to reorganize and to adopt Japanese Buddhist practices. At others, it struggled to maintain its own

Chinese/Taiwanese identity. The organization of The Patriotic Buddhist Association (愛國佛教會) and The Buddhist Youth Association (佛教青年會) after the Buddhist-related anti-Japanese riot Xilan Heritage Incident (西來庵事件, 1915) was among measures taken by Taiwanese Buddhists to ensure the survival of their religion (Jones 1999, 64–74). Efforts to maintain their connection with communities on the Chinese mainland were equally prominent. For example, Jueli, the highly revered leader of Fayun Temple (法雲寺) in Miaoli, central Taiwan, exercised all efforts possible to protect the monastic lineage (originating in southeast China) from being randomly altered by the colonial government's policies. He initiated educational programs in which cleric students would be sent to the mainland for further training. However, there were more Taiwanese clerics who, in pursuing higher education in Buddhism, went to Japan, one of the few places where they might encounter superior scholarship in Buddhist philosophy in addition to practical training. In Japan, they were exposed to the reform of Japanese Buddhism. Over time, Taiwan Buddhism, with Chinese Buddhist tradition as its basis, gradually developed a unique form of its own, absorbing elements from Japanese Buddhism, local religions of Taiwan, and other foreign religious orders (Cai 1989, 86–87).²

After the retrocession of Taiwan to China, the Taiwan Buddhist community underwent a dramatic change. The political shift made the community subordinate to the Chinese Buddhist Association, the central Buddhist agency recognized by the

² The term “Taiwanese” is equally used in designating the language and culture of Hoklo people, one of the ethnic groups in Taiwan. In order to avoid misunderstanding, I opt to use “Taiwan Buddhism” in this particular context. However, when contrast is needed to distinguish between what is of China and what is of Taiwan, the adjective will be used.

Nationalist government. Following the retreat of the Nationalist government to Taiwan, the high ranking relocated monks from China arrived in Taiwan and assumed leadership in the Chinese Buddhist Association (中國佛教會), reestablished in Taipei in 1949. Taiwanese clerics, due to a lack of proper skill in Mandarin (the official language of the Republic of China), were generally silenced (Jiang 1996, 248). More importantly, their lack of connection with the politics in Taipei deprived them of an equal standing in competition with relocated Chinese Buddhists for leadership. They lost their previous status earned during the Japanese colonial period. Taiwanese Buddhists, despite being the majority of the association's actual constituency, were underrepresented in the congress of the Buddhist central agency due to an unfair electoral practice. Like the national congress controlled by the Nationalists, the central agency demanded two delegates to be elected to represent each province of China, despite the fact that the provinces these elected members represented were no longer under the administrative power of the association (Jones 1999, 139). Subsequently, Taiwanese Buddhists' opinions were neglected. Taiwanese Buddhist culture and its unique identity, cultivated during the Japanese colonial period and even earlier, began to suffer a great loss of support and were quickly disappearing. With the fresh memory of the February 28 Incident, which had occurred only a few years before (in 1947), Taiwanese clerics and Buddhists remained quiet during the change, avoiding any possible actions that might be suspected by the government as Communist or Taiwan separatist activities (Jiang 1996, 249; Jones 1999, 113).³

³ The February 28 Incident in 1947, though beginning as a simple police incident, developed into an

Since most of the relocated mainland monks and Buddhists were originally from Shanghai and cities of the adjacent Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, the newly introduced Chinese Buddhist culture was basically that of this particular area. In comparison with the magnificent temples and large monasteries in Jiangsu and Zhejiang where Buddhist culture thrived and flourished for over a thousand years in China, Taiwanese Buddhist temples appeared to be shabby and insignificant in the eyes of the mainland monks. The scarcely educated Taiwanese clerics and their Taoist-influenced practice further disappointed the eminent mainland monks who were deputed by the Chinese Buddhist Association for inspecting the current state of Buddhism in Taiwan (Jones 1999, 112–14).⁴ According to their observation, the mainland monks determined that these Taiwanese temples were very much in a state of infancy, full of superstitious practices and requiring restructuring. Measures were taken to remove the “deficiencies” in Taiwan Buddhism. The mainland monks claimed control over the ordination of new monks that would determine the future membership of the clergy. Subsequently, the central Chinese Buddhist agency put the Taiwanese clerical lineages under its administration. The original Buddhist culture in

island-wide protest against government corruption in the weeks following the incident, resulting in injuries and death. Government crackdown on revolt activities ensued in the coming months. During the military action, numerous Taiwanese social and political leaders and civilians were persecuted and sentenced to death.

⁴ Among the deputed monks was Dongchu (東初). His apparent prejudiced remark and similar others made by different mainland clerics have been recently reexamined by historians of the late twentieth century. The historians criticize that these negative opinions basically grew out of the relocated monks' very limited knowledge about the unique social and cultural context in Taiwan at that time. They point out that the special circumstances in Taiwan during the Japanese colonial period shaped a very different monastic culture that focused more on the austere lifestyle through hard physical labor as a way of self-discipline and moral training (Jiang 1996, 279–80).

Taiwan was forced to change according to the ideas of an orthodox Chinese Buddhism (ibid.).

During this period, the friction between the reformists, made up mostly of Taixu's disciples, and conservatives within the association was another problem. The situation directly and indirectly impacted the development of Chinese Buddhism in Taiwan in the post-war era. In the beginning years of the 1950s, the reformist camp was more influential with most of the Buddhist organizations in Taiwan (Jones 1999, 110). They created Buddhist reform programs, including many cleric educational programs, and encouraged the development of creative practices such as Buddhist song-related activities. Despite this optimistic development, their influence did not last long before the conservatives returned to power in the beginning of the 1960s. However, the 1950s was an important time in which Hsing Yun and other reform clerics began their work in Ilan and in other parts of Taiwan. While the government was watchful of potential subversive movements associated with civil and religious organizations in the past, reform Buddhist groups, to avoid suspicion, concentrated their efforts in social and cultural works, organized culture events, and built charity networks to serve the society.

HSING YUN (1927–), HIS EARLY YEARS

Hsing Yun, today the leader of the Fo Guang Shan Monastery in Taiwan, was originally a mainland Chinese monk born in Jiangdu, a minor city of Jiangsu province

in Eastern China. Though the city lacks cultural and political significance, it was never deprived of resources for those who sought distinction. Several important and culturally rich cities, including the historical Yangzhou, Nanjing, and Zhenjiang, were within manageable distance even during those periods when modern means of transportation were unavailable. Suzhou, Shanghai, and cities under foreign influence when Hsing Yun grew up were also comparatively near; they were only hours away by train.

Jiangsu has been a province of cultural and economic prominence for centuries. The rich Buddhist culture is marked by the number of temples built in different periods of Chinese history. They are among some of China's oldest temples, including Gaomin Temple of Yangzhou, a major temple of Chan Buddhism built during the Sui dynasty (581–619 CE); Qixia Temple in Nanjing, a major Buddhist center of national significance, first built during the South-North dynasties of China (A.D.420–589); and Dinghui Temple at Jiaoshan near Zhenjiang, built in the East Han dynasty some 1800 years ago. In the Republic era, some of these temples were also major progressive Buddhist institutions leading the development of Chinese Buddhism reform.

Hsing Yun's hometown Jiangdu was within the fertile Yangtze River system, one of the richest agricultural regions in all of China. Despite the prosperity enjoyed by the people in this area since ancient times, at the time Hsing Yun was born, civil wars, foreign capitalist exploitation, and imperialist invasions led to frequent hunger and deprivation. As Hsing Yun recalled in his later years, his early life prior to relocation in 1949 was a series of great hardships. War, food shortage, death, and

migration in great numbers were common experiences of the people and are vividly reflected in Hsing Yun's interviews in different publications (Hsing Yun 2010). In one of the interviews, he remembers his early childhood experiences as a war refugee. At the age of ten, he was forced to flee the Japanese invasion. Before he could return to his hometown, he had to travel for many days in harsh winter conditions without much food (*ibid.*). Against this backdrop, he developed an admiration for the Buddhist monks whom he had met during his childhood. They influenced his decision to join the Buddhist community and to become an apprentice in the Qixia Temple at the age of eleven (Huang 2009, 21).⁵

In addition to the strict training and austere lifestyle in the monastery, Hsing Yun was able to receive an education. His studies at Qixia Buddhist College (1938–1943), and Jiaoshan Buddhist College of Ding Hui Temple during his late teens and early twenties (1945–1947) proved to be important in shaping his future career as a reform monk. Jiaoshan, in particular, was a progressive Buddhist college directed by Taixu's disciples. As a supplement to the studies in Buddhist literature and practical training required for priesthood, Hsing Yun was introduced to the progressive thoughts of the May Fourth period of China during his two years at Jiaoshan Buddhist College. Cai Yuanpei, Lu Xun (1881–1936), Hu Shih, and Lao She (1899–1966) were among those important thinkers who impressed him with their ideas about education and the modernization of society (Hsing Yun n.d.a). As described by Hsing Yun's

⁵ According to Hsing Yun's own words, he joined Qixia at the age of twelve (cf. Hsing Yun n.d.a.). His calculation was most likely based on the Chinese concept of age, which includes the term of pregnancy as one additional year.

biographer and disciple, Huang Hedong, the progressive thoughts of these thinkers “brought him into touch with the impulse of the times” and “laid a foundation for his later creative writings in Buddhism” (2009, 24–27). Encouraged by his teachers in Jiaoshan, Hsing Yun developed a great interest in and talent for literature. He soon began to publish his literary works in magazines and newspapers in Shanghai and cities in Jiangsu. In promoting change in Chinese Buddhism, he included unconventional topics such as Buddhists’ participation in politics and management of temple economics (Hung 2009, 34–37; 105). It was in Jiaoshan where Hsing Yun first met Taixu and began to develop his own ideas of Buddhist reform. The following excerpt from Hsing Yun’s memoir provides some insight into his enthusiasm about the reform advocated by Taixu:

At that time, Master Taixu was deeply concerned with the future of Chinese Buddhism and attempted reforms in monastic institution, ideology, and the management of monastic property. Master Taixu’s passion and devotion to the teaching, as well as his courage in bearing the duty... made him a model admired by many young monks. Though I was only able to attend his lectures once or twice, my soul remained with him all the time. It often occurred to me that if there would be such a day when I was offered the opportunity to devote my life to the work he was leading, I would be very happy to sacrifice myself, with no reservations. (Hsing Yun 1999, 115–16)

After he left Jiaoshan, Hsing Yun worked as an elementary school teacher and independent writer for two years before his departure for Taiwan. When the struggle between the Nationalists and Communists neared a decisive end in early 1949 and the Nationalist government began its retreat to the south and Taiwan, Hsing Yun and his

friends organized a Buddhist nursing team, which they used to negotiate passage by ship to Taiwan from a Nationalist military officer in charge. However, the hastily arranged team quickly disbanded upon arrival in Taiwan (Hsing Yun 2010). Hsing Yun had no prearranged plan and did not know where to go. In contrast to the privileges enjoyed by the eminent Buddhist leaders who came and occupied important positions in the central Buddhist organization and major temples in Taipei, young monks like Hsing Yun, without general recognition and resources, had to struggle for survival. For a considerable length of time, he wandered from one temple to another across the island, seeking help from his fellow mainland monks who were luckier to have found sponsoring temples, but he achieved no success. In Hsing Yun's near desperation, Miaoguo of the prestigious Yuan Kuang Monastery (圓光寺) in Zhongli, a secondary city in northwest Taiwan, extended his help and kindly provided him accommodation. Miaoguo, a highly esteemed monk, was among the few eminent leaders native to Taiwan at that time. Hsing Yun swore to never forget the kindness of the older monk. With the help of Miaoguo, Hsing Yun was appointed lecturer in the Taiwan Buddhist Seminar (台灣佛教講習會) in Hsinchu after a little more than a year in Yuan Kuang.⁶ From there, he began to establish himself as a writer and dharma lecturer (法師) in Taiwan (Huang 2009, 46–59).⁷ According to Huang and

⁶ Hsingchu is about half an hour by train from Zhongli to the south. For the exact location of the two cities, please refer to the map of Taiwan in Figure 3.1.

⁷ According to Webster's New World Dictionary, *dharma*, originating from Hinduist and Buddhist philosophy, is a "cosmic order or law, including the natural and moral principles that apply to all things and beings." In the context concerning Chinese Buddhist religious or missionary activities, the word *fa* (dharma) is usually used in a combined form, such as *fa hui* (dharma meetings), *fa zuo* (dharma lectures), *hong fa* (spreading dharma) or *suo fa* (giving talks on dharma).

Hsing Yun, his reputedly persistent personality might have contributed to his misfortune during his early years within the Chinese Buddhist circle in Taiwan. In pursuing certain sensitive issues with his able pen, he was not popular among Chinese Buddhists (Hsing Yun n.d.a). This might have also resulted in his later dismissal from the Taiwan Buddhist Seminar (Huang 2009, 61). As a result, despite his initial reluctance to go to Ilan, Hsing Yun later found it to be an ideal place for his career, distanced as it was from the politics of Taipei.

THE WAY TO ILAN

*The silver river of stars appears on high
 The bright moon shines into my heart
 The surrounding wilderness is full of the noise of insects
 The hearts of the sentient beings are clouded
 Bless me, my Lord Buddha
 To the Dharma and to the well-being of the people
 I am happily devoting myself
 The honorable Purna
 Who encountered the vicious ones as he spread the Dharma
 Risked his life without reservation
 Hoping only for the widespread acceptance of the Dharma
 My Dharma friends, let's work together as vanguards
 Without fear of setbacks or fear of obstacles
 The aim is not personal happiness
 But rather success in spreading the holy teaching*

(Hsing Yun “The Song of the Dharma Propagators”)

“The Song of the Dharma Propagators” (弘法者之歌) (Hsing Yun 1956, 6) is said to have been conceived by Hsing Yun in the early 1950s during a routine dharma-spreading trip to the countryside in Ilan. Inspired by the starry night during the trip

home, he wrote the words, which were later set to music by Yang Yongpu, the director of Hsing Yun's music group in Ilan. Regardless of whether or not the story is true, the song has come to serve as a type of collective memory, remembering early members of Hsing Yun's Buddhist music group who joined in 1954.

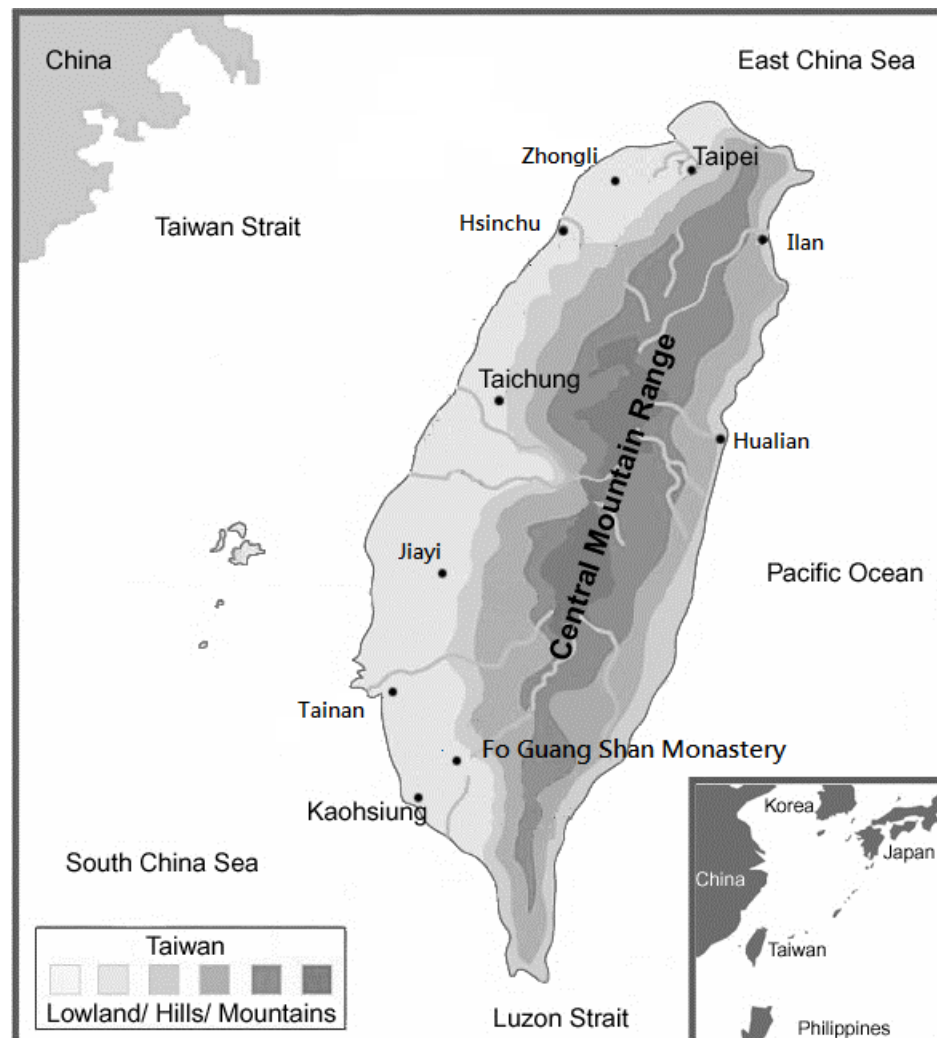


Figure 3.1: A map of Taiwan marked with important cities where Buddhist songs activities began to emerge in the 1950s.

In 1953, a search committee of sixteen Buddhist gentlemen from Ilan approached Hsing Yun and invited him to come to Ilan after failing to secure reputed

monks to preside in their temple (Lu n.d). Situated in northeast Taiwan, Ilan was separated by high mountains from the political and cultural center of Taipei. Despite the seemingly short direct distance between the capital city and Ilan, bus or trains which were not able to penetrate the high mountains would have to travel along the northeast coastline to access the area at that time. Ilan in the 1940s and 1950s was a county with a population of 200,000. Though the population was by no means small, it consisted of mostly farmers. Compared with cities along Taiwan's west coast, Ilan was less developed in many ways (Taipei shizhengfu n.d). Neglected by eminent monks in Taipei due to its inconvenient location and insufficient resources, Ilan was more or less a frontier for Chinese Buddhists. In the early 1950s, Lei Yin Temple (雷音寺) in Ilan was a local Buddhist center lacking support and leadership. Hsing Yun might have initially hesitated, but eventually he accepted the invitation.

In the early morning on January 1, 1953, New Year's Day, Hsing Yun took a four-hour-long bus trip from Taipei to Ilan and finally arrived in Lei Yin Temple around noon.⁸ He later gave a detailed description about what he saw that day upon his arrival:

This was the first time I walked into Lei Yin Temple and from that point I officially stepped onto the road to my future life of dharma spreading. Lei Yin Temple was a small temple sitting near the north city gate of Ilan. In the small main hall, more than a hundred Buddhist and Taoist statutes were enshrined. The wing buildings were occupied by families of military personnel [recently relocated from the

⁸ According to Hsing Yun, he was invited twice: once by Ma Teng in the summer of 1952 and once by Li Juehe near the end of that year. However, this trip did not take place until January of the following year (Hsing Yun 1994).

mainland]. On the day I arrived, preserved meats, fish, and women and children's clothes hung there in front of the Buddha's statue. Lei Yin Temple at a glance was discouraging, poorer than an impoverished household in China (Hsing Yun n.d.b.).

The temple was not only unappreciable in its appearance, but also inadequate in its facilities: he found that his guest room was furnished with nothing but an old bamboo bed. There was no sight of a desk; instead he used a broken sewing machine as a substitute for a work surface. Only a small light bulb allowed him some luxury to read and write at night (Hsing Yun n.d.b.). Hsing Yun found that the local Buddhist clerics were “poorly educated” and that Japanese Buddhist cultural influence was prominent. Though he was apparently disappointed by all of Ilan's insufficiencies after his first visit, he might also have noticed the opportunities the town could afford him. Ilan could be a whole new start for Hsing Yun after what he had been through during the initial years in Taiwan. The hospitality of the local Buddhists apparently impressed him. His previous training in the mainland—with all its years of hardship—was now starting to pay off through the admiration and appreciation of the local Buddhists in Ilan. With his comparatively rich knowledge of the Chinese Buddhist tradition, Hsing Yun appeared superior to the small Buddhist community. According to Lu Dafu, a witness to Hsing Yun's first arrival in 1953, the local Buddhists were strongly influenced by this young “out-of-province” (*waisheng*) monk from Taipei, with his “eloquent speech” and “outstanding appearance.” Hsing Yun's knowledge of Buddhism was considered “beyond comparison,” while his exemplary physique added extra charm (Lu n.d.). Despite his propitious start, however, Hsing Yun did not plan to

stay. After his three-week-long lecture series, he returned to Taipei, even though Taipei would not promise him anything in terms of a placement, either (Hsing Yun n.d.b).

Hsing Yun eventually came back after “repeated invitations” from Ilan and was determined to stay (Lu n.d). Upon his return, Hsing Yun had some plans for the local Buddhist Community. Though Ilan might have appeared to be an ideal place for him to realize some of his radical ideas with comparatively little opposition, his initial challenges were no less severe. The post-war period in Taiwan was marked with conflicts between ethnic groups and struggles of the people against the Nationalist government’s authoritarian ruling. When Hsing Yun began his work in 1953 in Ilan, the sociopolitical life of Taiwan reflected the disharmony between people of Taiwan and the relocated Chinese, most of whom were associated with the regime as military troops or government employees. In general, the people’s distrust of the mainlanders was intense and often turned into harassment, disrupting Hsing Yun’s work in various ways (Lu n.d). Compounding this, the White Terror and the government’s anti-Communist campaign affected everyone without exception. Social gatherings in particular were a problem; they could result in police intervention or even arrests under martial law. Loyalty to the government often had to be demonstrated in the 1950s by shouting slogans or propagandistic phrases totally irrelevant to the religious topics of the day in order for Buddhist lectures to safely begin. In addition, the Christian churches supported by the Nationalist regime competed vehemently with the

local religions for new converts, forcing Buddhists to change and adopt new strategies.⁹

Despite the various kinds of discouraging incidents that continued to rise out of his social and political circumstances, Hsing Yun was able to move on with the firm support of his followers. His first goal in Ilan was to “reintroduce” Chinese Buddhism to the local Buddhist community. As he had observed in his first visit, elements borrowed from Taoism and local beliefs were prominent in the local Buddhist practice. Hsing Yun, a guardian of Chinese Buddhist tradition, was determined to remove all these “impurities.” While he eagerly defended Chinese Buddhist teachings in their “pure form” from the influence of Taoism and local religions, he welcomed the influence of Christianity. In this action, he found no contradictions.

In 1956, a new Buddha recitation hall (念佛堂) was built under Hsing Yun’s supervision. Simultaneously imitating and competing with the West, the new hall disregarded centuries-old customs regarding building a structure of importance.¹⁰ Unlike the traditional Chinese Buddhist temple structure, which emphasizes balance and harmony as symbolized by the gently declining slope of a magnificent roof piece at the front, the hall defied this principle by borrowing opposing architectural ideas

⁹ Chiang Kai-shek, after marrying May Ling Soong, converted to Christianity. Despite his newly adopted religion, he was more a Chinese traditionalist in spirit and used Confucian doctrines practically to consolidate his regime, as in several of his political/cultural campaigns including the 1930s New Life movement in China and the 1960s Chinese Culture Renaissance Movement (中華文化復興運動) in Taiwan. Some historians believe that Chiang’s support for the Christianity was partly due to his dire need to win the support of the West in his losing struggle with the Communists during the critical years in the 1950s.

¹⁰ *Nianfo tang* (念佛堂), which normally forms an extension of a Buddhist temple, is intended to house the Buddhist practice of sutra recitation activities according to Chinese Pureland Buddhist practice.

from Christianity. Conforming instead to the style of Christian churches, Hsing Yun made the east side of the new hall (where the roof comes to a high point) the front, facing the main street (Zhongshan Road), instead of the south side (the auspicious side). In a nod to tradition, Hsing Yun affixed a swastika, a symbol of Buddhism, atop the high point of the building, where a cross would typically be located if it had been a Christian church building.¹¹

Inside the building, the statue of Amitabha was placed at the narrow (west) side of the rectangular building to symbolize the western Pureland where the Amitabha Buddha resides. According to the plan, the statue of Amitabha would gaze through the long narrow hallway the same way as the statue of Jesus on the cross would in a church. Moreover, the interior space of the Buddha Recitation Hall was a replica of a Christian church, equipped with the same type of benches (with a plank to the back of the bench for use as a desk) on either sides of a middle passage—certainly an uncommon arrangement in any traditional Buddhist temples (Venerable Yongdong, interview with author, Ilan, Taiwan, 20 May 2009).¹² Hsing Yun also attempted to “modernize” the organization of the lay community associated with Lei Yin Temple by dividing Ilan into administrative units. A leader was elected from each unit and made responsible for leading Buddhist activities in the leader’s respective area.

¹¹ A Buddhist swastika differs from Nazi’s similar sign in that the four arms of the Buddhist symbol point toward the left instead the right.

¹² In the 1960s, after the devastation of Typhoon Opal in 1962, a new and even larger temple structure, in the traditional Chinese Buddhist style, was erected on the site of the original main hall of the Lei Yin Temple, next to the Western-influenced recitation hall. In the mid 1990s, the 1960s temple structure, together with the recitation hall built in 1956, was torn down for the construction of a seventeen-story, modernist, multifunctional building. The construction was completed in 2001. The changing styles of the Lei Yin temple in its various reconstructions witnessed the mutative cultural perception of what was progressive or Buddhist during a period of dramatic social and cultural change in Taiwan.

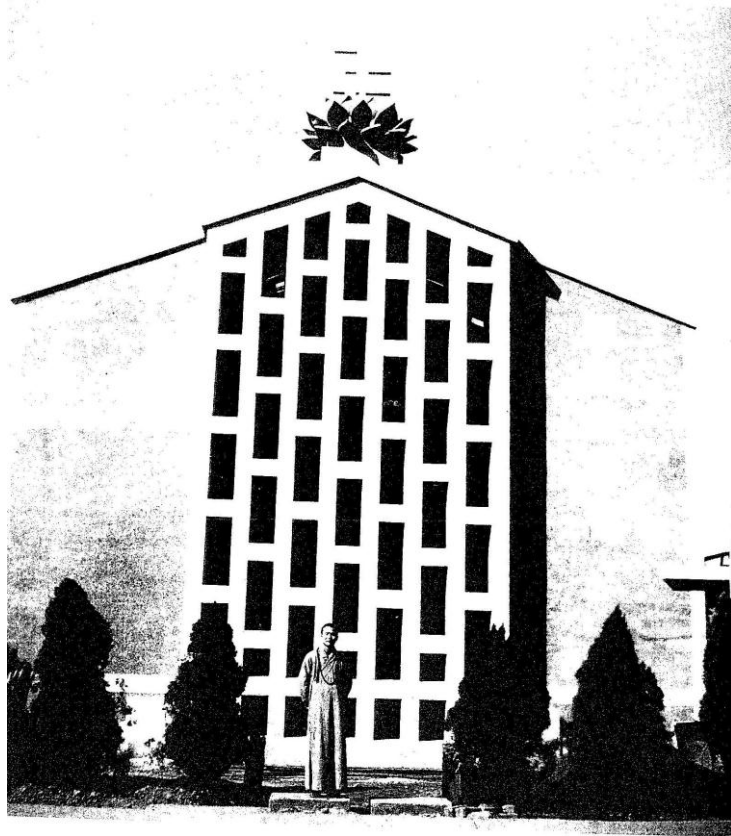


Figure 3.2: Hsing Yun standing in front of the newly built Buddha Recitation Hall of Ilan Buddha Recitation Society, Ilan, Taiwan. The modeling of the Buddha Recitation Hall on Christian churches is more than obvious from the angle of the shot. On the ridge of the roof, there was a swastika, symbol of Buddhism, in the traditional place of the cross of Christian churches. (Ju Chang 2003)

In a 1960 Buddhist magazine article titled “What Should Chinese Buddhism Do Immediately” and written under the pen name Mojia,¹³ Hsing Yun listed five goals for Buddhists to accomplish (Mojia 1960, 2). They must: (1) build a Buddhist

¹³ Hsing Yun used several pen names in his life. Among the most often used are Mojia (after the Buddha’s disciple *Mahakasapa*) and Jiaofu (porter) (cf. Xing Yun shi er wen, n.d.).

university; (2) organize a Buddhist basketball team; (3) establish a Buddhist radio station and newspaper; (4) organize a Buddhist film company; and (5) build a Buddhist hospital. Though some of the proposals may at first sound too absurd to be taken seriously, and might be easily dismissed as a young man's impractical fantasies, Hsing Yun did achieve most of them over the subsequent sixty years. The Fo Guang Shan Monastery today maintains two research universities in Taiwan, operates a television station, and owns a Buddhist newspaper and magazines. Hsing Yun, a basketball enthusiast, encourages his followers to join him in the sport. At affiliated high schools and colleges, monastery-sponsored student athletic activities are encouraged, with teams competing in national games. In this early article, we also see Hsing Yun's emphasis on cultural and educational work that later became one of the primary focuses of the monastery's social and cultural programs.

MUSIC IN THE TEMPLE: THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BUDDHIST (YOUTH)

CHOIR

*In the bitter sea [of desire], one catches no sight of the destination
 Living is like a sampan floating aimlessly in the middle of the ocean
 Wise ones, please think: Where may our life goals lie?
 We must not hesitate. We must not linger
 Hold firm your spiritual compass, Buddhism
 Then head toward the peace and assured comfort of the west pure land*

(Hsing Yun, "The West")

As part of his reform experiments in the 1950s, Hsing Yun and his group used the song “The West” (Hsing Yun 1954a) as an experimental substitute for the Buddhist ritual passage “The Transference of Merits” (回向偈), which regularly forms the closing segment of a Buddhist ritual. Deliberately contradicting the traditional way, Hsing Yun faced an opposition more serious in the 1950s than might now be imagined. He recalled, “They said Buddhism was finished. Now, people began to sing in the Temple ... Hsing Yun, the villain, must go or we will have no peace.” Hsing Yun received warnings and death threats for having introduced singing into the temple (Hsing Yun, Lecture to graduate students of Fo Guang University Taiwan, 20 September 2008, Ilan).¹⁴ As previously mentioned, the opposition against his music and other creative programs was also partly due to the rivalry between the traditionalists and reformers within the larger Chinese Buddhist community in Taiwan.

¹⁴ The lecture was delivered on a spontaneous occasion in which Master Hsing Yun referred to his early reform work in Ilan as an encouragement for his young followers from the newly established graduate program in Buddhist Studies in the Fo Guang University.



Figure 3.3: The Buddhist Choir of the Ilan Buddha Recitation Society in 1955–1956. Photo used by permission of Fo Guang Shan Monastery. Photo taken at Lanyang Branch Temple, Fo Guang Yuan Art Gallery, 5 November 2009, Ilan, Taiwan.

In addition to the creativity he added to ritual ceremonies, meditation retreats and other regular temple activities, Hsing Yun created lay activities for the promotion of Buddhism including music and writing programs, the latter of which was immediately successful. In the writing program, Hsing Yun, an experienced writer, personally provided instruction to participating students. As reported by my interviewees, Hsing Yun “patiently guided them in composing essays in Mandarin, correcting their works and showing them techniques for writing in a proper style” (Lin Xiumei, interview with author, Ilan, 4 October 2007). The unique political

circumstance of the time may have contributed to his success. Mandarin had been mandated by the ruling Nationalist government as the official language of the Republic of China. However, many Taiwanese were unfamiliar with the language at the time of Taiwan's retrocession due to the fifty years of Japanese rule. In order to compete for education and employment opportunities, young people who wished to learn the official language would have to acquire the necessary language skills.

Unlike the writing program, the music program depended largely on Hsing Yun's friends for technical support and assistance. Hsing Yun, not a musician himself, invited Yang Yongpu, a music teacher from a nearby high school, to join his work. The Buddhist Choir of Ilan Buddha Recitation Society (宜蘭念佛會佛教歌詠隊) was officially organized in 1954, but, according to the original participants, their activities might have begun as soon as Hsing Yun decided to stay and lead the community in 1953 (Lin Qing-zhi and others, interview with author, Ilan, October 4, 2007). The choir similarly attracted young participants who might not have been interested in Buddhism in a traditional sense. The younger generations, who received a new Western-influenced education, were often against Buddhist rituals that they considered superstitious. Instead, they found Hsing Yun's creative Buddhist programs in line with their experience of the modern world.

Zhang Youliang, a former member of the Buddhist choir, gave a detailed description of the choir's organization in a news article published in the Buddhist monthly *Puti Shu* (菩提樹) (Zhang 1954). Structured in six parts, this article details the creation and activities of the music program. According to the document, the

Buddhist Choir was “created right before the Buddha’s birthday [in April 1954], to form a division within the home organization, the Ilan Buddha Recitation Society.” Further, it states that the purpose of organizing such a group was to “attract young people to Buddhism,” unequivocally expressing the common faith in youth and its potential for introducing future change. The group did appeal to “the educated youths across the town as well as outstanding students from various schools.”

According to the article, the participants were apparently from a variety of religious backgrounds. There were “lotus friends” who had already been participating in the Buddha-recitation activities, but there were also new members who had no previous experience in Buddhism. Zhang comments that their participation not only “introduces renewed vitality to the Buddha recitation society,” but also helps “push forward the wheel of Buddhism and revive the original spirit of Buddhism.”

Also detailed in the article is the group’s leadership, which included “a captain, deputy captain, two section leaders in the men’s section, and two section leaders in the women’s section.” Their master Hsing Yun “has been most supportive ... and has been involved in planning the activities.” And “Mr. Yang Yongpu is ... [the] honorary captain, teacher and coach for rehearsals.” In a few months, the members quickly increased in number and reached a total of eighty or more. Their musical activities took many forms. “When the Buddha’s or bodhisattva’s birthdays or dates for scheduled dharma lectures approach, members would hop onto a truck with loudspeakers and ride down the streets to bring the news to people.” During the evening show for the celebration of the Buddha’s birthday in 1954, they, “for the first

time, introduced Buddhism to the people” with their singing. In order to include new songs in their performances, Hsing Yun (as lyricist) and Yang Yongpu collaborated to create a repertoire. Conveying the belief shared by the participants in music as a powerful Buddhist reform medium, the article argues that music helps “introduce Buddhism to the people of the new era” and “create opportunities for young people to join the world of Buddhism.” Concluding with hopes that their music may succeed in assisting future Buddhist missionary work, it says, in an exaggerated language typically found in Buddhist sutra, “with great Buddhist songs of highest artistic values, may the singing voices of Buddhists be heard in the three thousand realms and the teaching brought to nations numbering in the thousand billions.” They earnestly hope that “friends of music with their devoted hearts will join together and lead the new music movement of Buddhism” (Zhang 1954).

EARLY MUSICAL ACTIVITIES: SOME EXAMPLES

Over the last few years, I interviewed several of the original members who participated in the earliest Buddhist song activities in Ilan in the 1950s. Ranging in age from seventy-five to early eighties today, the members are retired public school teachers, professors, and housewives. While some remain laity, others chose to join Hsing Yun’s Fo Guang Shan monastic group as clerics. Laity and clerics alike, they remain in close connection with the community and help Hsing Yun, developing his Buddhist cultural and educational programs. Among my interviewees, Lin Qingzhi,

Lin Xiumei (Lin's wife), Zhang Zhao and Zhang Cilian generously shared with me what they remembered about the choir's activities in the 1950s and provided research data regarding the repertoire they used. From them, I learned of their thoughts about the musical work in which they participated and their commitment to such a group. Venerable Tzu Hui, who was also an ex-member of the early music group but later became the director of Fo Guang Shan Foundation for Buddhist Culture and Education, kindly offered me her understanding of their accomplishment (members of the Buddhist Choir, interviews with author, Tainan, Taiwan, 7–10 September 2007; Lin Qingzhi and Lin Xiumei, interviews with author, Ilan, 4 October 2007; Tzu Hui, telephone conversation with author, 26 June 2009; Zhang Cilian, telephone conversation with author, 20 April 2010).

Members of the choir had diverse backgrounds and joined the choir for different reasons. Many of them, like Lin Qingzhi, were previously non-Buddhists and may have considered Buddhism superstitious. Lin recalled how he decided to participate in the choir after he listened to a speech Hsing Yun delivered at his school, the Ilan (Men's) High School.

It was near the end of 1955 when the Master was invited to give a talk at my school. During his talk, he mentioned nothing about Buddhism or anything about the afterlife, but encouraged us to move forward to create a positive life for ourselves and devote ourselves to works that may help transform society. He impressed me deeply. By the end of his speech, he invited us all to visit him at Lei Yin Temple. After school that day, I went home and talked about the Master with my sister. We decided to visit the temple the coming Thursday. This was how I joined the Buddhist group. Since then, I have been connected to

the community for the past fifty or so years. (interview with author, Ilan, 4 October 2007)

Other members made similar reports during interviews, showing their faith in the religion and their strong attachment to their master Hsing Yun. They unanimously identified him as having some desirable merits generally matching Buddhist core values, such as “creativity” (智慧), “compassion” (慈悲) and the “solemn elegance” (莊嚴) a Buddhist master should possess.

In one of the interviews, members of the choir fondly remembered the sessions they used to have. They remembered how excited they were the first day they joined the choir, when their teacher Yang Yongpu gave them each a placement examination, helping them determine their vocal ranges and which parts they should take up in the choir. Regular rehearsals, which were scheduled on Thursday nights, were the time for them to join and have fun. Additional rehearsals were expected when there were upcoming events. According to the choir members’ memory, on the Thursday evenings when the rehearsals took place, their master Hsing Yun joined in person to set up the classroom for their use, moving around desks and chairs. During the rehearsals, Mr. Yang, the music instructor, coached them to sing new pieces, showing them how to use their voices properly. A harmonium was the only musical instrument they had at that time. When Mr. Yang was conducting the choir, Zhang Youli (later Venerable Tzu Hui) would be on the harmonium accompanying their singing. Zhang was the only person other than Yang who was able to play the instrument. Because most of them had no musical background (though their enthusiasm for music was

never lacking), each rehearsal would contain a review of songs they learned in previous sessions in addition to an introduction to new songs.

During the 1950s, the choir's performances usually functioned as part of Hsing Yun's dharma propagations. During the activities, its main goals were to help warm up the audience before Hsing Yun's lecture began or to sing to conclude the event. But there were also Buddhist events in which the choir played a major role. Those events were often connected to celebratory activities on Buddhist holidays. The choir also toured to cities around the island to give performances, and it was as common for them to perform friendship concerts in the military units and to sing at orphanages and nursing homes. These performances might be considered by the members to be a demonstration of the reform Buddhist ideals of serving the people and building connections with the community. Aside from regular town halls, performance sites tended to be informal. The choir might sing at the corner of a town square where it stopped to distribute fliers or to give short speeches. During the performance, the choir would also encourage audiences to sing along and learn the song of the day.

The choir did not lack musical talent. Two members, Zhang Youli and Zhang Cilian, once aspired to be professional pop singers. Zhang Youli, the accompanist of the choir, had rare early musical training, while Zhang Cilian, a soprano with a fine voice, was often a soloist in their performances. But Hsing Yun discouraged their aspirations to become pop musicians. They say that their master was concerned about the bad influences of the popular music industry (Tzu Hui, telephone conversation with author, 26 June 2009; Zhang Cilian, telephone conversation with author, 20 April

2010). Though they were not able to realize their dreams of becoming professional singers, they did not lack opportunities to showcase their voices in the temple's congregational activities and in concerts in their tours to cities around the island.



Figure 3.4: Choir members singing in a Buddhist conference featuring lectures and songs, an event held possibly in 1956.¹⁵ The song of the day, according to the enlarged music score partially visible at the right side of the stage in the picture, was “A Buddhist Song” (in four parts) by Huang Zi (1904–1938) (1930, 8–9), the renowned Chinese “new music” composer of the early Republic. Photo taken at Fo Guang Shan Lineage Archives (佛光山宗史館), 12 March 2010, Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

¹⁵ The date of the performance was determined based on the explanatory note accompanying this photo exhibited in Fo Guang Shan Lineage Archives gallery. However, the information contained in these notes is highly unreliable due to poor scholarship, which is evidenced by the numerous errors including obvious conflicting dates provided in many of the notes.

A news article from *Puti Shu* documented one of their trips in 1955. The author of this article, Zhang Youliang, was a member of the Buddhist Choir in Ilan. She was also the author of several other essays published in various Buddhist newspapers and magazines. Most of Zhang's published works are about a variety of the group's activities in the 1950s and 1960s. To my knowledge, these articles by Zhang, as well as those by other young participants from Hsing Yun's group, could have been their homework for Hsing Yun's writing program. The publication of their works might have been encouraged by Hsing Yun, so as to not only help improve their writing skills, but also to make their activities known within the Buddhist circles in Taiwan and therefore to increase the visibility of the group.

The dharma-promotion event occurred on Sunday, February 13, to form part of a four-day event in Ilan in honor of visiting journalists and clerics. After three days of activities, the event culminated on the fourth day with a festival including music performances, theater, and a public lecture in Luodong, Ilan County:

The next morning on Sunday, we lined up to pay our tribute to the statue of the Buddha and to honor the Buddha in prostrations. We also sang praises. In this solemn moment, we closed our eyes, with palms joined. In silence, we sincerely spoke to the Buddha with words from the depths of our hearts, hoping that the Buddha would mercifully add luck to our dharma work today, allowing us to spread the truth of the Buddha. In this devotional moment, my tears were lingering in my eyes.

At nine o'clock, our "Truck of Truth" came to pick up all the participating friends and we were on our way. In addition to the ribbon-garnished posters and the equipment [necessary for the dharma work], there were two loudspeakers, with which we would play songs and records of dharma speeches to the townspeople. When we arrived in the main streets of towns, we would first stop to give a talk, while

dharma brothers would jump off the truck to pass out fliers. On the fliers were printed Buddhist songs and paragraphs with guides to popular Buddhist magazines, cultivation centers and radio stations available to the people in the area. Also included were some short speeches by eminent Buddhists. We were warmly received with waving hands and firecrackers.

We drove through a place where local farmers were crouching in the paddy field cultivating the land. The team leader, Lin Juezun, seized the opportunity to pass the Buddha's message to the farmers, bringing them the sound of salvation. "My dear uncles! What hard work to cultivate the field! Please come and join us in the Buddhist truth. Today, I want to introduce you to the merciful kindness of the Buddha, who will bring you a bright future and happy life and allow you to leave behind all your sufferings. Please chant the name of Bodhisattva Guanyin with us!" We were all excited and waved to them. On their faces, there showed weariness as well as signs of hope. It seemed that their bottled-up stress was now released. In their eyes, I saw a positive response to our Buddhism. There was a sign of the bright future of Buddhism. Let our Buddhism live a thousand years, let it live a hundred million years!

.....

We drove to Xindian, Sijie, Jiaoxi, and Toucheng. In Toucheng, the followers hoped that we would be able to stay for two hours and talk about the teachings with them. But we did not have time to stay longer. After a short speech on the main points of Buddhist teaching, we moved on according to the schedule and reached Dongshan, Su'ao, and Nanfang'ao. They were the southernmost towns in Ilan County. Nanfang'ao is well known for its fishing business. Venerable Zhuyun spoke to the followers and encouraged them to practice reciting the name chant "Namo Guanshiyin Pusa" (The Respectable Bodhisattva Guanshiyin) in order to receive the merciful protection from the bodhisattva when they were out to work on the sea. During that hour, people gathered around the truck, wishing to learn more about the teaching and to learn about the seven-tone Buddha name chant (七音佛的聖號).¹⁶ Impressed by their earnestness, I was carried away with my thoughts into the boundlessness of the future.

That evening, we returned to Luodong. At the spacious city plaza, we gave a dharma talk, performed solo songs and choral songs, told Buddhist stories in colorful pictures, and presented a slide show.

¹⁶ The so-called seven-tone name chant is a way of chanting Buddha or bodhisattva's name using a melody consisting of seven motivically related musical phrases sung in a specific order to form one recitation cycle. The cycle can be repeated indefinitely.

In the audience of some seven or eight hundred people, a boy was overexcited and suddenly screamed. The noise surprised the attentive audience. The poor child got a slap on his face from an angry spectator who admonished him to keep quiet. The boy was startled, but obeyed with wide-open eyes.

The enthusiastic audience packed the square. The sight touched me and made me sigh, not out of sadness, but out of excitement. The night had fallen deeper and deeper. It was half past ten in the evening. The lively city was quickly quieting down.

The Truck of Truth that brought good news to the people picked up the joyful team members and headed home. On the truck, we chanted the holy name of Bodhisattva Guanyin in the seven-tone style. The beautiful rhythms traveled through the silent night and reached the ears of sleeping children, bringing them the seeds of *bodhi* (enlightenment). That would help cleanse their souls contaminated by the material world, and rid them of all the pretentiousness, hunger for fame, and selfishness. The sound would help them move toward the dawn [of Truth].

At eleven o'clock in the evening, the truck arrived back at the front door of the Buddha Recitation Society. Looking at the faces of our participating lotus friends, I found no trace of pain or fatigue. Instead, there was doubled joy. Layman Zhu Fei was also excited. He smiled and said, "It might have rained today, but I, a bodhi tree, kept away the scorching sun and spring storms for you." I teased, "No wonder there has been freezing cold wind rather than cooling breezes under the bodhi tree!" The joy after the dharma-promotion trip was beyond description in words. It must be experienced. The day passed with great achievement full of meaning and joy. (Zhang Youliang 1955)

Although Zhang's essay contains exaggerations and emotion-laden words, it provides some insights into the choir's actual work in the 1950s, the goals of its activities, and forms the activities took.

The following examples describe two other major types of their musical activities: Buddhist song performances through radio broadcasts and production of records. Radio broadcasts had been popular with reform Buddhists since the 1930s in Shanghai. Hsing Yun was also keen on the use of broadcast media.



Figure 3.5: A picture of Master Hsing Yun (middle) and the team members of The Buddhist Choir standing in front of the “Truck of Truth” before setting off for the Dharma propagation. Photo taken at Lanyang Branch Temple, Fo Guang Yuan Art Gallery, 5 Novemeber 2009, Ilan, Taiwan.

One of the choir’s radio performances near the end of 1954, as described by choir member Lin Juezun, helps introduce their activities of this type (Lin 1954, 26). The performance was sponsored by The Chinese Buddhist Association in Taipei. At that time, the Buddhist central agency was directed by Venerable Dongchu, a disciple of Taixu. Sixteen choir members were selected from the Buddhist Choir to sing on this special occasion. The chosen members had “fully devoted themselves to hard work, rehearsing for the past half a month under the leadership of Mr. Yang Yongpu” (Lin 1954, 26). The recording took place at the Chinese Broadcasting System (中國廣播公司) in Taipei on October 17, 1954. Several songs, including songs for solo voice

and songs with multiple parts, were recorded in a three-hour session that afternoon. Lin described the event as the “New Buddhist Movement” (新佛化運動), supported by eminent monks Nanting and Dongchu, who came to encourage them during their recording session.



Figure 3.6: The Buddhist Choir of Ilan Buddha Recitation Society, a picture taken after the recording session on October 17, 1954. The caption clearly indicates that the event was “To remember the Buddhist Music Broadcasts Performed by The Buddhist Choir of Ilan Buddha Recitation Society, October 19, Year 43 of Republic Era [1954], Taipei.” Third from right in the middle row (sitting) is Yang Yongpu and the fourth is Hsing Yun. Photo taken at Fo Guang Shan Lineage Archives, 12 March 2010, Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

The choir members also took part in the production of a set of five pioneering Buddhist records in 1961.¹⁷ Like the 1954 radio performance, this event was similarly sponsored by the Chinese Buddhist Association. Madam Sun Zhang Qingyang (wife of General Sun Li-jen), who had been a devoted Buddhist since her earlier years in Shanghai, recorded a track with the choir.¹⁸ The recordings included both traditional ritual chants as well as Buddhist songs. A total of twenty-two pieces of ritual chants, selected from popular Buddhist ritual and ceremonial repertory, were included in the first four records, with the fifth record devoted to nine Buddhist songs. The nine songs recorded include: “The West” (西方) (Yang 1954b, 7) and “The Prayer” (祈求) (Yang 1956a, 34) composed by Yang Yongpu; “Year, Month, Day, Hour” (年月日時) (Wu 1983a, 24) by Wu Chu-che; “Song of the Triple Gem” (三寶歌) by the revered Buddhist reform Master Taixu and Hongyi in 1930; “A Buddhist Song” (佛曲) (Huang 1930, 8–9) by the 1930s Chinese composer Huang Zi;¹⁹ and “The Inspiration of Bodhisattva Guanyin” (觀音靈感歌) (Ilan nian fo hui 1956a, 52), a song based on the popular tune “Suwu Herding his Sheep in the North Sea” (蘇武牧羊).²⁰ The other

¹⁷ The dating of the production is disputable and needs to be further confirmed with more evidence.

¹⁸ Sun Li-jen (1900-1990) was among the Chinese military leaders of the early Republic Era who were educated in the West. Sun, a graduate of the Virginia Military Institute, became an influential figure in early twentieth century Chinese history after defeating Japanese troops in Myanmar in the Second World War. Sun’s position was suspended not long after the start of the Korean War in 1950, and he was house-arrested in 1955 as a result of political struggles within the Chinese Nationalist Party (cf. Chen 1996, 233).

¹⁹ The melody of “A Buddhist Song” was originally from the Buddhist-related tune “Mulian Saving His Mother from the Hell” (目蓮救母), which was popular in the 1920s and 30s. The four-part art song version for men’s voice was arranged by Huang Zi and published in *Yue Yi* (The Musical Art) in 1930. (Qian 1994, 31).

²⁰ According to the research of Qian Renkang, the music of “Suwu Herding his Sheep in the North Sea” (蘇武牧羊) was originally composed by Tian Xihou in the 1914 (cf. Qian Renkang, 2001, 52–53).

three songs were “Buddhist Gatha I” (佛偈第一首), “Buddhist Gatha II” (佛偈第二首), and “Buddhist Gatha III” (佛偈第三首), the origins of which are unknown.

One set of the five records survived and has been preserved in Fo Guang Shan Lineage Archives (佛光山宗史館).²¹ It is not possible to listen to the records because of the overtly protective measures taken by the Archives in an effort to avoid any possible damages. But the notes printed on the records, though providing only a minimum of information, disclose the types of music and their performance styles. These songs derived from different origins in a variety of styles may inform us of not only the current development of Buddhist songs but also the historical context of and influences on that development. Standing as the first song of the record, “Song of Triple Gems” symbolizes the continued effort of Buddhist reform in Taiwan. “The Inspiration of Bodhisattva Guanyin” follows the school song practice of setting a popular tune to sutra-inspired text, indicating the unfading influence of school songs on Buddhist songs. The inclusion of “The Buddhist Song” by Huang Zi, a multi-part song with a complex texture, demonstrates the capability of the group in dealing with challenging choral singing techniques.

²¹ Though the set preserved by Fo Guang Shan Lineage Archives consists of five records, other sources, including Fo Guang Shan’s official publications *Cloud and Water* (雲水三千) (Ju Chang 2003) and *Eighty Years of Star and Cloud* (星雲八十) (Wang 2006), indicate that there may have been six records in total in its original publication.

REPERTOIRES OF THE 1950s AND EARLY 1960s

“Songbook ready for order”

The Buddhist Choir of Ilan Buddha Recitation Society is printing its own songbook. There are sixty pages in each copy for a price of two dollars. For dharma-promotion groups, only one dollar is required for postage.

(Puti Shu 1954)

In the October 1954 issue of *Puti Shu*, there was an insert with instructions as to how the public could obtain mimeographed copies of the Buddhist songbook *The Buddhist Holy Songs*, compiled by The Buddhist Choir of Ilan Buddha Recitation Society. *The Buddhist Holy Songs* of 1954 was the first Buddhist songbook published by this group, and, based on the evidence I collected, also the first Buddhist songbook published in Taiwan in the post-war era. Regrettably, other than the information provided in the short note and some additional information derived from interviews with early participants of this music group, very little is known about this publication today, since the original copies were lost. Fortunately, *Puti Shu*, the Buddhist popular magazine, published a number of new songs composed by Yang Yongpu and other Buddhist musicians between 1954 and 1955. These songs, according to the subtitles of the published scores, were included in the 1954 *Buddhist Holy Songs*. “The West” (Yang 1954a, 7), “The Sound of the Bells” (鐘聲) (Yang 1954b, 19), and “The Buddhist Wedding Song” (佛化婚禮祝歌) (Yang 1954c, 27), were collaborations by Yang Yongpu and Hsing Yun (as lyricist). “Bodhi Tree” (菩提樹) (Hsing Yun 1954d, 2) borrowed its tune from the Western classical repertoire and was set to new lyrics by

Hsing Yun. “No Fear” (無畏) (Yang 1955, 7) was composed by Yang Yongpu and Xinwu (心悟), a monastic friend of Hsing Yun from Fujian, China. In addition to the aforementioned songs, there are a few other songs appearing in the early issues of *Puti Shu* by musicians associated with Li Bingnan’s music group in Taichung, central Taiwan.²²

These songs give us some insight into the earliest repertoire available for the singers in the 1950s. Like Buddhist songs in the previous period in the mainland, they similarly follow the school song style with typical “school-song” melodies characterized by a sense of simplicity and positivism, evidencing a combination of influences derived from Western repertoire and movement songs. Two examples may help illustrate the common characteristics of songs included in this repertoire. The first example, “The Buddhist Wedding Song,” is a Buddhist song with new lyrics (by Hsing Yun) and a new tune (by Yong Yongpu). As marriage is traditionally not a Buddhist idea, due to its perpetuating human suffering through the cycle of rebirth by uniting a man and a woman, it rather demonstrates Hsing Yun’s desire to draw on Christian practices to effect change in Buddhism. It was set to music by Yang Yongpu in a three-part song with the march-like rhythm of a propagandistic song.

²² Layman Li Bingnan (1889–1986), a native of Shandong, China, was one of the most important Buddhist leaders in the post-war era in Taiwan. In his early years, Li was immensely influenced by Master Yinguang, and closely worked with Taixu in Sichuan in the 1940s for several years (Shi Guoqing 2010, 278–80). Taichung Buddhist Lotus Society (台中佛教蓮社), which he organized in the 1950s, is among the largest Buddhist organizations in Taiwan.

27 樹 提 菩

歡欣地，中速 G 調 $\frac{4}{4}$ 佛化婚禮祝歌 星雲法師作詞 楊詠譜先生曲

mf

5̣. 5̣ 1 3 5 — | 6 5 5 3 — | 5̣. 5̣ 2 3 4 — | 5 4 3 2 — |

今 日 何 日 何 日 今 日 何 日 今 日 何 日 今 日 何 日 今 日 何 日 今 日 何 日 今 日 何 日

今 日 何 日 今 日 何 日 今 日 何 日 今 日 何 日 今 日 何 日 今 日 何 日 今 日 何 日 今 日 何 日

1-1 4 4.4 6 | 5 5 6 5 4 | 3 2 2 1 — | 2.2 1.2 3 3 3 |

有 情 人 人 成 眷 屬 佛 化 的 婚 姻 幸 福 無 比 他 像 須 達 美 公 子，

有 情 人 人 成 眷 屬 佛 化 的 婚 姻 幸 福 無 比 他 像 須 達 美 公 子，

3.3 3.2 3.4 5 | 5.5 # 4 5 6 6 6 | 2.2 5 5 6 . 6 | 5 — 5.5 1 1 |

仁 德 持 家 把 業 立； 她 像 玉 耶 賢 少 女， 孝 親 愛 夫 合 家 喜。 是 前 生 的

為 國 為 民 謀 福 利； 她 像 玉 耶 賢 少 女， 孝 親 愛 夫 合 家 喜。 是 前 生 的

7 1 2 5 5 3 2 | 1 2 3 6 6 | 5 6 7 1 1 | 2.2 1.2 3.4 3.2 |

因 緣 是 修 來 的 福 氣。 我 們 為 他 倆 祝 禱： 永 遠 承 受 佛 光 的

照 三 奉 花 卉 福 氣。 我 們 為 他 倆 祝 禱： 永 遠 承 受 佛 光 的

5 5 3 6 | *Rit* 5 4 3 . 2 | 1 — . 0 |

護 庇， 百 年 壽 諧 老 福 壽 齊！

護 庇， 百 年 壽 諧 老 福 壽 齊！

——宜蘭念佛會佛教歌詠隊歌集之四——

Figure 3.7: “The Buddhist Wedding Song” (Hsing Yun 1954b, 27) as it appeared in *Puti Shu* 24 (November 1954). The caption at the bottom of the page reads “Song 4 from the Buddhist Songbook of The Buddhist Choir of Ilan Buddha Recitation Society,” thus indicating the inclusion of this song (as well as other songs by Yang Yongpu and Hsing Yun published in *Puti Shu* between 1954 and 1955) in the earliest 1954 edition of *The Buddhist Holy Songs*.

A second example, “The Bodhi Tree,”²³ follows a typical school song compositional procedure, borrowing its music from Franz Schubert’s “Der Lindenbaum.”²⁴ In actuality, it was not Hsing Yun but Shanghai Buddhists in the 1940s who first used the Schubert song as a Buddhist song and included it in the 1950 *Sounds of Ocean Waves*.

²³ A *bodhi tree* is a tree of enlightenment.

²⁴ “Der Lindenbaum” is from Schubert’s song cycle *Winterreise*.

Such a fact may imply the possible influence of the earlier period of development in Shanghai on the later development in Taiwan. However, there is a minor difference between the two versions of “Bodhi Tree.” Rather than setting new lyrics to the melody, the early Shanghai version translated the song’s original German lyrics.

[illegible]

Figure 3.8: “The Bodhi Tree” (Hsing Yun 1954c, 2) as it appeared in *Puti Shu* 20 (July 1954). It was the first song published in *Puti Shu* monthly by The Buddhist Choir in Ilan in 1954.

The 1956 edition of *The Buddhist Songs* published by Hsing Yun's group contains fifty-six Buddhist songs.²⁵ In addition to songs borrowed from the earlier Shanghai repertoires, there are songs by contributors from other Buddhist groups developing in parallel in Taiwan at that time. Venerable Xinran (心然), Venerable Xinwu (心悟), Laymen Mengmei (夢梅) and Layman Li Bingnan (李炳南) are among the most common names found in this songbook. All of these individuals shared similar backgrounds. They were without exception relocated Chinese Buddhists and were once close friends of Hsing Yun. It is apparent that the Buddhist musical development of the 1950s in Taiwan was a collaboration among groups led by relocated mainland Buddhists in different cities across Taiwan rather than one accomplished by Hsing Yun's group alone, even though these Buddhist groups might not be equally important as Hsing Yun's group in terms of their total musical output. The different Buddhist groups these individuals belonged to likely shared with each other resources necessary for the development of their own musical activities.

²⁵ Despite the fact that the table of contents of the 1956 songbook shows a list of 57 Buddhist songs and 11 ritual passages, there are, in fact, only 56 songs in total, with the song "Buddhist Youth" (佛教青年) mistakenly printed twice.



Figure 3.9: *The Buddhist Holy Songs* (Ilannian fo hui 1956), published in 1956 by Ilan Buddha Recitation Society, was among the earliest Buddhist songbooks published in Taiwan.

In 1960 a newer version of the *Buddhist Holy Songs* was released. It is an improvement upon the 1956 edition in terms of the number of total collected songs.²⁶ There was an increase of newly composed songs, while even more songs from the Shanghai period were included. In these songs, themes similar to those found in the repertoire created by Shanghai Buddhists are also found frequently, demonstrating

²⁶ According to the back matter of the 1960 edition, there could be an earlier print of the 1960 edition. The copyright notice of the 1960 edition (included in its back matter) tells us that the 1960 edition was a revised and enlarged edition. However, whether it was revised and enlarged upon the 1956 edition or another newer publication between 1956 and 1960 is so far unknown.

continued sociopolitical influences. For example, “Be Mobilized to Disperse Superstitions” (佛教驅邪總動員) (1960, 75–76), a new song included in this songbook, could be considered similar to “Dispersing Superstition,” published by Shanghai Buddhists in 1953. Compared with songs from the Shanghai period, songs from the 1960 publication indicated a further adoption of Western compositional techniques, in consideration of the sophisticated treatment of phrases and tonality and the complexity of the overall musical structure, as exemplified in songs by Yang Yongpu and other musicians of this period. While songs from Shanghai period as represented by those included in *Sounds of Ocean Waves* were unanimously single-voiced, attempts to create multi-voiced songs were apparent, as revealed by songs from this later songbook. “Be Mobilized to Disperse Superstitions,” by Cai Jikun (蔡繼琨),²⁷ demonstrates refined voice-leading techniques in a highly contrapuntal style. To complement Hsing Yun’s original lyrics, Cai imaginatively integrated the Amitbha Buddha name chant “A-Mi-Tuo-Fo” into the texture of the three-voiced song.

NEW DEVELOPMENT IN THE MID 1960S ONWARD

There was a period of ten years between the mid 1960s and mid 1970s in which no new editions of *The Buddhist Songs* were released. This was due to the new growth of Hsing Yun’s Buddhist work in Southern Taiwan, which occupied most of

²⁷ Cai Jikun was once the director of the Taiwan Provincial Garrison Forces Philharmonic Orchestra (台灣省警備總司令部交響樂團, later the National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra).

his attention. Beginning in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Hsing Yun regularly visited Kaohsiung for new engagements. There, he was made the principal manager (監寺) of Kaohsiung Buddhist Hall (高雄佛教堂) when the new hall was completed in 1957.

As his influence in Kaohsiung grew and the community he led expanded, Hsing Yun and his followers began the construction of yet another temple, Shoushan Temple (壽山寺), which, completed in 1964, subsequently became the new base for his work in Southern Taiwan (Ju Chang 2003, 624–25). In the following years, he created a number of affiliated monastic and social service organizations. Among the new establishments, Shoushan Buddhist College (壽山佛學院), the affiliated monastic training institution of Shoushan Temple, proved to be important for Hsing Yun, who served as its director. He brought several revolutionary ideas to the new establishment, at which he envisioned his cleric training programs to be similar to those of modern institutions of higher education. The program allowed students to choose their own emphases according to their individual strengths. As the number of adherents grew and many of the graduates from the clerical school became supporters of Hsing Yun and his work, construction of the Fo Guang Shan Monastery began. Fo Guang Shan, which would become the new headquarters of Hsing Yun's monastic community across several continents for the next forty or so years, became operational in 1967.

When Hsing Yun traveled regularly to Kaohsiung, where new projects required more and more of his attention, activities in Ilan were left in the hands of community leaders. Without his leadership, the pace of the creation of new Buddhist

works slowed. Some of his experiments in Ilan were abandoned and the congregation in Ilan relapsed to its original practices. A particular case was the use of the Buddhist song “The West” in a regular daily ritual. After Hsing Yun left for Kaohsiung permanently in the early 1960s, its practitioners discarded this new practice. The Buddhist Choir basically ceased to operate on a regular basis after 1962, despite the community elders’ continuing efforts.²⁸ However, we must also note that this change may have some relation with the change of politics within the Chinese Buddhist Association in Taipei. At this time, the conservatives resumed their leadership in this central organization. It was not until the newly built Fo Guang Shan Monastery began to operate in 1967 that the Buddhist music of Hsing Yun’s group was revived. When Hsing Yun was able to organize his own Buddhist community, the influence of which continuously grew, his group basically was able to assume independence from the control of the central organization. At this time, more independent Buddhist groups like Fo Guang Shan, including Tzu Chi Foundation (慈濟功德會) in Hualian, Yuanzhao Temple (圓照寺) in Kaohsiung, and other smaller emerging groups, began to assume different voices in asserting their forms of reform Buddhism as allowed by the their ever-expanding communities and the changing economic and cultural

²⁸ Hsing Yun’s early music program in Ilan came to an end in 1962 after the devastating Typhoon Opal destroyed the main structure of Lei Yin Temple in early August that year. The natural disaster was not the sole reason for the cessation of the new practice, but was the last that finally put an end to it. (Zhang Cilian, telephone conversation with author, Ilan, 20 April 2010).

environment.²⁹ Buddhist music in this period began to take new forms, combining new elements to meet the changing taste of the general public.

The last edition of *The Buddhist Songs* was released in 1977, ten years after the Fo Guang Shan Monastery began to operate and quickly expand. The number of songs dramatically increased in the 1977 edition to a total of 169. The 1960s and 1970s witnessed the beginning of dramatic social and cultural change in Taiwan. In order to counteract the Cultural Revolution on the mainland, the Nationalist government in Taiwan sponsored the Chinese Culture Renaissance Movement (中華文化復興運動). The latter was meant to promote Chinese high culture through hosting cultural events and directing appropriate educational programs across the island. The movement, in consideration of its social and political goals, could be seen as a continuation of the New Life movement in the mainland beginning in 1934. Buddhism, considered a form of Chinese high culture, received special attention from the government. During this period, Buddhist cultural events such as those of Fo Guang Shan not only gained approval from the government but also won its direct support. In return, Buddhist communities were expected to perform roles that helped stabilize the society and hold the peoples on the island together during the national crisis of the post-Cold War period.

In the 1970s, the accelerated industrialization of Taiwan created wealth, while the political control of the Nationalist government began to weaken due to changes in

²⁹ Tzu Chi Foundation, founded in Hualien in 1966, was dedicated to the service to the poor and the unfortunate and catastrophe relief work. It is now the largest Buddhist organization in Taiwan. Yuanzhao Temple, led Venerable Jingding of a younger generation of Buddhist monastics, is one of the most important Buddhist temples that dedicated to the promotion of Buddhist songs in Taiwan.

world politics. During this period, civil and cultural activities began to explore previously forbidden intellectual territories. Buddhist songs also reflected the change. New musicians, including Xiao Huyin and Li Zhonghe, joined and contributed an impressive number of new songs to the repertoire. During this time, Li and Xiao's popularity grew rapidly together with that of Fo Guang Shan. They became so widely known that there is today a common error of assuming that Li Zhonghe and Xiao Huyin were among the early Buddhist musicians from the 1950s. It is therefore important that we distinguish the achievement of Yang Yongpu and Wu Chu-che during the earlier period from that of the later Fo Guang Shan musicians, including Li and Xiao. The songs of each period are different not only in their musical styles but also in their historical importance. While Hsing Yun's influence grew and the new musical culture began to reach a wider range of audiences in the 1970s, the early musical experiment of his group in the 1950s in Ilan continued to be a source of inspiration.

CONCLUSION

Hsing Yun, a mainland monk originally from Jiangsu, China, came to Taiwan in 1949 after the Chinese Civil War. In Ilan, he started a Buddhist reform program, within which a Buddhist choir modeled after that of the Christian church was created. With his persistent effort and the unwavering support of his followers, Hsing Yun succeeded in realizing many of his ideas and was able to achieve prominence no later

than the early 1970s. Notably, his extraordinary personal history occurred in a very unusual sociopolitical environment during the post-war period. Chinese Buddhism was reintroduced to Taiwan after Taiwan's retrocession to China in 1945. With the support of the authoritarian government, Chinese Buddhists dominated the Buddhist scenes in Taiwan, while Chinese Buddhist culture introduced by relocated Chinese Buddhists after 1949 quickly replaced Taiwan's indigenous Buddhist culture. The situation was further worsened by the Nationalist government's cultural policies that promoted Chinese high culture with the purpose of facilitating the regime's social and political control. The political-historical development allowed Hsing Yun and other Chinese Buddhist monks to spread their form of Buddhism with great ease, despite the fact that Hsing Yun was not one of the privileged eminent monks but a young relocated mainland cleric without any resources or support. Though the ethnic tension between mainland Chinese and the local people in Taiwan persisted, Hsing Yun's success was ironically dependent upon the support of native Buddhists from Taiwan.

Hsing Yun's success was also an outcome of his persistent effort and especially his incomparable personal charm, the influence of which was consistently reported by his followers. His leadership and vision definitely influenced the general development of Buddhist culture in Taiwan. All the qualities he possesses might have resulted from his early life experience and education. His early contact with ideas of reform Buddhism supplemented by his experience during the sociocultural movements in the late 1930s and 1940s in China became a major source of inspiration for his later work in Taiwan. For example, the word *wenhua* ("culture"), commonly

employed in his talks, carries a special meaning in his Buddhist work. He believes that we may be able to achieve a social transformation by cultivating a good culture among people. Despite its being progressive and seemingly original, however, the idea of “‘culture’ as a means for the spread of the dharma” (以文化弘揚佛法) may be traced to those ideals generally held true by the cultural reform activists in the early twentieth century. In the same way as the cultural movements hoped to transform the traditional culture, Hsing Yun developed his own cultural programs to transform Chinese Buddhist culture with his literary works and songs.

To describe Hsing Yun’s personal quality, I find it useful to refer to the research by J.A. Conger and R.N. Kanungo (1988) on the qualities of a charismatic leader.³⁰ *Unconventional* seems to be most relevant attribute when considering Hsing Yun (Conger and Kanungo 1988, 91). His personal charm is clearly demonstrated in his many lectures engaging original topics that challenge our traditional understanding of Buddhism. For example, in a 1981 public lecture in Sun Yat-sen Hall in Taipei, he openly rejected the uncompromising anti-wealth stance of traditional Buddhism (Hsing Yun 1982, 437).³¹ His new idea regarding a Buddhist’s possession of wealth, however, conveniently accommodated the new social values of the growing

³⁰ In the article “Behavioral Dimensions of Charismatic Leadership,” Conger and Kanungo describe ten attributes of a charismatic leader in comparison with those of non-charismatic leaders. Among the ten, Conger and Kanungo identify that a charismatic leader possesses expertise in “using unconventional means,” operating through their “unconventional behaviors,” to achieve “goals highly-discrepant from the status quo” (Conger and Kanungo 1988, 78-97).

³¹ In “Buddhism and Fortune” (Fojiao de caifu guan), Hsing Yun suggested that fortune was desirable only if it was earned righteously and that possessing fortune was also permissible if it was managed and spent in a morally acceptable way (Hsing Yun 1982). Though the argument might be no more than common sense for a religiously inspired person, it stands in great contrast to the original Buddhist idea of dispossessing one’s fortune for spiritual freedom. Hsing Yun further encouraged his followers to use the righteously earned fortune for the restoration work of Chinese Buddhism.

entrepreneurial class in Taiwan in the 1970s.³² Perhaps in combination with some degree of compromise, it won the applause of his newly rich audience. The “unconventional” quality certainly has been demonstrated in Hsing Yun’s Buddhist musical work and is definitely applicable to the form of Buddhist cultural activities he and his followers create. Despite opposition, his monastic group introduced a new form of Chinese Buddhism that sometimes seems like a combination of Buddhist lectures, sociocultural activities, and entertainment. Mediated through a musical form closely connected with the ideals of national reform movements, Chinese Buddhism acquired new social and cultural roles rather than religious ones alone.

Of course, Hsing Yun’s success could not have been achieved without the support of his faithful disciples in the form of their labor and original ideas. Among the most important contributors of ideas during his beginning years in Ilan, three names deserve to be mentioned: Lin Songnian (a.k.a. Lin Juezun), Ai Gu, and Li Juehe. Some members of the Buddhist Choir today believe that Lin and Ai Gu, who were progressively minded, may have suggested the initial idea that led to the creation of the musical group. Without the faithful support and assistance of his followers in Ilan, it would be almost unimaginable for Hsing Yun, a mainland monk who never really learned to master any of Taiwan’s local languages, to carry out his work.

The collective effort of the early Buddhist music group in Ilan, above all, deserves our special acknowledgement. Their actual work in compiling new songbooks and holding creative Buddhist cultural activities and also their spirit for

³² The lecture was delivered on 14 November 1981 at National Sun Yat-Sun Hall, Taipei, Taiwan.

innovation and change had a positive impact on the later development of Buddhist songs in Taiwan. As the sociocultural environment quickly changed beginning in the 1970s, more Buddhist music groups affiliated with different monastic communities were organized. The new groups similarly adopted the performance style of choral singing and inherited various music practices of the 1950s, but also improved upon the achievement of the previous period by devoting themselves to creating more diverse styles.

As creative minds explore more and more artistic and spiritual possibilities, the current Buddhist music movement is transforming the culture of the Buddhist community in Taiwan. To further trace the course of the Buddhist music development, I devote the next chapter to the discussion of the two professional musicians Yang Yongpu and Wu Chu-che, whose musical works form the central repertoire of Hsing Yun's Buddhist community in two different periods. Considered in both its quality and quantity, their music certainly deserves our attention.

4.

YANG YONGPU, WU CHU-CHE, AND THEIR BUDDHIST SONGS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter takes as its focus two Buddhist song composers, Yang Yongpu (楊勇溥) and Wu Chu-che (吳居徹), and their music. Both Wu and Yang were involved in Hsing Yun's musical work in Ilan in the 1950s and 1960s. Joining at slightly different times, they helped to create a repertoire of Buddhist songs in a new style that integrated both Western and traditional elements. Drawing musical inspiration from multiple sources, their music collectively impacted the later development of the genre in Taiwan.

The chapter consists of two equally weighed sections, with each devoted to one of the two composers. The reconstruction of their life stories is based on materials including personal documents and manuscripts collected during visits to the Yang and Wu families. These materials enabled me to establish a record of their influence, which has been growing along with their renewed popularity. To supplement the description of the two musicians, studies of their respective social and historical backgrounds are included. Through analyzing the contextual elements and the various

musical traits incorporated in their songs, I attempt to study the different influences under which they worked.

Yang and Wu played different roles in the musical work of Hsing Yun's group. As already discussed in chapter 3, Hsing Yun relied heavily on Yang Yongpu for his expertise in music and for training the choir. Unlike Yang, Wu was a Taipei-based musician. He composed songs for the group via correspondence with Hsing Yun without physically participating in the group's activities. Further, Yang and Wu participated in Hsing Yun's Buddhist song activities for different lengths of time. Yang eventually ceased to participate actively after the early 1960s when Hsing Yun regularly left Ilan for more projects in Kaohsiung, while Wu continued to produce Buddhist songs until the 1990s.

Despite the difference in their participation, Yang and Wu's influences on the development of Buddhist songs are equally far-reaching. As their songs continue to reach new audiences and influence Buddhist music practitioners, they help shape the contemporary Buddhist musical culture in Taiwan. Although they were connected to Hsing Yun's Buddhist community for a significant period of time, their creative career was not limited to their connection with Hsing Yun's group nor restricted to the period when they were involved in his early activities. In this consideration, I aim to examine the total compositional activities of the musicians in order to reveal the entirety of their life work.

YANG YONGPU (1918–1984)

My research into Yang Yongpu's life story began in summer 2009, though from the beginning of my study of the Fo Guang Shan Buddhist community I had realized the significance of his Buddhist songs for the development of the genre and the community's music. Despite Yang's vital role in the development of the new form of the Buddhist song in post-war Taiwan, I found that very little was known about the person and his life. This is mainly due to the later break between Yang and Hsing Yun's Buddhist community in Ilan in the 1960s. The connection between Yang's family and Hsing Yun's Buddhist community completely dissolved after Yang's death in 1984, and many people who knew him have since moved on or died.¹ A major breakthrough in my research occurred when I finally obtained a possible address of the family. When a letter failed to connect me to them, I decided to pay a personal visit, which I made on 1 June 2010. This self-invited visit finally helped connect me to the family after my long search when Mr. Yang Zizu, the second son of Yang Yongpu, opened the door and led me into the living room for the rest of the day. For the next six hours we went through Yang's preserved materials, documents and personal records relating to his work throughout the different stages of his life.

¹ Interviews with early participants, such as those with original members of the Buddhist Choir of Ilan Chanting Society in Lei Yin Temple, yielded limited information. Most of those who participated in the music group surprisingly had very little memory of the late musician. There were only some unsubstantial descriptions about Yang, his personality and character derived from interviews with some of his old acquaintances. At the time of my research in 2010, Hsing Yun asked one of his followers to search for the family, hoping to reconnect the family with his monastic group. Apparently, the monastery has so far had no knowledge about Yang's later life and his family. In general, the resources for investigation had been extremely limited, if not entirely absent, up to the time my research began.

As we sat down on the sofa in the living room, Zizu told me that since he received my letter, he had been working on the collection of materials stored since his father's death more than 25 years ago, and which he felt might be of interest to my research. The materials, which Zizu presented to me, bore the mark of time with tattered edges and a color of aged yellow. "Hasn't anyone from Fo Guang Shan Monastery tried to contact you in the past?" I asked. "No, not at all," Zizu said, but moved on to explain, "In fact, we have moved several times, and since my father's death there have been fewer and fewer friends coming to visit." Zizu told me that they had lived there for the past ten years and many of his father's friends, not knowing their present whereabouts, had since lost contact.

Among the preserved materials were large quantities of photographs. The images were taken during different periods and stages of Yang Yongpu's life, with some of them dating back to his early life in China before 1940. Other than photographs, hand-written materials and documents, including musical and textual manuscripts, were also informative of his early life and musical activities. Notable among them were an autobiography and an unpublished music textbook. There were also some personal items including military badges that Yang used to wear, showing his ranks in the barracks during different periods. Others include nameplates and pictured identification cards showing his various professional associations. The "Autobiography" (自傳) (Yang n.d.a) was written on the office stationary paper used during the Nationalist regime period. At the lower right corner of the cover page of the autobiography, there are two lines in smaller font that read "Yuanshan Middle School,

August 10, year 55 of the Republic Era (1966)/ Ilan Vocational School of Commerce, August 18, year 56 of the Republic Era (1967),” with a personal seal on top of them.² As the school year in Taiwan began in early September, this may have been used as part of the documentation required for personnel registration at the time when he was employed by the two schools after his retirement from the army in 1966.

The following description of Yang’s life is, therefore, based on these materials and records derived from this research trip. Some additional information was derived from interviews with his old acquaintances.

The Early Life in Mainland China before 1949

*My home was in the Mainland
Where the mountains were high and the rivers were long
The views were different in four seasons of a year
In the springtime, the willow’s branches were tender
While in the summertime
the lotus flowers released their fragrance into the air
When autumn came
the maple trees were as red as if on fire
Cold winter brought us snow
that heralded the coming year of abundance*

*My home was in the Mainland
Where there lived my many relatives and friends
Who often came to visit and remained in close contact
When passing the New Year and the festivals, joy and luck were
plenty
In the Yuanxiao Festival³
colorful lanterns competed with each other*

² Official documents were written in vertical fashion in Chinese and from right to left.

³ Lantern Festival. The 15th day of the 1st month of a lunar year marks the end to the Chinese New Year Festival.

*In the Duanwu Festival*⁴
Dragon boats were raced in hustle and bustle
In the Mid-Autumn, the moon was especially bright
While when passing the Septembers
the Chrysanthemums were yellow and crabs grew full of meat

(Yang Yongpu, “My Home Was in the Mainland”)⁵

Zeng Huijia, in her study of the popular music of the 1950s in Taiwan, considers this song as characteristic of the decade (Zeng 1998, 116–19). Written in the first-person, the song refers to the life patterns, geography, and the particular cultural events of the people in the mainland. According to Zeng, the song won great popularity among its audience during the post-Chinese civil war period in Taiwan, perhaps especially so among the recently exiled mainlanders, who were suffering emotional and psychological agonies due to their involuntary relocation. As one may also imagine, this song served the government’s intent to evince nostalgia in the soldiers and therefore to strengthen their will to fight in the struggle with the Communists.

Through the creation of a contrast between the cherished memories evoked in the song and the separation existing in reality, the shared personal and collective tragic experience of a time of national turmoil is recalled, intimately touching upon

⁴ It is sometimes called Dragon Boat Festival, celebrated on the fifth day of the fifth month of the lunar year in memory of the Poet Qu Yuan (340–278B.C.) of the period of the Warring Nations in Chinese history.

⁵ The song was a collaboration of Yang with one of his colleagues at Ilan (Men’s) High School. The identity of its lyricist is yet to be confirmed.

sentiments about one's lost nation, homeland, and the previous life to which one's memories are connected. In his "Autobiography," Yang writes,

I was named Yang, with a given name Yongpu (勇溥), also self-called Yongpu (詠譜).⁶ I was born in Kaifeng, Henan province in March, year 7 of the Republic Era (1918). My late father Enyen was a wenju (文舉) of the abdicated Qing dynasty.⁷ Since the beginning of the Republic Era, he had served in the legal office until his death when he was thirty years old. My mother passed away very early.

.....

I was inspired toward learning at the age of seven. In the following years, I completed my elementary school education, after that, middle school. After discovering my talents in arts upon my graduation from middle school, I chose to attend the Henan Teachers College of the Arts (河南藝術師範學校).

(Yang Yongpu n.d.a, "Autobiography")

1918, the year Yang Yongpu was born, was the same year the European War ended, with devastating destruction in the involved countries as well as a diminishing influence of these countries in Asia. It was a year before the breakout of the May Fourth Movement, a collective effort advocating a thorough change of the people from the root of their culture in hopes that the old nation may be finally transformed and saved. During this time, reformers regarded Western literature and arts as superior to Chinese counterparts. The new art forms, developed according to Western models,

⁶ The self-called name is pronounced the same as the original one but is in a combination of two different Chinese characters indicating the musician's self-identified musical talents and character.

⁷ *Wenju* is supposedly a varied form of the more commonly used title, *juren* (舉人), which was offered to someone who passed a provincial civil examination during the period of imperial China. With the degree of *Juren*, the conferred person would become eligible for holding government positions. The *juren* degree was higher than that of *xiuca* (秀才), but lower than that of *jinshi* (進士).

were used as an instrument for advocating a new age and a new style of national life for the people. As a result, they became inseparable from their nation-saving actions. The new music, differing from traditional Chinese music, was the art of the revolutionary age, possessing not only a new set of aesthetic values but new ideals and hopes for a new, liberated society, which required the devotion of youths.

Following the excitement of the culture revolution of the late 1910s and 1920s, the 1930s, when Yang grew up, saw the country grow rapidly in all aspects upon a temporary unification of China after Chiang Kai-shek's Northern Expedition. During this time, new social and cultural activities, including the Songs for the Masses movement in Shanghai and other major cities, which may be viewed as a continuation of the initial New Culture movement of the previous period, were on the rise. In facing Japan's aggression, musicians, supported by and under the influence of the political parties, composed songs with themes that generated great influence among the general public. Against this background of the revolutionary era, Yang began to explore the different possibilities afforded by his talents as his identity as a musician and a patriot began to take shape.

In year 30 of the Republic Era (1941), I received unconditional admission offered by the Ministry of Education of Henan province to the training program in music leadership sponsored by the Central (Governmental) Training Corps. The program consisted of three workshops in administration of public affairs, military skills, and music, respectively. The three were equally weighed.

In the spring of year 32 of the Republic Era (1943), I passed the entrance examination of Shanghai Conservatory of Music and

began my pursuit in music theory and composition with a focus on the study of the theory and the styles of Chinese music. In year 35 of the Republic Era (1946), I was decommissioned and returned to my home province upon the victory over Japanese in the Resistance War.

(Yang Yongpu n.d.a, “Autobiography”)

The year 1941 witnessed the breakout of the Pacific War and the convergence of the Chinese Anti-Japanese War of Resistance and the Second World War. In this age of both hope and despair, Yang Yongpu began his professional training in music.



Figure 4.1: Yang Yongpu prior to 1950.
Used by permission of the Yang family.

When the Communists were leading musical movements in cities and rural areas, the Nationalist government created music programs to promote music that served to propagandize government policies. In the early 1940s, the government in Chongqing, Sichuan, established the Ministry of Military Affairs (軍政部) within which a military music division was created. During wartime, workshops were organized to more effectively develop civil and military music. The Music Leadership Workshop (音樂幹部訓練班), which Yang joined in 1941, was a training program sponsored by the Nationalist government for popularizing government policies (Liu 2009, 204).⁸ After he completed the program, he went for more advanced training in the Shanghai Conservatory of Music (上海音樂專科學校), which was at that time relocated from Shanghai to Sichuan.

The Shanghai Conservatory of Music was the first, and has been the most prestigious, music school in China dedicated to the study of Western music and the reform of Chinese music. As previously mentioned, musicians looked to Western music for aid in the pursuit of Chinese new music. However, this does not mean that Chinese traditional music was to be entirely abandoned. Traditional music, though a part of the corruptive past, also represented the life of the people and the spirit of the nation. Therefore, in addition to recognizing or overtly exaggerating the value of Western music, some musicians, like Yang, were equally conscious of the value of

⁸ The Music Leadership Workshop was administered by the Central Training Corps sponsored by the Military Music Division of Ministry of Military Affairs. Later the workshop was further developed into a specialized training school in military music, The Music Academy of the Land Force (陸軍軍樂學校), in 1943. For more details regarding the development of government policy in public music activities during the 1940s, please refer to Liu Jingzhi, 2001, *Zhongguo xin yinyue shi lun*, chapter 4, pages 201–07.

traditional music and devoted themselves to the search for the new sound of China in their musical heritage. Recreating the past in the “modern” form was thought by some to be an alternative for the building of a progressive new nation in sound.

Taiwan/Ilan

We are ten brothers and sisters. Except for me, my wife and my two sons who are living in Taiwan, the rest of the family are all on the Mainland. I am the third son. In year 36 of the Republic Era (1947), I married Ms. Wang Yubi, a native of Jiangjin, Sichuan, at Chongqing. She is now teaching at an elementary school in Ilan. My first son, Nianzu, and second son, Zizu, are going to middle school. Family finances are maintained with careful calculations, balancing between spending and earning. Otherwise, all is in peace.

(Yang Yongpu n.d.a., “Autobiography”)

In 1949, upon the loss of mainland China to the Communists, a large number of mainland immigrants, many of whom were government employees, military leaders, enlisted soldiers, or simply idealistic sympathizers, fled to Taiwan. The estimated number of this group of disparate individuals was more than one sixth of the total native population in Taiwan at that time, causing the island province an immediate economic burden and social stress. Among the refugees was the Yang family. The forced separation and involuntary relocation to this strange island province aroused strong reaction among those relocated regardless of their backgrounds. Though earnest hope continued to grow for a timely and victorious return to the mainland, many

eventually spent the rest of their lives in exile on this island and were never able to make their return.

According to Yang Yongpu's "Autobiography," the Yangs came to Taiwan via Guangzhou in year 38 of the Republic Era (1949) (Yang n.d.a, 3). "We arrived in Keelung (a port at the north tip of the island) and had no place to go for the night. We made a tent under the roof of a warehouse ... Later, there was a good-hearted family, yeah, they are *benshengren* (people of the province), who took care of us and gave us a place to stay," said Mrs. Yang Yongpu, who survived him. She joined us later in the evening, recalling the hardship of their first few days in Taiwan. In the following year (1950), the family resettled in Ilan.

By the end of the Second World War, Taiwan's economy was severely stricken, with intensive bombing by Allied air forces causing massive destruction. Arbitrary economic management and government corruption of the succeeding Chinese administration in Taiwan further dramatized the suffering of Taiwan's people, thus dashing hopes for a timely economic and social recovery. During that period, the Yangs, like many others, were not making enough to get by and from time to time would not have enough food. In times of need, Mrs. Yang would go to the marketplace to search for discarded vegetable scraps to supplement the needs of the family. With the vivid memory of the tragic February 28 Incident of 1947, only two years prior, still in people's minds, the ethnic tensions between the *in*-province people (*benshengren*) and the *out-of*-province people (*waishengren*) were very high.

"Taiwanese people called us 'out-of-province pigs!' Once I went to the market to buy

food. The vendor did not want to sell me anything. I stood there so long ... (the speaker paused) Then, I kept my head up, turned around and walked away!” Mrs. Yang bitterly remembered those days from the past. It seemed at that moment a collective memory of a nation in sorrow traversed across time to reach us, even though for us today the reality of that period may not be fully comprehensible. Despite these difficulties, the Yangs managed to persevere through these difficult times.

In the relocation, the Military Communication Academy (宜蘭通訊兵學校), with which Yang originally was associated as a music instruction officer, was to reestablish in Ilan. Before he was able to resume his position, Yang taught at the local Ilan (Men’s) High School for several years (1950-1954). It was during this time that Hsing Yun invited Yang to assist him in his Buddhist music program in Lei Yin Temple. Yang’s professional career as a teacher was significant to him and to the Ilan community. To fully address his contributions in music education, I intend to begin with his early aspirations on the mainland.

In year 26 of the Republic Era (1937), I was appointed the principal of the Independence School of the People of the capital city of Henan. At the time, the general public was poorly educated, but I found that most of them, pure and honest, were willing to learn with strong motivation. This sign encouraged me. However, the Japanese army soon arrived. According to government policy, I changed the usual stationary method of teaching into a mobile one, bringing education to the people.

(Yang Yongpu n.d.a, “Autobiography”)

As Zizu and I went through the materials, the large quantities of photographs gave testimony to the life events mentioned in his autobiography. With the help of Zizu, I was able to identify the events in the pictures with their own individual stories. Some of the oldest pictures dated as far back as the late 1930s when Yang Yongpu was barely 20 years old. In addition to pictures, Yang also preserved his nametags, which were sewn to shirts above the upper left pockets indicating his positions and engagements during different stages of his life. One of them indicated his position as a *ganshi*, an assistant to the director of the Wartime Civilian Education Corps (戰時民眾教育工作團), which Yang joined in 1938. A number of pictures showed Yang in dramatic performances. “This is my father,” Zizu said. The heavy makeup distorted the original appearance of the person and made him very difficult to recognize. “I know he loved acting, but I do not know much [about the details of his earlier activity in the theater],” he added further. In fact, Yang was also an accomplished *qingyi* performer in the traditional Peking Opera, which I learned later from Mrs. Yang Yongpu.⁹

The enthusiastic involvement of the characters can be felt vividly in spite of the fading color of the old pictures. I couldn't definitively tell what was happening on stage or what purposes these performances served, but some of the pictures gave clues according to the backdrops, stage settings, and costumes. Among them was an image of one play accompanied by a caption on the backdrop reading “‘Raticide’, Civil Education Week Public Charity Sale Performance Sponsored by Henan Ministry of

⁹ *Qingyi* is a young and virtuous female role in Peking opera, a traditional Chinese dramatic and musical art.

Education” (see Figure 4.2). Given the largely illiterate Chinese civilians and peasants in great number over a vast area of rural countryside in a period of continuing warfare against Japan that prevented stationed schools from assuming their normal functions, the performances hosted by the mobile Civilian Education Corps helped introduce practical knowledge to the people. New drama, a popular art form among the young and progressive intellectuals’ circle of the early Republic Era, apparently served a purpose similar to music in this revolutionary age and was surely an interest of Yang’s during his early years as an educator.



Figure 4.2: A dramatic performance of Yang Yongpu, sponsored by Henan Ministry of Education during wartime against Japanese invasion (1937–1945). The caption reads “‘Raticide’, Civil Education Week Public Charity Performance Sponsored by Henan Ministry of Education.” Used by permission of the Yang family.

In addition to being an assistant in the educational corps, Yang occupied several other positions during this period, including the principal of the Independence School of the People in Henan (1937) and the music instruction officer in the Nationalist army (1941–1949), as mentioned earlier. In the spring of 1949, Yang taught briefly at Hunan Second Normal College before the area was evacuated in August due to the arrival of the Communists. For the rest of his life in Taiwan, Yang taught at public schools in Ilan, holding part-time or full-time positions, including Ilan (Men's) High School (1950–1954), Yuanshan Middle School (1966–1967) and Ilan Vocational School of Commerce (1967–1969). He eventually retired from Ilan Middle School in the early 1980s. Often, out of financial necessity, he maintained additional part-time positions alongside his full-time position.

During the period immediately after the war, music education in public schools in Taiwan was often improperly implemented. The lack of qualified teachers with proper training in music and teaching materials contributed to the deficiency. Due to its geographic isolation, music teachers were even harder to locate in Ilan and other east coast counties. Those who were talented and aspired to become professional musicians would often have to travel to Taipei regularly for more than four hours each way by train or bus for professional instruction. Or, they would have to seek help from Yang Yongpu. "People came and asked for instruction. He never turned anyone down and never asked for tuition," said Mrs. Yang. Yang's qualifications in music and in music education were certainly rare during this period.

As a tradition of the school song movement in the early twentieth century, dedicated music educators, following the model of Shen Xin'gong and other school song pioneers, compiled and produced school songbooks for educational use as their work required. When Yang became an educator himself, he similarly composed new songs that helped expand the repertoire of the genre and wrote music textbooks to facilitate teaching. According to available evidence, Yang wrote at least two songbooks: *The Songbook of Ilan (Man's) High School* (宜中歌集) and *Educational Songs for the Cultivation of National Spirit* (民族精神教育歌曲) (Taiwan shengzhengfu jiaoyuting 1976?, 47). Regrettably, they have been lost. But, fortunately, a music textbook, *The Rudiments of Music* (音樂小常識), that he wrote for his students has been preserved by the Yangs. With this book, we are able to gain insights into his ideas about music and music education.

The textbook is a learning course providing basic knowledge in Western music notation, an introduction to the art of conducting and general tips on singing techniques in Western vocal style, in addition to a guide to principles of Western music theory. The apparent emphasis on the use of voice as musical expression was doubtlessly a legacy of the music movements of the 1930s and 1940s. As was commonly believed, voice, the least expensive “instrument” of the people, may allow the influence of music to reach the widest possible audience during the times of great shortage. In addition to providing practical musical knowledge, Yang devoted a considerable length of this book to discussion of his ideals in music and music education.

As a patriot, Yang, like many of his colleagues, considered music not simply an artistic expression but more importantly a means of revolution. In Yang's own words, the new Chinese music of "elegant taste" should demonstrate "one's love for the country." It is "an uplifting creativity" that supports "the courageous spirit" and "fearlessly progressive mind" to protect and rebuild the country (Yang n.d.b., 2–3).¹⁰ With this faith in music, Yang, inspired by his position as a music instruction officer in the barracks, says, "The soldiers of the civilized age should have a proper form of music ... that would excite them with the patriotic sentiment, the passion to serve their country, and a cooperative spirit to accomplish an assignment in collaboration with others" (Yang n.d.b, 2–3).¹¹ Regularly citing Chiang Kai-shek for his ideas regarding the influence of music on educating and disciplining soldiers, Yang's thoughts on music as contained in the textbook may have been equally instigated by the government's ideological control and are concerned with music's capacity in educating and mobilizing the people:

I would hope that all who devote themselves to the work of nation-saving succeed in becoming those who also promote the Songs for the Masses movement. Because what China needs at the present time is tens of thousands of individuals who can sing and carry the voice of strength to all corners of China. (Yang n.d.b, 3–4)

¹⁰ According to Yang, music may also be able to change a person physically and spiritually. This seems to be influenced by similar ideas popularly advocated by Xiao Youmei, the founder of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music (cf. Yang Yongpu n.d., "The Rudimentary Knowledge of Music," 2–3). But, one should also note that some of these comments may also find their origins in Confucian ideas preserved in Confucian classics, such as *The Book of Rites* (禮記).

¹¹ The paragraphs are likely cited by Yang from some so far unidentified source.

The ideals for (Chinese) nation-saving and nation-building as expressed in these paragraphs, which had developed since the time of the school song movement, were transformed by the current Nationalist government's cultural policy in Taiwan in the 1950s and 1960s. In the face of the Communist threat, there was clearly a shift of focus from anti-Japanese invasion to anti-Communism. In the 1950s and 1960s, the Nationalist Party, in its exile in Taiwan, took as its main goal the accomplishment of its anti-Communist project, "Combating Communists and Resisting the Russian Soviet" (反共抗俄), and integrated it into its cultural policy to affirm the loyalty of the people in Taiwan to the government. Guidelines of Censoring Inappropriate-Themed Books, Journals, Films, Dramas and Songs (檢查取締違禁書報雜誌影劇歌曲實施辦法) of 1951 was one of the measures taken to regulate the cultural activities on the island in this period. It allowed only music that encouraged an optimistic lifestyle and patriotism (tailored to fit the government's anti-communist ideology) to reach the general population (Su 2003, 123–126). With its goal of counteracting the effect of the Great Cultural Revolution on the mainland, the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement, beginning in 1967, continued to strengthen the anti-communist ideology with an added emphasis on the promotion of Chinese high culture to inspire "(Chinese) national spirit" (民族精神) among the people (Gao 1991, 50–54). The influence of this movement was not strictly directed onto songs but can be felt in all art forms. For example, in discussing policies on censoring Peking opera, which was considered a piece of "national essence" (國粹), Nancy Guy describes

Peking opera's potential (in eyes of the Nationalist government) "as an important player in their cultural warfare with the Chinese Communists" (1996, 138–47). The policy remained effective in the 1970s and 80s with more government supported movements, such as the National Language movement (國語運動), promoting the use of the official language of Mandarin, and new laws, such as "Detailed Regulations Concerning Radio and Television Broadcast" (廣播電視法實行細則), to censor broadcast programs. Yang, an active musician in the 1950s with an output in a variety of genres, was among those who were directly impacted by these government enactments.

Yang Yongpu and Hsing Yun's Buddhist Song Movement

In order to spread the Dharma, I invited the best teachers from Ilan (Man's) High School. . . Among all, Yang Yongpu was the person to whom I want to express my best thanks. He has written many Buddhist songs for me but never asked a penny for his labor. [I] probably did not even ever buy him a dinner. Those songs, which have been popularly circulated, including "The West," "The Prayer," "The Sound of the Bells," and "The Buddhist Wedding Song," were written for my lyrics, and [he] had even helped me train the singers. . . .

(Hsing Yun, "The Details of My Life in Spreading the Dharma")

Yang's participation in Hsing Yun's Buddhist community and the subsequent production of his Buddhist songs may have been similarly motivated by his conviction in the power of music for introducing change to society. In the early 1950s, Hsing Yun invited Yang Yongpu to assist him with his Buddhism music program, which

lasted about 10 years. Despite the fact that he was physically in Ilan after the choir ceased to operate, Yang, a non-Buddhist, did not continue to join the Ilan Buddhist community and participate in their other activities in the Lei Yin Temple. While the memories of Yang quickly faded, the songs he wrote for Hsing Yun's community remained popular among Buddhists in Ilan and in Taiwan at large. In the following, I select "The Sound of the Bells" (鐘聲) and "The Buddhist Wedding Song" (佛化婚禮祝歌) as samples that may help to describe the common characteristics shared by the songs he composed in relation to Hsing Yun's Buddhist reform.

Largely influenced by his own life experience and music education on the mainland in the earlier period, Yang Yongpu's Buddhist songs are similar in style to songs that aimed to inspire the masses in the movements or to serve the government in its propaganda work. Dotted rhythms and march-like tempi are among the common characteristics. With the exception of "The West" and "The Prayers," both of which use some kind of Chinese pentatonic or heptatonic modes, Yang's songs are generally set in Western major keys. C and G major, among the most commonly found keys in his songs, may have been considered suitable for their bright color. Distinct sections are frequently employed, while melodic styles are unmistakably inspired by Western triadic harmony. For example, the C major song "The Sound of the Bells" (Yang 1956b, 7) is in three-part song form, set in a *moderato* tempo (中速). The primary melodic pattern, based on the concept of an arpeggiated triad, first appears in the opening phrase of the song in the tonic chord (mm. 1–3), which is followed by its answer in a similarly-arpeggiated dominant (mm 3–4), supposedly to inspire optimism

with repeated upward motions to help heighten the spirit of the singers. The same melodic idea is employed to form a contrasting section (mm. 9–11), this time, however, in the relative minor key.

c調 4/4 鐘聲 星雲法師詞 楊詠詩作曲

mp 發人深省 中速

1 33 55 | i — 2i 76 | 56 54 3 — | 2 2. 55. |

當 黎明 遠逝 幽 渺， 古 寺 晨 鐘 遍 傳 天 涯 城 市， 村 莊，

當 夕 陽 徐 徐 西 下， 古 寺 晚 鐘 遍 傳 天 涯 山 野， 田 間，

35 6 5 65 | i 5 33. | 2 2. 35 6 | 5 65 i 7 |

飄 揚 着 機 誓 的 鐘 响； 鏗 鏘， 幽 揚， 喚 醒 了 沉 迷 的 夢

蕩 漾 着 巡 邏 的 聲 响； 洪 亮， 深 沉， 指 示 着 悵 徨 的 眾

i — 1 333 | 6 3 63 67 | i 7 65 6 — | 66 444 32 3 |

鄉。 這 一 聲 鐘 响， 響 在 流 浪 人 的 心 上， 忘 記 塵 塵 的 憂 涼，

生。 這 一 陣 陣 鐘 响， 響 在 飄 泊 者 的 心 上， 消 除 人 生 的 煩 惱，

31 233 6.4 | 5 —^{mf} 55 5 | i — 11 33 | 5 i f22 2 |

拋 開 今 世 的 滄 桑。 你 可 再 聽， 老 頭 院 的 歌 唱： 沃 壤 初

融 化 窮 困 的 心 腸。 你 可 再 聽， 老 頭 院 的 歌 唱： 千 戈 永

6 — i i i | 5 — 3 6 | 7 i 2 5 3. | 2. i i — |

叩， 寶 閣 高 吟， 下 通 地 府 上 激 天 堂。

息， 甲 馬 休 征， 勝 敗 傷 亡 俱 生 西 方。

7

Figure 4.3: “The Sound of the Bells” (Yang 1956b, 7) as printed in *The Buddhist Holy Songs* published in 1956. The spirit-lifting rhythms of the song were clearly influenced by the Songs for the Masses movement of the 1930s.

The musical style may also be intended to match with Hsing Yun’s lyrics. In serving Buddhist missionary purposes, lines, with the particular use of metaphors derived from Buddhist philosophy, such as “the morning bells of an ancient temple ... awake people from their illusive dreams” or “forgive the cruel world and forget the

up-and-downs of this life ... we reach the underworld and brings comfort to the souls in suffering,” naturally require a complementary melody with similarly “forward-looking” and “encouraging” rhythms.

In contrast to the style of a missionary song as demonstrated in “The Sound of the Bells,” “The Buddhist Wedding Song” represents a second category with an attempt to revolutionize traditional Buddhist ideas about the cultural practice of marriage. As previously mentioned, Hsing Yun was one of the Buddhist reformers who were more ready than anyone to integrate the idea of marriage into Buddhism, despite the concept running counter to fundamental Buddhist belief.

What day is today?
 There is such great promise in this wonderful moment
 What day is today?
 It is a lucky day, fitting for celebration
 The loving ones finally wed each other to form a family
 A Buddhist marriage is full of unsurpassable joy
 He is like the handsome Xuda
 who supports his family and establishes his career with benevolence
 She is like the virtuous Yuye
 devoting herself to the care of the parents and the love of her husband
 So as to create great joy for the family
 This connection is a blessing that has been cultivated from a previous
 life
 Let's pray for them:
 Forever may they receive the blessing of the Buddha's light
 May they enjoy the maximum of their fortune and reach an old age of
 a hundred years.

(Hsing Yun, “The Buddhist Wedding Song”)

According to Hsing Yun, the idea of marriage and the principles of Buddhism may be reconciled. Rather than focusing on the joining of the sexes, he emphasizes the

value of a good family for building a harmonious society. As demonstrated in this song, Hsing Yun compares one's role in a family as a husband or a wife to that of a bodhisattva, affirming that properly performing such roles is to fulfill one's social obligation and is therefore a blessing for all. With references to Buddhist ideals as revealed in the canonic Buddhist texts, *Shansheng Sutra* (善生經) and *Yuye Sutra* (玉耶經), and Confucian values, he affords the new Buddhist practice necessary textual legitimacy.¹²

The revolutionary stand as suggested in "The Buddhist Wedding Song" is further fortified by Yang's use, in what was regarded as reform style, of Western-influenced musical idioms. With the use of, again, arpeggiated chords and dotted and syncopated rhythms, the wedding song emphasizes a revolutionary spirit in an action-inspiring motion. Interestingly, the beginning phrase of the song, with its rising tonic arpeggio, reminds one of the beginning phrase of the Bridal Chorus of Wagner's *Lohengrin*.¹³

¹² "Shansheng Sutra" of the *Long Agama Sutra*, like many early Buddhist texts, was allegedly a record of the Buddha's life stories. In "Shansheng," the Buddha, in encountering Shansheng, son of a respected elder (長者), by chance teaches him how to be a man of virtues. Among the moral lessons given by the Buddha are those that show how one may properly interact with one's family members, including his parents and wife, to create a harmonious household. In "Yuye Sutra," the Buddha, in an event where he is arranged to meet the beautiful but arrogant Yuye who was recently married but is not properly performing her role as a wife and daughter-in-law, shows her how to be a virtuous wife. In both texts, the roles of a husband and a wife are defined according to their responsibilities to the each other and to their parents. Some of the moral lessons given in both texts demonstrate some rather traditional definitions of man-woman relationship, with the man considered as the head of the family and the woman a subdued spouse in the presence of her husband (cf. "Shansheng jing" and "Fo shuo Yuye nu jing").

¹³ Please refer to figure 3.7 at page 151 of this dissertation for the original music score of "Buddhist Wedding Song" printed in *Puti Shi* 24 (November 1954): 27.

The Last Years

My home was in the Mainland
The traitors Zhu De, Mao Zedong and their followers had lost their
conscience,
And the peace of my home was never to be restored
The field has been deserted, and the houses left to collapse
My old-aged father and mother lost their lives,
While the young ones were forced to cross the River Yalu [to fight the
Korean War]
My home was in the Mainland
Should we want to go home, we must be self-strengthened,
And turn our anger into strength
Revenge the bloody enemy with bloodshed,
Redeem justice with the price of life
Slaughter the ten-thousand-time vicious communists,
And, sing the victorious song in returning home

(Yang Yongpu, “My Home Was in the Mainland”)

In a politically correct manner, Yang Yongpu sings of his hope to return home to the mainland. But the return to the mainland as hoped was never realized during Yang’s lifetime. Beginning in the early Republic Era, it was a life journey that took Yang from Henan, through half of the geographical area of China, to Taiwan. During the passage, the life of an individual was bound to the destiny of the nation, defined by the unavoidable change in a time of national crisis. As the rise and fall of a nation is in general the focus of history, the life and death of a person seemed to be of little significance in this larger historical perspective.

In the 1960s, the Military Communication Academy, with which Yang had been associated since his years in the mainland, moved to Zhongli, on the west coast of the island. In 1966, he decided to retire from the military position that he held for

the previous twenty years. “At that time [1966], I wanted to buy a piece of land. He was just retired. I wanted to use his pension money to purchase a piece of land. He insisted that we would go home very soon,” Mrs. Yang Yongpu remembered, apparently disagreeing with her late husband and his unrealistic hope. With the unfulfilled dream to go back to the mainland, one might choose to give up or keep one’s hope alive regardless of how modest the hope could be. Yang Yongpu chose the latter. However, “he never left Ilan after we came here. There were job offers, including one at a college in Taipei. But he chose not to go. He hated to leave home and refused to move away,” Mrs. Yang added. Obviously, Yang had long ago considered Ilan as his other home. His personal life was not only bound with the land and home in the mainland, but also with the home and land in Ilan where he spent most of his life. “When he was writing ‘The Warm Current of the Pacific Ocean’, he went to the shore [of the Pacific Ocean] every day to observe the sea, and listen,” Mrs. Yang told me. As a musician, he had known the land and its people through his senses and his sensitive musical mind that brought him into close contact with the pulses and rhythms of the people and the land. The effort Yang made when called by the people, such as volunteering in writing music for the community in Yilan and providing assistance in Hsing Yun’s Buddhist endeavors, has become an inspiration for all of us, representing the courage of like-minded individuals, their passion and creativity in times of national as well as personal crisis.

WU CHU-CHE (1924–2005)

Wu Chu-che was a prolific Buddhist song composer in post-war Taiwan who, like Yang Yongpu, also contributed significantly to the musical work of Hsing Yun. As I have already mentioned, Wu did not physically join the activities of the music group in Ilan, but contributed his Buddhist songs to the group through correspondences with Hsing Yun without leaving Taipei, where he was based. Close to the Taipei Buddhist circle, the center of the development of post-war Buddhist culture in Taiwan, Wu had begun to compose his Buddhist songs before his collaboration with Hsing Yun.

In this study Wu's educational background and the life experiences that influenced him to become a Buddhist and a Buddhist musician will be the focus. The discussion includes an examination of concurrent historical developments that may help explain the motivation for much of his work. After this biographical section, an analysis of the musical idioms and forms employed in his music will follow. In the analysis, I will attempt to illustrate the relationship between his music and the musical genres that developed concurrently during his lifetime. A comparison between Wu's Buddhist songs and musical examples taken from different genres will be given. As will be evidenced in the examples, domestic and Western-influenced musical cultures representing different social/cultural movements greatly affected his music. The cultural movements and their respective goals helped shape his personal view of Buddhist music and its meaning.

Wu was an independent Buddhist musician whose work was not limited to his collaboration with Hsing Yun. Therefore, the discussion of Wu's life work in this study will go beyond the repertoire created specifically for Hsing Yun's Buddhist music group to include examples from his entire output. Between November 2007 and April 2008, I was given the opportunity to interview Wu's surviving family members. Mrs. Wu Chu-che (Wu Zhou Xiuyue) and their daughter Miss Wu I-te generously allowed me to examine materials and documents preserved by the family, including Wu's music publications and family pictures. The Wu family also offered me all assistance possible in my search for related materials. Their introduction letter to the Human Resource Office of National Taipei University of Technology (台北科技大學), where the late musician held a permanent position, afforded access to Wu's personal data preserved by the office.¹⁴ These data, though limited, enabled me to verify some critical information about his early life. A small preexisting literature about Wu, mostly news articles, was also helpful during the early stage of my research.¹⁵ Among Wu's publications, two songbooks published in 1983 and 1991 enjoyed some degree of popularity and circulation within Buddhist circles. They are the primary references of this study.

¹⁴ The school was originally named Taipei Industrial Vocational School (台北工業職業學校) at the time Wu Chu-che sought employment in the 1940s. It was later renamed Taipei Institute of Technology (台北工專) in 1948. The current name was adopted in 1997.

¹⁵ Previous reports and studies about Wu may be found in a limited number of news articles. The more significant ones include "Sounds of Wonder, Sounds of Purity, and Sounds of Ocean Waves: Musician Wu Chu-che" in the journalistic book, *The Heirs of Buddhist Arts* (Xiu'e 1993). These articles concern no more than general knowledge of the person, events and personal anecdote. Lacking are discussions of the historical context of his life, influences on his music and the development of his musical thoughts.

The Life Story of Wu Chu-che

Wu was born in 1924 during the Japanese colonial period in Taiwan (1895–1945). Before he was born, the early decades of Japanese colonial rule were a period of civil unrest and military crackdowns that resulted in much bloodshed. In comparison, the 1920s were marked by peace and the beginning of profound change with a series of reforms introduced by the new Japanese Governor of Taiwan Den Kenjiro, a literati official, who succeeded the former military administration in 1919.¹⁶ Den's government implemented relatively lenient sociocultural policies and announced educational reforms soon after his inauguration. Despite little change in the autocratic colonial government, Taiwanese people were systematically exposed to Western knowledge and Western-influenced arts. However, during this time, there were far fewer educational opportunities for the people of Taiwan than had hoped. Those who aspired to higher learning would often have to travel to Japan for further training.

¹⁶ Den Kenjiro became the third Governor of Taiwan in 1919.



Figure 4.4: Wu Chu-che during his early years. Used by permission of the Wu Family.

Wu was a native of Mengjia (now Wanhua) in western Taipei. He spent nearly his entire life in the proximity of the famous Longshan Temple (龍山寺) for both religious and personal reasons. One of the oldest Buddhist temples in Taiwan, Longshan Temple, first built in 1738, has long been an important religious and cultural center of northern Taiwan. The temple has a history that is bound up with the life of the people over the previous centuries. It was destroyed by natural catastrophes and rebuilt several times and was once turned into a school during the Japanese colonial period. It was also witness to the Second World War, during which its main structures were completely leveled by Allied bombing. In recent decades, Longshan Temple has also been the site for democratic movements. In 1986, the lasting conflicts between the government and the protesters who pursued freedom of speech and the

independence of Taiwan ended with the self-immolation of Zheng Nanrong, an active leader of the democratic movements of Taiwan prior to the lift of martial law in 1987.

Wu's childhood was surrounded by the religious activities and cultural festivals held in the temple. Buddhist chanting, different kinds of religious music and sounds of the temple activities formed an important part of Wu's memory and became the inspiration for his later compositions. As he grew up, Wu received an education not atypical for young Taiwanese. And, like many aspiring young men of Taiwan during that period, Wu went to Japan to pursue further training in music. In 1942, he enrolled in Tokyo College of Music (東京音樂學院) and finished his studies in 1945.¹⁷ It was the year in which the Second World War ended with Japan losing to China, and in which Taiwan suffered widespread devastation due to intensive bombing. When the sovereignty of Taiwan was reclaimed by the Chinese, the Taiwanese people were excited about China's victory and about Taiwan's return to the embrace of its "father nation" (祖國) (Li and Lin 2006, 231). In one of these celebratory events in front of Longshan Temple in 1945, Wu Chu-che, who had recently returned from his studies in Japan, stepped onto the platform to direct the celebrating crowd to sing the national anthem of the Republic of China (Wu Zhou Xiuyue, interview with author, Taipei, 5 October 2007).

¹⁷ The information regarding the school and the school name in Chinese as well as his graduation date is derived from the author's interview with Mrs. Wu on 5 October 2007. It coincides with the information provided by Taipei University of Technology. But, during the post-war period, records of this kind could be subject to extreme human errors and therefore the information regarding the school name needs to be further verified. Whether he earned a degree is not certain.

As Wu's life was closely connected to Longshan Temple, in which the statue of Bodhisattva Guanyin occupies the main shrine, his music also clearly reflected that connection. The Buddhist song "The Inspiration of Bodhisattva Guanyin" (觀音靈感歌) (Wu 1983b, 8), for example, was inspired by a personal revelatory experience in the temple during the 1958 restoration work of its main hall (Wu Zhou Xiuyue, interview with author, Taipei, 5 October 2007). It was also in this temple that Wu, after a chain of personal events and encounters, decided to devote himself to his later Buddhist work.

Wu's family had long before adopted Buddhism. In the beginning, his Buddhist belief was more a family tradition than a personal choice. That changed when he read a book in the Longshan Temple library that argued for the superiority of Buddhism over Christianity. The book prompted him to begin contemplating the unique qualities of Buddhism. One day in 1959, while he was wandering in the temple, he ran into a Buddhist monk from the United States who was temporarily staying in Longshan Temple to learn Chinese Buddhism. Wu's curiosity soon turned into admiration, when after talking to the foreign monk he learned of the strong motivation the monk had in his pursuit of enlightenment in Buddhism. After his encounter with the American monk, he told his wife, "It is a pity that we Chinese do not know the value of our own heritage. Instead, we need a foreign person to tell us that. It is such a shame." At that point, he began to reexamine his Buddhist belief and his identity as a Buddhist and a Chinese (Wu Zhou Xiuyue, interview with author, 5 October 2007). As his ideas about his cultural identity developed, he began to consider himself an heir

of Chinese culture and felt a strong sense of responsibility to Chinese Buddhism, which he considered a significant part of his own cultural heritage.¹⁸ He believed that Chinese Buddhism was in decline and needed to be restored to its original glory. By the end of the same year (1959), he had determined to devote himself to Buddhism.

Wu began to compose Buddhist songs in 1958 (Wu 1983, 42). At the time, he met a young mainland monk named Xinran, who was a friend of Hsing Yun and who was similarly exiled to Taiwan from mainland China. Since his arrival in Taiwan, Xinran had been involved in the composition of Buddhist songs with other musicians. Some of Xinran's songs had been circulated in Buddhist circles, enjoying some popularity.¹⁹ After they met, Wu and Xinran soon became good friends with shared interests in music and Buddhism. They remained friends and collaborators for the rest of Wu's life. Several of their collaborations, including "Praise to the Holy Bodhisattva Guanyin" (聖觀音頌) (Wu 1983c, 12) and "The Perfect Connection" (美滿姻緣) (Wu 1983d, 18), have since been widely sung within the Buddhist circle in Taiwan. As an example, six out of the thirty-three songs in Wu's songbook *The Buddhist Songs* (佛教歌曲集), published in 1983, were collaborations with Xinran.

¹⁸ "Chinese Buddhism" in this particular context denotes the common religious cultural heritage of Chinese people as a cultural group. It differs from the same wording in chapter 3 used to differentiate the Chinese Buddhist tradition developed in Chinese mainland before 1949 from Taiwan Buddhism in a historical-political sense.

¹⁹ According to Xinran, one of his songs, "Praise to the Sangha" (讚僧歌) (Xinran 1956, 2), was written in 1949 in Penghu, an offshore county of Taiwan, where he stayed for two years on his way from the mainland to Taiwan. This is possibly true, according to available evidence derived from various early publications and interviews. If so, the song was likely the earliest contemporary Buddhist song written in Taiwan during the post-war era. According to interviews with original members of the Buddhist Choir in Ilan in 1950s, the song was one of the four earliest songs used in their Buddhist activities in 1954. It was also included in the 1956 *The Buddhist Holy Songs* published by the choir. Since Xinran and Hsing Yun were friends relocated to Taiwan approximately at the same time, the song's inclusion in the choir's repertoire is not surprising.

According to Wu's wife, Wu Chu-che met Hsing Yun between 1954 and 1955, not long after the young cleric accepted the invitation from Ilan to lead the Buddhist community in the city. Upon learning of his being a musician, Hsing Yun invited Wu to compose Buddhist songs for him (Wu Zhou Xiuyue, interview with author, Taipei, 5 October 2007). However, their early encounter did not immediately lead to any joined effort in producing new Buddhist songs. As a matter of fact, Wu's songs did not appear in the music publications of Hsing Yun's group until the early 1960s.²⁰

In addition to composing for Xinran and Hsing Yun, Wu collaborated with several other monastics who similarly became prominent Buddhist leaders. Among them was Venerable Chengyi of Vihara Huayan (華嚴精社), another mainland monk who had sponsored Buddhist song activities since the 1950s. In his own temple in Toucheng, a neighboring town of Ilan, Chengyi organized a Buddhist choir similar to Hsing Yun's group. Wu's other lyricists include Venerable Shengyan, later the leader of the Dharma Drum Mountain (法鼓山), and Venerable Shengyin of Wanfo Temple (萬佛寺) in Taichung.

²⁰ The dating of the events is derived or determined according to various sources including interviews with Mrs. Wu Chu-che, Zhang Cilian, a choir member of the 1950s Buddhist Choir in Ilan (telephone conversation with author, 20 April 2010), and Venerable Xinran (interview with author, Taipei, 1 December 2008), in addition to Wu's and Hsing Yun's publications. According to Zhang's memory, the choir members met with Wu in an early date (likely in the 1950s), but he did not compose "many" songs for them at that time. This explains why most of his Buddhist musical works written for the group did not appear in the choir's publications before the early 1960s. The earliest evidence available to us today that shows Wu's participation in Hsing Yun's activities is the inclusion of Wu's song "Year, Month, Day, Hour" (年月日時) (Wu 1983, 24) in the 1961 records published by Hsing Yun's group.



Figure 4.5: Wu Chu-che and his students from Longshan Temple's civil education program posing for an end-of-course shot in 1959. Second from left, front row (seated), is Wu. Used by permission of the Wu Family.

In addition to composing Buddhist songs, Wu actively participated in Buddhist musical activities and performances. Between 1979 and 1993, he led several important Buddhist music groups, including Guanshiyin Choir (觀世音合唱團) in Taipei and Yuan Kuang Choir of the Yuan Kuang Buddhist College (圓光佛學院). Aside from music, Wu also devoted himself to the creation and the publication of the *Buddhist's World Picture Bulletin* (佛教世界畫報), which was almost entirely self-financed. In 1989 he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease not long after his retirement from Taipei Institute of Technology (renamed National Taipei University of Technology in 1997) where he had been employed for forty-four years. After suffering from a

combination of illnesses for over fifteen years, Wu died in 2005 at the age of eighty-one.

In the 1980s, the general social and political change in Taiwan inspired rapid cultural development. The Buddhist genre quickly developed in new directions, with diverse styles, thanks to the creative efforts of new Buddhist musicians who joined in the composition and performance of Buddhist songs during this period. While new styles were emerging, Wu's songs continued to enjoy popularity among Buddhists in Taiwan. The effort of Wu and other active musicians in promoting Buddhist songs definitely encouraged the new musical culture to take root in Taiwan, and choir singing to become an accepted form of Buddhist activity. With growing popularity, Buddhist choral singing, accompanied by a rapidly expanding repertoire of Buddhist songs, has become a way for Buddhists today to identify themselves.

Influences in Wu's Buddhist Songs: an Analysis

As previously stated, Wu's songs, like most Buddhist songs of this period, were written in collaboration with Buddhist clerics and had a direct connection with the monastic community. His songs, like those used in Chinese Buddhist communities since the genre's early period in Shanghai, were similarly intended to be used in lay Buddhist social gatherings and celebratory occasions. As a tradition, his songs were often performed by Buddhist community choirs as well as congregations, depending on the circumstances of different events and occasions. For this reason his songs were

written with consideration for differing styles and abilities, as the works needed to be approachable for both professional performers and amateur singers. His talents in merging styles and incorporating elements of contemporary popular genres contributed much to the accessibility of his music.

Different influences may be observed in his songs and deserve investigation. The influence of Christian hymns on his music, for example, can be identified by a characteristic use of words like *song* (頌, odes or praises) or *zan* (讚, praises) in his song titles. As Christian hymns are customarily called *zan mei shi* (讚美詩, lit. poems complimenting God) and to praise God is *ge song shangdi* (歌頌上帝), the particular use of *zan* or *song* in Wu's songs evokes a sense of progressiveness thought to be associated with Christian songs. In addition, Wu's compositional technique frequently mirrors various Western classical song forms, which can also be commonly observed in Christian songs popularly known to the people in Taiwan. The effort may be understood as his intent to make Buddhism comparable to Christianity, a religion at that time representing Western civilization for the Taiwanese. In addition to learning from Christian hymns, Wu regularly adopted idioms from Taiwanese folk songs and pop songs of the 1930s, reflecting his cultural heritage. In a practical sense, this may have increased the appeal of his music to the majority Taiwanese audience. With these borrowed musical idioms, he transferred not only the musical but also the cultural meanings of the contemporary genres to his songs.

With the following examples, I intend to draw comparisons between Wu's Buddhist songs and songs selected from different genres from Taiwan to further

describe Wu's musical ideas and the meanings carried therein. The shared similarities between Wu's songs and songs from other genres will help highlight the different influences on his songs and help clarify Wu's musical thoughts.

Influence of Protestant Songs. His strong inclination toward learning from Christian music in Taiwan is not only evidenced in his use of Christian musical idioms but also confirmed by his wife's recollections on his admiration for Christian hymns. "He used to say that the Christian hymns are great music for everyone to appreciate, that we Buddhists must learn from them," recalled Mrs. Wu (interview with author, Taipei, 5 October 2007). Christian churches in Taiwan enjoyed great prosperity in the 1950s and 1960s, especially during the early years of the Nationalist government's exile in Taiwan. With such great appreciation of the *shengge* (lit. holy songs, Protestant hymns) of Christian churches, it seemed natural that Wu would want to create his own Buddhist songs after the Christian models in order to compete with these Western religious songs. Some of his songs carry not only the particular hymnal expressiveness but also close formal similarities. "Praise to the Holy Bodhisattva Guanyin" (聖觀音頌), for example, does share a high degree of similarity with the Christian *shengge* "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," which is among the most popular Christian hymns of all time in Taiwan.²¹ A comparison of both melodies is revealing (see Figure 4.6): they both begin on the dominant, followed by an arpeggiated tonic triad in a downward motion. Though the Christian hymn continues to move downward and the Buddhist praise leaps an octave higher, the fundamental

²¹ The song was originally composed by American composer Charles C. Converse (1832–1918) in 1868.

melodic structure is not disturbed. Both reach the upper neighbor C in the second measure before moving stepwise downward to close at the supertonic (measure 4 of both melodies).

聖觀音頌
(二部合唱)
降E調 莊嚴 **Maestoso** (Praise to the Holy Bodhisattva Guanyin) 心然法師詞 吳居微曲

"Bodhisattva Guanyin," line 1

5 — 3 1 | 6 · 6 5 — | 3 3 5 1 | 2 — — 0 |

聖 自 在 觀 世 音 ! 慈 悲 誓 願 深 ,

"What a Friend," line 1

"Bodhisattva Guanyin," line 2

5 — 3 1 | 6 · 6 5 — | 3 3 2 2 | 1 — — 0 |

水 災 中 , 火 難 內 , 風 旱 與 地 震 ,

"What a Friend," line 2

Figure 4.6: "Praise to the Holy Bodhisattva Guanyin" in comparison with "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

After the temporary rest at the half cadence, the melodies continue with a repetition of the first phrase but close, this time, at the tonic Eb.²² With their skeletal notes marked out, the similarity between the two songs is outstanding.

Melodic formation originating from an arpeggiated triad, as demonstrated in the opening phrase of this song, is a uniquely Western melodic concept. Commonly employed by Buddhist musicians including Wu Chu-che and Yang Yongpu, this technique may be considered as one of the most irreducible Western influences in Buddhist songs from this period. Among other Western-influenced compositional techniques are the use of phrase-period structure—a Western melodic convention set in a question-and-answer manner—and imitative sequencing and motivic development. An example of the latter may be found in the same song. The original motives (motive A and B, see Figure 4.7) first presented in measure 1 and 2 are employed for the development of the contrasting section (beginning in measure 9) and closing section (beginning in measure 16). As demonstrated by the score analysis, motive B serves as a basic unit for the development of the contrasting section, while motive A is subject to different melodic and rhythmic treatments in the closing section.

²² According to Shenkarian theory, a note with an octave alteration should be considered as the same note. The C in the second measure is considered as an upper neighbor of the primary Bb on a deeper level.

降 E 調 莊嚴
Maestoso

聖觀音頌

(二部合唱)

心然法師詞
吳居微曲

Motive A Motive B

5 — 3 1 | 6 · 6 5 — | 3 3 5 1 | 2 — — 0 |
聖 自 在 觀 世 音 ! 慈 悲 誓 願 深 , Antecedent (question)

5 — 3 1 | 6 · 6 5 — | 3 3 2 2 | 1 — — 0 |
水 災 中 火 難 內 , 風 旱 與 地 震 , Consequent (answer)

Contrast section based on motive B

2 2 2 — | 3 · 2 1 — | 4 6 1 · 6 | 5 — — 0 |
是 身 病 , 是 心 惱 , 虔 念 觀 世 音 ,

6 · 6 1 — | 5 · 5 3 — | 5 5 2 · 3 | 1 — — 5 5 |
不 分 信 , 不 分 疑 , 災 厄 化 為 塵 。 偉 哉

Closing section based on motive A

3 · 2 1 1 1 | 5 · 4 3 — | 2 3 4 5 | 3 — — 5 5 |
觀 世 音 大 哉 觀 世 音 ! 誓 救 衆 生 苦 , 度 盡

Motive A augmented to form part of closing section

3 — 2 — | 1 — — 5 5 | 3 · 2 1 1 1 | 5 · 4 3 — |
證 菩 提 , 偉 哉 觀 世 音 ! 大 哉 觀 世 音 !

2 3 4 5 | 3 — — 5 5 | 3 — 2 — | 1 — — 0 ||
誓 救 衆 生 苦 , 度 盡 證 菩 提 。

Figure 4.7: “Praise to the Holy Bodhisattva Guanyin,” an analysis on motivic development.

The song “Year, Month, Day, Hour” (年月日時) (Wu 1983a, 24) further illustrates Wu’s preference in motivic development techniques (see Figure 4.8). As may be observed in the score, the formation of the melodic line is in fact based on one

single musical motive first presented at the beginning of the song (mm. 1–2). The economical use of materials characterizing some Western classical music is similarly demonstrated in Wu's songs. As the melody proceeds, the initial two-measure pattern is first treated in a pseudo-repetition in a higher register (mm. 3–4) and then in a quasi-inversion (mm. 5–6) before the motivic phrase is restated with some degree of variation at the end of the first period (mm. 7–8). The contrasting section (measures 9–16) is based on a motivic sequential imitative motion that pushes the melodic flow to its climax before its closing phrase beginning with the last upbeat of measure 14.

Wu's advanced Western musical techniques, with their references to specific musical gestures, make his songs stand in sharp contrast with Chinese traditional Buddhist music such as *fanbai* (Buddhist melodious chants), which is closely related to Chinese traditional genres. However, it is not true to say that similar motivic or phrasal patterns associated with the Western music style are not found in Chinese music or traditional Chinese Buddhist music. Rather, the Western concept of motives and phrases regarding a fixed number of measures regulated by a single meter in a phrase-period structure is alien to the original Chinese music tradition. The reasons are many and the present context might not call for further explanation. The field

年月日時
(Year, Month, Day, Hour)

F 調 小行板
Andantino

虛雲和尚詞
吳居微曲

The musical score is presented in four systems, each with a staff of music, a line of numbered notation (likely a simplified notation system), and Chinese lyrics. English annotations above the staves describe the development of the original motive.

System 1:
 Original motive: 5 | 3 · 2 3 | 1 · 1 1 | 4 · 6 6 | 5 · 5 · 5 |
 Original motive inverted to form a semiphrase answer: 5 | 3 · 2 3 | 1 · 1 1 | 4 · 6 6 | 5 · 5 · 5 |
 Lyrics: 一年復一年，形容漸漸遷，骨

System 2:
 Original motive modified with an additional chromatic passing tone: 4 · 2 2# | 3 · 3 5 | 3 · 2 7 | 1 · 1 1 |
 Original motive forming end of a sentence: 4 · 2 2# | 3 · 3 5 | 3 · 2 7 | 1 · 1 1 |
 Lyrics: 髓徐枯竭，眉毛看漸穿，幻

System 3:
 Original motive modified to form imitative progression: 1 · 1 1 | 2 · 2 2 | 2 · 2 2 | 3 · 3 3 |
 Lyrics: 身如聚沫，四大豈能堅，五

System 4:
 Original motive modified to form the ending phrase: 5 · 4 3 | 6 · 6 6 | 7 · 3 2 | 1 · 1 ||
 Lyrics: 欲蔽三界，何時見性天。

Figure 4.8: “Year, Month, Day, Hour,” an analysis on motivic development.

observation of American musicologist John Hazedel Levis, an example of the initial contact of Western scholars with the original form of Chinese music and their reaction to it, may give us insight into a fundamental difference between the musical cultures.

Levis came to China early in the 1900s and spent over twenty-five years observing and collecting Chinese music. He reported that Chinese traditional music would normally adopt a free style with a complex pattern of meter change. He also found that Chinese music was not easily subject to motivic analysis. He might be wrong to apply the Western concept of “meter change” to the description of Chinese *sanban* (散板), the unmetered traditional music style. His observation nevertheless gives us something to ponder about the general stylistic character of the Chinese musical tradition. Levis concluded that it would be unwise to fix Chinese music in a 4/4 (four beats per measure) meter or any Western musical system, which would spoil the meaning of the music (Xiao 2004, 586–87). We should also bear in mind that it is not just because of the Western techniques Wu employed in his songs but his systematic use of these techniques that makes the Western influence prominent in his songs. Historically speaking, the aforementioned techniques as employed in Wu’s songs may have been adopted by contemporary Chinese art music composers in the same or earlier period in China and Taiwan. However, they were not yet as common in the repertoire of Buddhist songs during that period. At the least, the techniques of this more advanced level were not commonly found in Buddhist songs from the Shanghai period during the 1940s and early 1950s.

Influence of Min-Tai Folk Songs. In addition to Western motivic and phrasal techniques, the employment of the regional Min-Tai (Southern Fujian and Taiwan) melodic style is significant in Wu’s songs. As argued by Miao Jing and Qiao Jianzhong (Miao and Qiao 1987, 116–28), folk songs of Min-Tai (Southern Fujian and

Taiwan) origins, unlike other Chinese folk music, possess a simplistic quality. Most often, the melodic flow is within a limited pitch range, employing straightforward rhythmic and melodic styles. In a typical Min-Tai melody, according to Miao and Qiao, there are neither abrupt jumps nor decorative grace notes that characterize other species of Chinese folk songs. The regional flavor can be heard especially well in the idiomatic pattern—a melodic interval of a third followed by a second (See Figure 4.9a).



Figure 4.9a: Min-Tai melodic pattern.

However, this technique is not used without modification in Wu's songs. The pattern appears as often in its inversion or under other forms of treatment as in its original form. For example, in "Heart Testament" (心証) (Wu 1983f, 30), the Min-Tai motive introduced at the very beginning of the song is answered with its retrograde-inversion (see Figure 4.9b).

心 印 同安禪師詞
 (Heart Testament) 吳居微曲

The musical score is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of two phrases. The first phrase, labeled 'Original motive in Min-Tai style', is highlighted with a bracket and corresponds to the notes G4, A4, B4, and A4. The second phrase, labeled 'Min-Tai motive in inversion-retrograde to form a consequence semi-phrase', is also highlighted with a bracket and corresponds to the notes G4, F#4, E4, and D4. Below the staff, the lyrics are written in Chinese characters: 問君心印作何顏？心印誰人敢授傳？. Below the lyrics, a sequence of numbers is provided: 3 5 6. 5 | 1 2 3 — | 2 3 5. 3 | 2 1 2 6 — |. The numbers 3, 5, 6, and 5 correspond to the first phrase, and the numbers 1, 2, 3, and — correspond to the second phrase. The numbers 2, 3, 5, and 3 correspond to the third phrase, and the numbers 2, 1, 2, and 6 correspond to the fourth phrase.

Figure 4.9b: “Heart Testament,” with melodic patterns derived from Min-Tai music tradition highlighted.

Another example may be found in the song “Rootless Tree” (無根樹) (Wu 1983g, 21) (see Figure 4.9c), wherein the same motive, again introduced at the very beginning of the song, is answered by its retrograde in the second semi-phrase. The following consequent phrase (mm. 5–8), in answering the previous phrase, parallels the original motive with its retrograde-inversion. The song continues on to a contrasting section (mm. 9–12), using the same motivic material as the basis for an imitative upward-moving progression that effectively increases tension. The closing phrase (mm. 13–16) begins with the original motive in its inverted (or quasi-inverted) form and is answered by a concluding upward-moving semi-phrase (see Figure 4.9c). Notably, the treatment of the closing phrase creates a melodic contour nearly opposite that of the first phrase.

C 調 中 板
Moderato

無 根 樹

(Rootless Tree)

張 三 丰 詞
吳 居 微 曲

Original motive in Min-Tai style

Min-Tai motive in retrograde to form second semi-phrase

3 5 6 — | i 3 5 — | 6 5 3 5 | 1 2 3 2 — |

無 根 樹， 花 正 幽， 貪 戀 榮 華 誰 肯 休？

Original motive in its retrograde-inversion

Original motive in its inverted form with an intervening "A"

2 3 5 — | 3 2 3 — | 2 3 5 6 3 2 | 1 — — 0 |

浮 生 事， 苦 海 舟， 蕩 去 飄 來 不 自 由！

Original motive in its retrograde-inversion to form contrasting section

2 . 2 3 5 | 6 5 6 — | 5 . 5 6 i | 2 i 2 — |

無 岸 無 邊 誰 繫 泊？ 常 在 魚 龍 險 處 游。

Quasi-inversion of the original motive

Concluding phrase harks back to the original motive

3 . 2 i — | i . 6 5 — | 3 5 6 i 2 3 | i — — 0 ||

肯 回 首， 是 岸 頭， 莫 待 風 波 壞 了 舟！

Figure 4.9c: "Rootless Tree," with melodic patterns derived from Min-Tai music tradition highlighted.

In addition to the use of the Min-Tai motive, regional musical characteristics, such as the preference for simplicity in overall melodic concept, are apparent through listening. However, aesthetic traits are subtler and less easily identified than data

legible in the score, not to mention that much information in the score is by nature dependent on subjective judgment to determine its eligibility for explaining certain cases (such as the length of phrases or the economy of the use of pitches or pitch range). A comparison between “The Journey to the Pureland” (淨土的旅程) (Wu 1983h, 14) and the popularly known Taiwanese folksong “Jasmine in June” (六月茉莉) may help illuminate the significance of the regional taste in Wu’s songs. The high degree of resemblance between the song and the folk song in general is beyond doubt, as we may see that the basic structures of both songs are in fact nearly identical. An examination of their rhythmic/melodic formation reveals more. The two songs are similarly structured by the use of a rhythmic pattern of a quarter note followed by two eighth notes (long-short-short). While the folk song is structured straightforwardly using this pattern with a slight embellishment at the end of the melody, Wu’s melody, while remaining firmly in the regional style, introduces triplets, a rare rhythmic pattern in Chinese (folk) music. Melodically speaking, the two songs, both a musical period in length, are similarly conceived within a range of a sixth with the exception of the Cs at the beginning of the consequent (second) phrase. The skeletal notes of both songs squarely match with each other. They both start on the fifth tone (F, the modal center of the folk song) of the Bb major scale, moving a sixth higher at the middle of the first phrase and returning to the starting F. The second phrase (mm. 5–8) of each song starts at the supertonic (C, the second tone) of the scale and again moves upwards. Both, pursuing a smooth, uninterrupted flow of melodic line, share a similar melodic contour. The only difference is that the Taiwanese folk song returns to F, the

modal center of the Chinese *Zhi* mode, while Wu's Buddhist song continues up to Bb to confirm the Western Bb major tonality (see Figure 4.10).

The figure displays a musical score comparison between two songs. The top section, labeled "Pureland," line 1, shows a melody in G-clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notes are accompanied by numbered notation (5, 5, 3, 6, 5, 3, 3, 2, 1, 2, 0, 3, 2, 1, 6, 1, 6, 2, 2, 1, 6, 5, 0). Below the notes are the Chinese lyrics: 諸行無常法鐘鳴，浮生若夢當覺醒。 The bottom section, labeled "Jasmine in June," line 1 (transposed for compasion), shows a melody in G-clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notes are accompanied by numbered notation (2, 2, 3, 5, 3, 5, 6, 6, 1, 5, 0, 5, 6, 1, 3, 2, 2, 6, 5, 1, 0). Below the notes are the Chinese lyrics: 雙手合掌在當胸，聲聲喚我是慈聲。 A callout bubble points to the notes 6, 1, 3, 2 in the "Pureland" line 1, stating: "Introducing dominant (F) and tonic (Bb) to establish Bb major". The bottom section, labeled "Jasmine in June," line 2, shows a melody in G-clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notes are accompanied by numbered notation (2, 2, 3, 5, 3, 5, 6, 6, 1, 5, 0, 5, 6, 1, 3, 2, 2, 6, 5, 1, 0). Below the notes are the Chinese lyrics: 雙手合掌在當胸，聲聲喚我是慈聲。

"Pureland," line 1

諸行無常法鐘鳴，浮生若夢當覺醒。

"Jasmine in June," line 1 (transposed for compasion)

雙手合掌在當胸，聲聲喚我是慈聲。

Introducing dominant (F) and tonic (Bb) to establish Bb major

"Pureland," line 2

雙手合掌在當胸，聲聲喚我是慈聲。

"Jasmine in June," line 2

Figure 4.10: "Journey to the Pureland" (Wu 1983, 14) in comparison with the Taiwanese folksong "Jasmine in June."

Influence of Taiwanese Pop Songs. The Taiwanese pop song repertoire of the 1930s through the 1950s was another major source of Wu's inspiration. One finds shared melodic patterns both in his songs and Taiwanese pop songs from this period. An example of this type is his Buddhist wedding song "The Perfect Connection" (美滿姻緣) (Wu 1983d, 18). The melodic pattern of this song, an upward motion in dotted rhythm (see Figure 4.11a), can be commonly found in Taiwanese popular songs from the 1930s, such as "Sigh in a Moony Night" (月夜嘆) (see Figure 4.11b), "Bird in the Rain" (雨中鳥) (Figure 4.11c), "Forever Spring" (日日春) (Figure 4.11d) and "A Cut of a Plum Twig" (一剪梅) (Figure 4.11e), to name just a few. As is apparent in these examples, this particular rhythmic pattern is a musical cliché in the Taiwanese pop genre, often used to begin and again to end a song, and thus acts as a clear reference when employed elsewhere. The general structure of the Buddhist wedding song also shares much in common with the Taiwanese pop songs "A Cut of a Plum Twig" and "Bird in the Rain." A comparison of the three line by line is revealing (see Figure 4.12).

a. "The Perfect Connection"



b. "Sigh in the Moony Night"



c. "Bird in the Rain"



d. "Forever Spring"



e. "A Cut of Plum Twig"



Figure 4.11a-e: "The Perfect Connection" in comparison with examples of Taiwanese pop songs. The above examples are beginning phrases of aforementioned pop songs aligned for comparison. One may easily notice their shared primary rhythmic pattern.

The image displays a musical score for three pieces: "The Perfect Connection", "A Cut of a Plum Twig", and "Bird in the Rain". The score is organized into four systems, each corresponding to a line of the lyrics. Each system contains three staves: the top staff for "The Perfect Connection", the middle for "A Cut of a Plum Twig", and the bottom for "Bird in the Rain". The lyrics are in Chinese characters. The first system (line 1) has a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The second system (line 2) has a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The third system (line 3) has a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The fourth system (line 4) has a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics for each line are: Line 1: 花 香 迎 人 影, 喜 氣 漫 盈 盈,; Line 2: 龍 鳳 花 燭 裏, 永 結 共 結 心.; Line 3: 互 助 又 互 愛, 同 孝 堂 上 親,; Line 4: 修 身 弘 佛 法, 建 立 好 家 庭。

Connection, line 1
花 香 迎 人 影, 喜 氣 漫 盈 盈,

Plum Twig, line 1

Bird in the Rain, line 1

Connection, line 2
龍 鳳 花 燭 裏, 永 結 共 結 心.

Plum Twig, line 2

Bird in the Rain, line 2

Connection, line 3
互 助 又 互 愛, 同 孝 堂 上 親,

Plum Twig, line 3

Bird in the Rain, line 3

Connection, line 4
修 身 弘 佛 法, 建 立 好 家 庭。

Plum Twig, line 4

Bird in the Rain, line 4

Figure 4.12: “The Perfect Connection” in comparison line by line with “A Cut of a Plum Twig” and “Bird in the Rain.”

Wu's Buddhist Songs in a Historical Perspective

In the 1920s and 1930s in Taiwan, when Wu Chu-che was growing up, a great sociocultural change was underway. The cultural development in Taiwan during this period was largely influenced by two factors: an official reform program initiated by the Japanese colonial government on one side, and the cultural movements led by Taiwanese elites and intellectuals on the other. Among the reform works initiated by the Japanese colonial government, educational reform in the 1920s had the most direct influence on the cultural and social change in the following decades in Taiwan.

The improved social conditions in the 1920s undoubtedly encouraged the quick development of popular cultural activities. During the 1920s and 1930s, Taiwanese elites and intellectuals who received education in Taiwan and/or in Japan began to actively involve themselves in work dedicated to social improvement, introducing new ideas to the people with free lectures, movies, concerts, art exhibitions and other forms of cultural activities. The early grassroots movement of the 1930s was one important form.²³ This movement was influenced by the concurrent cultural movements in mainland China and shared similar goals. Among them, the quest for political freedom and the pursuit of Taiwanese cultural identity were important. With their literary and artistic works, the enthusiasts meant to reflect social

²³ Historians who research into related areas generally agree that the article "How Can We Not Encourage the Devotion to the Development of Our Native Literature?" (怎樣不提倡鄉土文學) published by Huang Shihui (1900-1945) in 1930 initiated the earlier debates on how grassroots literature in Taiwan should take its direction in this period (Lin 2006). This initial development of literary awareness in pursuit of Taiwanese cultural identity should not be confused with the literary grassroots movement beginning in the mid 1960s.

realities, to provoke general concern for political and social restrictions imposed by the colonial government, and to encourage participation in their social and cultural activities aimed toward social transformation (Li and Lin 2006, 198–99). In their cultural activities, music served important functions in transmitting ideas. Many of the songs we still remember today include “Song of Taiwanese Autonomy” (台灣自治歌), “Song of the Labor Day” (勞動節歌) and “Song of Appeal” (請願歌). In the history of Taiwan this was probably the first time songs were created for the purpose of promoting social change (Yang 2000, 35–105; 153–178).

Songwriters of this period, including the widely known pop song lyricist Chen Junyu and musician Deng Yuxian, positively responded to this movement. In music, the enthusiasts advocated that conscious musicians should not only assume the responsibility of guiding the people, but should also listen to the people for their voice (ibid. 175–76). In addition to writing new songs, they deemed that the collection of folk songs and traditional music were among the most important works for them to undertake. Through their efforts, the devotees hoped that the Taiwanese people might unite and stand firm as a new people. It is no surprise that we also find similar themes and goals in Wu’s Buddhist songs.

The personal devotion to the creation of Buddhist songs for Wu was not only about a work supported by a personal faith, but also about a sense of dignity felt by a Taiwanese/Chinese intellectual at a time of national and cultural crisis. Wu believed that national progress would be realized with emphasis on both learning from the West and preserving the culture of the people. He once discussed the national style and the

international (Western) style coexisting in his songs and believed that both should be treated equally, albeit with a distinction between them. He said, “although it is important to preserve the national character in music, it is also important to adopt the international style in order to remain relevant in the contemporary age” (Wu 1983, 41). Wu’s remark unequivocally reminds one of the common application of *ti-yong* (體用, the substance-function dialectics), first proposed by Zhang Zhidong during the late Qing, by reformers in their modernization works. With *ti-yong*, Zhang meant to guard the national life in its entirety by preserving Chinese cultural heritage (*ti*), while employing Western learning for serving practical needs (*yong*).²⁴ Likewise, Wu believed that the culture of the people provided the original meaning of his music, while the Western form facilitated its spread. With a strong nationalist inclination, he expressed his earnest hopes of restoring Buddhist/Chinese culture in the postscript of his Buddhist songbook *The Buddhist Songs* (佛教歌曲集, 1983):

I earnestly hope that composers, young and old, would participate in the creation of new Buddhist musical works. Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism are the three legs of Ding [of our *culture*].²⁵ The composition of Buddhist music is not only a benefit for society, but an important part of the restoration of *Chinese culture*. (Wu 1983, 41, italics mine)

²⁴ For more thorough information on the *ti-yong* approach of Chinese modernization, please refer to chapter 1, page 14, where a designated section on the first stage of Chinese modernization movement provides a full contextual description on Zhang Zhidong’s idea of “Chinese learning for substance, Western learning for function” (中學為體，西學為用).

²⁵ A *ding* is a triple-legged ancient Chinese cookware made in bronze. It was often inscribed with records of ancient political events and taken as a symbol of great importance. By using the quintessential symbol of ancient and venerable Chinese culture, Wu highlights not only the importance of Buddhism in Chinese culture, but also the significance of his work in promoting Chinese culture.

In this postscript (the excerpt above shows a small portion of it), Wu repeatedly employed *wenhua* (culture) and *minzu* (nation or the people) in combination with other words to form his nationalist concepts. These combinations include *minzu yishi* (national consciousness), *minzu wenhua* (national culture), *minzu xuanlu* (national melodies) and *zhonghua wenhua* (Chinese culture), emphasizing the significance of the Chinese cultural heritage in his songs. However, the meaning of the word *minzu* (“nation”), as used in Wu’s text, connoting the “Chinese people” as a whole in a conventional sense, is an undifferentiated term. The “nation” in this context could include all peoples living within Chinese border, while *zhonghua wenhua*, “Chinese culture,” means Chinese high culture created primarily by Han Chinese.²⁶

The use of these words and their unspecific meanings reflect the 1960s and 1970s sociocultural environment under the rule of the Nationalist party.²⁷ In considering the personal life experience of the late musician as a Taiwanese/Chinese composer born in the Japanese colonial period and, in particular, the cultural influences found in his music, the idea of *nation* is certainly more complicated than the common interpretation of Wu’s usage of these words could satisfy. As evidenced in his songs, the references to the musical cultures of Taiwan, including folksongs, pop songs and Christian songs are more prominent than musical cultures found in any other regions of China. Though the language he used might have been influenced by government

²⁶ The Han Chinese are the majority ethnic group living within the Chinese border. In addition to Han, there are major ethnic groups including Manturians, Mogolians, Muslims and Tibetans, and minority groups.

²⁷ A fuller description of the sociopolitical background in connection with government policies of this period may be found in the section of this chapter devoted to the biography of Yang Yongpu at pages 174–76.

censorship, the earnest hope for inspiring a change in Buddhism and a search for one's cultural identity in Buddhist music are unmistakable. Wu might not have lived to hear the kind of Buddhist music he wanted Chinese/Taiwanese Buddhism to have, but his life's work has won him a position in the history of Chinese/Taiwanese Buddhist music. The expansion of Taiwanese monastic groups to a worldwide scale has helped his songs reach many corners of the world.

CONCLUSION

Preceded by the Buddhist song activities in the mainland China, the development of the Buddhist genre in Taiwan was not only a continuation of Shanghai Buddhist musical culture, but was furthered by Taiwanese Buddhist musicians, among whom Yang Yongpu and Wu Chu-che were two important pioneers. Their Buddhist songs were not only their creative outlets but also results of the influences they received from their respective cultural backgrounds and the new cultural-political environment of the post-war period in Taiwan.

Both Yang and Wu grew up amid great sociopolitical change, albeit of different types influenced by different political forces. Accordingly, their music should be understood within the context of each composer's unique background. Yang was born in China and grew up in a time of enormous social and national upheaval. His early life was intertwined with national crisis and reform movements. Wu was born in colonial Taiwan, which was comparatively stable under the Japanese

occupation. But Wu's early life was similarly connected to the sociocultural changes during the Japanese colonial period in the 1920s and 1930s. In Yang's songs, we see the influences from the earlier Chinese reform movements on the mainland; we see in Wu's songs similar elements derived from social movements that occurred in Taiwan approximately around the same time. Consequently, they shared in their songs the themes of the pursuit of national progress and the goal of Chinese/Taiwanese cultural restoration. Their songs, which use musical idioms and forms closely associated with music of the civil movements, reflect the spirit of the reform age. Their enthusiasm for national cultural revival and progress was remarkable.²⁸

However, these concurrent movements occurred in different politically defined geographical spaces with slightly different meanings, and subsequently impacted the composers and their music in different ways. We notice that their concepts of "nation" and "national culture" might not be the same. For Yang, the nation was the Chinese nation, which was once greatly impacted by foreign aggression, and which at the time suffered from extreme political and social disintegration due to internal political struggles. Yang experienced all the extreme national turmoil and also personally participated in the intellectual movements occurring on the mainland. Inevitably, the

²⁸ We must also realize that the cultural exchanges between Taiwan and mainland China were important for the development of Taiwan's cultural movements during the Japanese colonial period. The communication between the political and social activists on both sides of the Taiwan Strait was not completely disrupted during this time. Evidences show that, in 1911, Liang Qichao, the later leading thinker of the May Fourth Movement from China, traveled to Taiwan and remained in close contact with Lin Xiantang and other Taiwanese elites, who were leading sociopolitical movements against Japanese ruling in Taiwan. Many of his revolutionary ideas regarding social and political reforms were adopted by the movement leaders and intellectuals in Taiwan. The cultural movements on the mainland in the 1920s through the 1930s influenced similar movements in Taiwan (Ye 2000, 12–36).

influence of the cultural movements and their ideals to reform the society and the nation are never absent from his music.

For Wu, and perhaps for many Taiwanese as well, the nation in question probably had not yet been visible in concrete terms. A review of Taiwan's history tells us why. The political and cultural domination for over 300 years by different political powers, including imperial China, the Dutch, Japan and the Chinese Nationalist regime, had caused this misfortune of the Taiwanese people. These powers hardly ever put into consideration the future of the people and the land as their priority. The pursuit of one's nation in Wu's case was therefore more concerned with one's pursuit of cultural identity. Wu grew up in the 1920s and 1930s when the new cultural development of Taiwan took place in a form underlined by the intellectual struggle against Japanese colonial rule and the general cultural movements searching for cultural roots. Reflected in his adopted idioms from different genres, domestic and Western-influenced alike, Wu's pursuit of national identity and dignity was unmistakably a part of his musical language. The musical inspiration largely came from the Taiwanese musical heritage of folk songs, Christian missionary songs in Taiwan, and early Taiwanese pop songs.

Their different educational backgrounds also left a mark on their different musical styles. The government-sponsored musical-political programs in which Yang participated in China during wartime were intended for both government propaganda and social education. It greatly differed from the musical training received by Wu in the comparatively stable colonial Taiwan and Japan before the Allies' severe bombing

near the end of the Second World War. This resulted in different musical tastes and perspectives, both of which directly impacted the musical choices and thematic material in their respective work. While Yang's Buddhist song style, with its provocative rhythms, reflects his training in writing government propaganda songs, Wu's Buddhist songs, influenced by various styles of Taiwanese origin, carry a touch of lyrical simplicity.

Collectively, their Buddhist musical works influenced the development of Chinese Buddhist musical culture in Taiwan. Their songs helped reinterpret Chinese Buddhism with musical idioms informed by the ideals of the social and cultural movements of their time and introduced a new form of Buddhist spirituality in their personal musical language. In their songs, Buddhist faith, Chinese/Taiwanese nationalism, passion for the protection of one's cultural heritage, and pursuit of progress became one. The extraordinary life experience of the Buddhist musicians is therefore an inalienable element of the new musical expression of reform Buddhism in Taiwan. In this consideration, the understanding of the new Buddhist teaching and its music may require a new mode of interpretation in connection with the changing values of the society.

5.

A Course of History in Search of a New Cultural Identity

Chinese Buddhist songs originated in the twentieth century as Buddhists sought to reform their community in the face of Chinese modernity and modernization. *Xiandaihua* (modernization) has become the catchword in intellectual and popular conversations about the search for a progressive Chinese nation. Its meanings evolved side by side with the development of Chinese modernization movements. Its impact on Chinese society is evidenced by the characteristics found in musical expressions of this period, including Buddhist songs. Because of the close relationship between music and the cultural-historical development of China, it is therefore informative to examine the Chinese idea of *modernization* for a better understanding of the cultural contents of Buddhist songs.

The English word “modern” (現代) does not fit naturally into the history of China. An appropriate term when used to delineate European history, the Euro-American notion is not consistent with the evolution of Chinese culture and its stages of political and social changes. The cultural heritage of China is distinctive in terms of its possession of a history recorded in accordance with dynastic transitions based on particular sociopolitical contingencies. The idea of the “modern” has only become meaningful in Chinese history due to European involvement and/or intervention: first

in the sixteenth century, and second, during the especially important period beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century when the imperialist influence of Western powers became more and more prominent. However, it is not the case that China was completely isolated from foreign influences until recent centuries. Before the hostile confrontation between Western imperialism and China in the nineteenth century, multiple forms of cultural exchange, including religious and trading activities, occurred between the people of China and the rest of the world. These interactions, by all appearances, enriched Chinese culture, providing stimuli for its cultural growth. One may wonder: if the Western influence via Jesuits in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had not been interrupted during the seventeenth century due to political and historical reasons, would China have modernized earlier and thus avoid the Western aggression that began with the Opium Wars? Unfortunately, despite high hopes for the resolution of the nation's problems, Chinese modernization movements were marked with political struggles, economic chaos, military confrontations, and the loss of life. The cost of achieving modernization was extremely high. Therefore, the meaning of Chinese modernization should be considered in light of the hostile confrontation between China and the West, the people's response in terms of their resistance and finally, the humiliation suffered by the Chinese people. They are the inseparable elements of this history and should be considered as the many special characteristics of "Chinese modernization."

Different approaches were proposed in the search for a modern China in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Included among the proposals was the

so-called Wholesale Westernization (全盤西化) that demanded a complete transformation of China according to a Western model; namely the replacement of traditional culture with a Western one in *all* aspects of Chinese life.¹ Despite the good intention of the reformers to save their nation and preserve China's people from foreign aggression, the suppression of traditional culture, established ways of life, and time-honored ideals led to the distortion of a nation's self-confidence. The anti-religion movement of the 1920s, which intended to eradicate the entire Chinese religious tradition for the sake of national progress, provides a significant case study to analyze sites of tension between tradition and modernization.

Consider the transformation of the term *yinyue*. *Yinyue* (music), which traditionally referred to specific Chinese historical genres, became the term used to denote Western music in the twentieth century. While *yinyue* came to mean Western or Western-influenced music, a new term *guoyue* (national music) was devised to designate Chinese traditional music. In renaming Buddhist sounds as *fojiao yinyue* (Buddhist music), Buddhist reformers not only created a new vocabulary, but reinvented the very concept of monastic sound experience and consequently the idea of Chinese Buddhism (Chen 2005, 267). With "Buddhist music" as both a new concept and technology, the ancient teaching was recast in a new system of symbols that helped introduce new meanings and hence bridge Chinese Buddhism to the changing era.

¹ *Quanpan xihua* (translated by Hu Shih as Wholesale Westernization) though was proposed and supported by a number of different reform activists with slightly different emphases and interpretations, Hu Shih who made his proposal in 1929 was one of the most well-known during the early twentieth century (cf. Zheng 2006, 152).

As this example demonstrates, a Western notion—in this case, of “music”—reigned supreme as China modernized. In order to “improve” Chinese music, enthusiasts looked to Western musical styles for help. The Western musical system, including the use of harmony, polyphonic writing, the orchestra and technical characteristics that were natural extensions of Western musical aesthetic ideals, was presented by reformers to the Chinese people as representation of “advanced human culture” and therefore was taken to serve as a model for Chinese music in its modern transformation. On the one hand, reformers believed that Western music was capable of inspiring ethical values and moral conduct, and thereby could improve the Chinese lifestyle so as to create a progressive Chinese society. On the other hand, tradition, or anything related to tradition, was considered backward and therefore was an enemy of the people. It is thus no surprise to uncover historical artifacts, such as the reformers’ eulogies on Western music, and locate within them their disdain for Chinese traditional music. In general, such reformers asserted that Chinese traditional music was “non-aggressive” (無進取精神). Rather, it was “corruptive” (卑靡) (Fei Shi [1903] 1998, 190). In contrast, Western music, with its particular melodic and rhythmic style, could not only invoke “aggressive thoughts” (進取之思想) but also inspire “a united will” (合同之志意) (ibid., 192). Even the great school song composer, Zeng Zhimin endorsed the ideas that, void of all the melodic deliberations typical of Chinese music, Western melodies might inspire courageous minds. In a

1904 article, Zeng, while critiquing school songs, also warned against the “negative” influence of Chinese traditional music:²

The lyrics of the [traditional] songs easily become too elegant (易於協雅) and are hardly approachable for the ordinary people (難於協俗) ... The music [of school songs] should be naturally straightforward (自然) rather than being overtly elaborated (填砌); better be effortlessly attuned with the common taste (流利) rather than being arrogant through imitating ancient styles (高古). The lyrics should be molded in a serious tone with righteous purposes and therefore are capable of creating positive energy. The phrases must remain short and therefore are able to inspire action with their clear-cut rhythms. (Zeng [1904] 1998, 208)

The renowned school song researcher Qian Renkang argues that the popularity of Li Shu'tong's “Seeing off a Friend” (discussed in chapter 2 for the stylistic origin of school songs) was largely a result of its simplified melodic line with the original appoggiaturas tactically removed for the sake of simplicity. In contrast, those school songs, he further argues, that use Ordway's original melody (with the original appoggiaturas retained), such as Shen Xin'gong's “Dream from Last Night” (昨夜夢), were therefore not as successful because the melodic complications failed to appeal to the audience (Qian 2001, 238).

The musicians (and perhaps audiences alike) were trying to be modernists, but, ironically, the basis of these ideas regarding music as a means of reform are deeply traditional and similar to concepts that can be found in Confucian classics. In the *Book of Rites* (禮記), thoughts concerning music as an important function for the education

² For definition of school songs, see chapter 2, pages 51–57.

of the people and especially for the management of the state are preserved in abundance and remained influential through the history of imperial China. According to the *Book*, music may “reflect the nature of heaven and earth and pervade into the nature of the gods.”³ It was also believed that “[w]hen evil music influences men, evil spirits arise ... When correct music influences men, good spirits arise.”⁴ With confidence in music’s ability to influence the people’s thoughts and behaviors, “[t]he ancient rulers used music in education as it influenced the people profoundly and changed their customs and manners” (*Book of Rites*).⁵ During the 1950s and 1960s, the belief in using the proper style to bring about a desired social influence, some forty years later from Zeng’s time, remained effective. During this Communist regime, there was a prevalent notion that to perform Chinese folk songs without rendering the stylistic ornamental figures was a “modern and scientific” way of singing (Wong 1984, 133).

Buddhist reformers similarly expected Buddhist songs, modeled after school songs, to possess the same progressive qualities. Buddhist songs in a proper style were believed to be capable of inspiring the younger generation with “reverence, courage, religious excitement” (敬愛、勉勵、興奮) and a sense of “responsibility for the spread of the religion” (勇於佈道) (Chen 1950, v). In many instances, the general preference for Western musical style became so strong that the original Buddhist meanings were often overshadowed by imposed “progressive” themes.

³ The cited passage is translated by Walter Kaufman (1976, 41).

⁴ Ibid., 39.

⁵ Ibid., 38.

With this particular aesthetic or moralistic bent, the distortion of the original Buddhist cultural contents of Buddhist songs seemed inevitable. “Song of Peaceful Retirement” (安養歌) (Huang 1943, 70) from the 1940s serves well to illustrate this point. In this song, a melody created after Schumann’s “Traumerei,” from his song cycle *Kinderszenen*, was set to a text adapted from Pureland Buddhist sutras.

Traditionally, one would employ centuries-old melodies in an unmetered style to vocalize a similar sutra passage, as the melodies cultivated for this particular function would allow ultimate freedom in a meditative or devotional session for a rigorous mental exercise. Though a Buddhist song is not a Buddhist ritual chant, keeping in mind that they should be analyzed according to their respective categories, this example nevertheless demonstrates the conflict between the desire for introducing progress and the Buddhist content as originally intended in songs. In this instance, the Western melodic style of nineteenth century European romanticism is not only incapable of the function as required by the sutra-inspired lyrics, but also, more importantly, with its unique musical intent, contradicts the original Chinese Buddhist aesthetics and religiosity.

Such a process of alteration and modification of original Buddhist meanings in pursuit of change persisted during the late 1930s, and remained distinctive in Buddhist songs of the 1940s. In these works Buddhist themes were reshaped to accommodate popular ideas that served to support government campaigns, or encourage participation in leftist sociopolitical movements. In the 1950s, the political intervention of Communists into Buddhist practices was evidenced in songs published

in this period in China. Buddhist songs in Taiwan, under control of the Nationalists in the post-1949 period, were equally under the influence of politics. Yang Yongpu and Hsing Yun's Buddhist songs, which adopted the style of government propaganda music, unmistakably indicated such an influence, testifying to the particular social and political condition of the 1950s. The national craze for progress in Taiwan was combined with the goal of recovering the Chinese mainland in order to restore the glory of the nation, and this required the unflinching, unconditional loyalty of the people to the government. It was not until the late 1960s and 1970s that conscious individuals, contemplating the disappearing traditions and indigenous community of the people, rose to contest and challenge government policies.⁶

In the 1970s, the Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan became more and more isolated from the international community. It was a time during which the ROC's status as a legitimate state was complicated by the continuing Chinese Nationalist-Communist antagonism, the persisting disharmony between ethnic groups on the island and the ambiguity of post-Cold War politics.⁷ Upon the death of dictator Chiang Kai-shek in 1975, his son, Chiang Ching-kuo, eventually succeeded him in power. Changing world politics coupled with the rising internal civil/cultural movements pressured Chiang's government to relax its political and social control. Instead of following the style of his father's uncompromising iron-fisted rule, he

⁶ For example, the suppression of indigenous religions and religious activities, in contrast with the support for Christianity beginning in the 1950s, may serve to illustrate the prejudiced cultural policies of the post-war era in Taiwan. Local religious practices were in general discouraged as they were considered superstitious and therefore a backward practice that needed to be banned (Ahem 1981, 397–425).

⁷ In 1971 Taiwan lost its representation in the United Nations and in 1979, the severance of US-Taiwan diplomatic tie.

began to seek alternative policies that would consolidate his leadership and the legitimacy of his government in Taiwan. Also unlike his father, who was determined to use all resources possible for the return to China, Chiang Ching-kuo appeared to be more tolerant and practical in many ways. Cultural and religious policies, including those dealing with Buddhism, became increasingly lenient under his authority.

In facing these changes, the Grassroots Literary movement (Xiangtu wenxue yundong, 鄉土文學運動) and Folksong movement (Min'ge yundong, 民歌運動) rose and widely influenced the people of Taiwan in the 1960s and 1970s. In direct response to the diplomatic crisis of quickly dissolving ties with and support from the international community, the movements contemplated and critiqued both the national pursuit of progress in Western terms and the government policy for the recovery of Chinese mainland. In search of a viable solution in which the people could reassert their own worth as a people without the imposition of an unrealistic dream for building a strong, united Chinese nation and the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy for recognition, the activists advocated a renewed focus on the immediate life of the people and their original culture cultivated in local communities. The two catchphrases “return to reality” (回歸現實) and “care for the people” (關心大眾) help illustrate the central concerns of the movements (Hsiao 2008, 202–208).

Although the definition of one's culture and the approaches adopted to realize its restoration might vary from one group to another, and the objectives of the movements might not be always agreed upon by their activists, a common goal can be located in their attempt to rediscover and re-create one's connection with the

collective life experience of a people as evoked in the emotion-laden phrase *xiangtu* (“native soil”). In other words, through the search for one’s roots in places (of one’s cultural origins) and in memory (where the original lifestyle was recalled), participants in the movements intended to reaffirm their cultural identity during a time when their homeland, in a political sense, was disappearing.

The Folksong movement began in the 1970s in Taiwan with college students seeking to reestablish their cultural identity through songs. In order to combat Euro-American Western influences, these enthusiasts claimed to “sing their own song” (唱自己的歌) as a demonstration of their resistance against, in particular, American cultural domination. Through their songs they attempted to invoke a sense of “nationhood” by using symbols derived from their own cultural heritage. However, the nation they desired, be it of China, Taiwan or both, hardly lent itself to clear definition. Despite their efforts and success in winning sympathy across the island, the very foreign influences they tried to avoid permeated through the musical style and form they used to create their voice.⁸

The influence of the movements on Buddhist songs was not left unfelt. Buddhist musicians no longer wanted to confine themselves to composing music that served to promote government policies meant to help consolidate the authoritarian rule and its social and political control. As a result, Buddhist songs containing themes that conformed to state policy became increasingly less prominent; instead, there was an

⁸ The definition of the “people” and their “culture” in question may be understood differently by pro-China and pro-Taiwan camps. Those who valued Taiwan’s independence from China might specifically regard Taiwan as a focus of discourse, while the pro-China activists considered China and Taiwan together as one inseparable cultural entity.

emergence of Buddhist songs that were meant to coincide with the new popular emphasis on personal spirituality and communal bond. For example, in the 1977 edition of *The Buddhist Holy Songs*, published by Hsing Yun's group, songs included in previous editions with obvious politically influenced themes, such as "Protecting One's Nation" (護國) (Li 1956, 15) and "Good Citizens" (好國民) (Fojiao wenhua fuwuchu 1960, 84), were omitted. In their place were songs that addressed individuals' religious needs developing in conjunction with the growth of the people's awareness of their unique communal life. Representative works can be found in the artist/nun Venerable Xiaoyun's *chan* songs, many of which were collaborations with Li Zhonghe and Xiao Huyin, the two Buddhist musicians joining in the 1970s.⁹ The three volumes of the *New Sounds of Serenity* (清涼新聲), composed to Xiaoyun's *chan* poems exploring the depth of a Buddhist cultivator's spiritual life journey in an individualized voice, are among the best examples.¹⁰ The new style produced during the 1970s and 1980s, in contrast to songs of the previous period, demonstrates a high degree of sensitivity to the particularities of the Chinese/Taiwanese Buddhist cultural heritage and aesthetics, along with an increasingly sophisticated understanding of the people's new (religious) experiences during this period of societal transition.

⁹ Venerable Xiaoyun (a.k.a. You Yunshan), born in Guangdong, China in 1912, was first known to the public as an accomplished painter. She spent most part of her life in Europe, India, Hong Kong and especially Taiwan. In Taiwan she was professor in Buddhist studies and founded a nun community and a Buddhist university.

¹⁰ The term *chan* (*zen*) song (禪歌) is loosely used for denoting Buddhist cultivation songs with *chan* contents. A *chan shi* (*chan* poem) is the equivalent of a *chan* song in literary form. It is used here by the author to indicate the unique *chan* quality of Xiaoyun's songs that serve for both an expression of a personal spiritual experience and the function of a Buddhist song for interpersonal spiritual communication.

The general social and cultural environment further improved in the 1980s and 1990s when Taiwan began to enter an era of rapid globalization, both economically and culturally. During this time, a more open-minded government cultural policy was adopted. Worth noting was the establishment of the Council for Cultural Affairs (文化建設委員會) in 1981, by which a government budget was made available for the support of artists and their activities. This change allowed new ideas to develop and also helped enable the emergence of a new Buddhist musical culture. The favorable environment afforded Buddhist song composers the freedom to explore new artistic possibilities and to develop their music with new performance styles. In addition to Xiao Huyin and Li Zhonghe, musicians like Wang Dachuan and Huang Youdi emerged in the late 1980s and 1990s and became widely popular. These new Buddhist musicians named above are, without exception, well trained in Western compositional techniques, commonly adopting Western musical forms in their music, but they are equally sensitive to the renewed common interest in traditional materials.

In an apparent response to the calls of the grassroots movements beginning a decade or so earlier, the musicians explored musical and textual materials of the Chinese Buddhist tradition for inspiration. Buddhist chants and sacred texts are commonly integrated into the fabric of their songs. The traditional elements, which became the inspiration of a new/re-newed Buddhist aesthetic and expression, were employed to introduce a common cultural identity, a shared community in music. For example, Wang Dachuan has used the Buddha recitation tones of Buddhist name chants (念佛號) as a structural element in his recent works, while Li Zhonghe was

among the first to incorporate entire sutras in his large choral compositions.¹¹

Remarkable among these works are Wang Dachuan's contrapuntal pieces "Praise to Bodhisattva Guanyin" (觀音讚) and "Gatha for the Opening of Service" (開經偈), based on materials derived from traditional Bodhisattva Guanyin and Sakyamuni Buddha name chants.¹² Li's last songs, *The Heart Sutra* (心經) and *The Mantra of Great Compassion* (大悲咒), composed to Buddhist sacred texts, are equally significant works.

By using sacred materials in Buddhist songs, which were to be performed in both monastic and public venues, an effort to redefine what is considered sacred and what is considered secular was apparent. Contemplating changing global culture in the post-Cold War era, in which the antagonism between the East and the West underwent a transformation, and the platform for exchanging ideas through convenient means of communication continued to widen, the musicians experimented with a new musical language in attempts to redefine the religious basis of their music. Through this new language of music, Buddhist songs of this period, without being limited by the conservative definitions of Buddhism, searched for the "shared values of humanity" in Buddhist teaching. This new approach toward Buddhist religiosity allows for multiple interpretations, enabling the music to be appreciated by a broad audience across national and cultural borders. As a matter of fact, the musicians do not necessarily consider themselves Buddhists in a traditional sense. Some of them might claim to

¹¹ In contrast to sutras, the Buddha name chants, in a technical sense, are recitation of the name of the Buddha or a bodhisattva in mind or in voice in a Buddhist worship or cultivation activity.

¹² *Gatha* are Buddhist rhymed verses.

have based their music more on the universal values of humanity than on those of Buddhism alone (Xiao Huyin, interview with author, Taipei, 16 December 2010). Fascinatingly, this development in Buddhist songs was not an isolated phenomenon, but an artistic development that also found analogues in the art music on both sides of Taiwan Strait during the 1980s and 1990s. The so-called *new wave* music (新潮音樂) that began to develop in the 1980s emphasized the synthesis of Western forms and Chinese materials drawn from traditional music, arts, and literatures, while looking for a new dimension of both individuality and universality.¹³

This change accelerated and continued to evolve into newer forms in the late 1990s and 2000s. After decades-long sociopolitical movements, Lee Teng-hui, a native of Taiwan, succeeded Chiang as the President of the Republic of China on Taiwan after Chiang's death in 1987. The rapid democratization of the politics on the island followed in the 1990s and was accompanied by a further liberalization of the people's culture. In 2000, the candidate of the opposition Democratic Progressive party, Chen Shuibian, won the second direct election of the president, marking the beginning of a new era in Taiwan, and the end of five decades of Nationalist party rule. The rapid sociopolitical change and globalization of the economy and the culture were at present time dramatically transforming people's way of life and thinking.

¹³ In the 1980s, mainland Chinese composers of a new generation, including Tan Dun, Chen Yi, Ye Xiaogang, Chen Qigang and others, began to attract the attention of the international community of musicians. They commonly employed the latest Western compositional techniques but referred to Chinese cultural heritage in shaping their musical identities. A similar kind of musical development also occurred in Taiwan and Hong Kong. In Taiwan, it began with the 1960s folksong collection movement (民歌採集運動), which in itself could be seen as a subcategory of the general grassroots movement beginning in the late 1960s. Led by Shi Weiliang and Hsu Tsang-houei, this movement influenced the musical trend developed in the following decades and was commonly evidenced in works by composers including Hsu, Ma Shui-long, and their contemporaries (Liu 2010, 592; 618-20).

This evolution also brought new stimuli and opportunities to the Buddhist community and its culture. In comparison with earlier development that allowed the incorporation of sacred materials in Buddhist songs and the loosened restrictions regarding the uses of appropriate musical form for the incorporation of these materials, the newer transformation of Buddhist music in the 2000s moves towards full-scale reconciliation of the two originally contradictory domains: the sacred Buddhism and the secular world of the ordinary people. One of the most prominent changes was the integration of pop and world musical styles into Buddhist music, signifying the further receding influence of the sacred Buddhism and its symbols (in this case represented in sound) and the increasing importance of secular values of the common people in this religious practice. As I discussed previously, the ambiguous role of music in the Buddhist tradition has been at the center of many ongoing debates, in which music as a form of Buddhist representation was the focus of doubts. The incorporation of pop styles for secular entertainment further contradicts the sacred contents of religion, demonstrating an even greater discrepancy between the tradition and the new ideals regarding the adoption of secular practices. Compared to previous efforts to modernize Buddhist music, which primarily adopted the forms and musical language of Western “serious” music, including art songs and protestant hymns, the incorporation of pop elements, which represent the mundane life of the people, into Buddhist music beginning in the late 1990s was by no means a small step.

In this development, both Buddhist chants and Buddhist songs were affected. Though the original ritual-styled performances of Buddhist chants are still reserved for

liturgical purposes, the melodies of Buddhist chants are now subject to all kinds of compositional procedures that mean to re-create the monastic sound and, consequently, its meaning. As a result, the traditional melody and text used in chanting “The Mantra of Great Compassion” (大悲咒), for example, could be turned into an art song, rewritten in orchestral form, or recorded in a so-called New Age atmospheric musical style, serving the various preferences of Buddhist practitioners, which are not necessarily related to any Buddhist ideas. As far as musical form is concerned, this new practice may be considered as a response to the broadening tastes of common people due to the rapid development of the music industry and the resulting increased exposure to music of the world through the globalized cultural-economic system. Their new musical experiences (through exposures to musical cultures from around the world via electronic media), in turn, encourage the production of new Buddhist musical commodities. Regarding the forms of transmission, in addition to the use of comparatively conventional sheet music and songbooks, there are new media, including audio/video recordings and karaoke CDs, with which one can learn Buddhist songs at home or in various kinds of Buddhist-related recreational situations. These Buddhist musical/cultural goods are readily available in bookstores associated with Fo Guang Shan’s branch temples across the island and the world. In general, these new media allow their consumers to freely use the religious sound materials in unconventional venues and at unconventional times. As a result, the music, recorded for sale, is detached from its original meanings associated with the monastery and its lifestyle. In addition, it is detached from the fundamental Buddhist ideals cultivated

for thousands of years, further lending itself to a reinterpretation of the sacred and the secular. Depending on the individuals' personal tastes and spiritual orientation for success, these musical commodities reveal a closer and closer relationship between the monastic world and that of the ordinary people.

The world trend toward democratization of culture not only affords the general Buddhist music participants new cultural opportunities, but also allows them to create their own cultural forms. Consequently, Buddhist songs of the 2000s demonstrated “contents of the common people” (常民的涵養), as noted by Li Gufang (Fo Guang Shan Wenjiao Jijinhui 2003, 16-27). The popularity of karaoke CDs of Buddhist songs is another threat to conventional ideas about Buddhism. Karaoke, a technology designed to allow anyone to participate, grants ordinary and talented people alike equal access to the control of the microphone, a symbol of professional singing that used to drive trends within popular musical culture, and allows ordinary people to stand as equals with the professionals. Evidenced by the sheer number of karaoke shops in cities throughout the island, the importance of karaoke, which has become a part of everyday life in Taiwan, is not to be neglected in this process of cultural democratization. Buddhist songs made in the karaoke style, acknowledging the increasing importance of the ordinary population and their “voice,” are part of an ongoing Buddhist endeavor to touch the lives of the common people even more profoundly. To further illustrate these burgeoning changes toward the Buddhist music of the common and a religion of the ordinary, I point to the Buddhist music event Sounds of the Human World of Fo Guang Shan as an example.

The event took the form of a competition for the best new Buddhist songs of the year. With its first occurrence in 2003, it was meant to commemorate the 1950s Buddhist musical activities that began in Ilan with the Buddhist Choir organized by Hsing Yun. The competition organizers expected that through this activity the spirit of experiment and creativity would be carried on. Three goals manifested in the commemorating book *Sounds of the Human World* helped demonstrate the shifting direction of monastic musical culture. The songs should be: (1) globally appealing, (2) accessible for all, easy to learn and remember, and (3) enjoyed by everyone and composed by all, including professional musicians and amateurs (Fo Guang Shan Wenjiao Jijinhui 2003, 166). Peoples of all cultures around the world from all classes and ages were invited to participate. Participants used the lyrics written by Hsing Yun, or texts drawn or adapted from Hsing Yun's literary works, as lyrics, while all musical styles were welcome and accepted. In 2003, more than 1000 songs from around the world were entered into the competition (ibid., 26).

In the 2007 event, in which I participated, there were songs in styles such as that of the campus songs (校園歌曲) of the 1980s, but there were more recent styles including R&B and rap, which are both very popular in East Asia today. Songs with ethnic or world music styles were also well represented. Among the winning songs were songs in native Taiwanese Hoklo and Hakka styles performed in their respective original languages. Winning songs also included ethnic styles performed by international finalists. In emphasizing the goals of broadening the competition to international or global styles, Li Dongheng, one of the event judges, told me that

“there is an underlining policy that a diversity of styles, in particular the ethnic styles, should be recognized in the winner list (Li Dongheng, interview with author, October 2007, Taipei). In the songs written for this annual competition, old lyrics from the 1950s and 1960s written by Hsing Yun are given new life through their new musical and performance styles. The songs have not only become a nostalgic remembrance, but have also come to embody new meanings heralding the advent of a new age in which the modern Buddhist community becomes less and less distinguishable from the world of the common people.

The new artistic language of Buddhist music developed from the 1980s to the 2000s signified a change in Buddhist songs, not only in their capacity to closely reflect the sociocultural change, but also in their potential for reshaping Buddhist spirituality. It brought the teaching closer to the life of the common people by adopting not only the musical form (the symbols) but also the values (the content) typically associated with the secular world. The devoted searched not only for artistic refinement or a new sound, but also for an expression of the individual, his/her broadened cultural identity and a unique perception of the world.

As observed by Richard Madsen (2007), Reform Buddhism, with its social work, community services, social education, relief work and different types of Buddhist cultural programs carried out through its many volunteer organizations, has become a primary support of the emerging civil society in Taiwan that calls for the participation of both individuals and groups in the process of a societal change. Reflecting the common cultural development of the late twentieth and the twenty-first

centuries and its unlimited opportunities made possible through global interaction between individuals and between cultures, the reform teaching, aided by the flexible medium of music, redrew the boundaries between the monastic world and the external world, obtaining a new form emphasizing the conscious choice of individuals and their communal life pattern. Buddhist songs, through the various stages of transformation, are today not only a form of religious and musical expression, but also a sociocultural medium and many other things, sharing values common to all. They are not only a form of Buddhist lay activity or a vehicle of religious messages that helped strengthen the bond between the community members, but also an instrument for inspiring new ideas, the pursuit of one's original culture, an artistic/religious expression of the individual, and a form of social participation in the expanding community of Buddhism.

In concluding the discussion, I was reminded of a statement by Venerable Tzu Hui, the eminent disciple of Hsing Yun and former director of the Fo Guang Shan Foundation for Buddhist Culture and Education. In describing the significance of Fo Guang Shan's Buddhist musical work, she emphasized the incomparable value of music in advancing the welfare of society and the common values of humanity. She declared, in quite a paradoxical way, that "religion [Buddhism] might not be for everyone, but the arts are welcomed everywhere. If we cannot bring change to a person with Buddhism, and we might be able to do so with music, why not use music?" (Venerable Tzu Hui, telephone conversation with author, 26 June 2009). The flexible approach adopted by practitioners and also afforded through music forms

toward religion indicates the new development of Buddhist religiosity by which the Buddhist community might not only freely adopt music as a useful means, a tactic of balancing between the sacred and the secular domains, but also, in redefining the sacred and the secular, transcend the possible conflict and limits of the two. According to Tzu Hui, there is certainly a common ground for the two opposing categories to coexist and to be mutually supportive, as the Buddhist principle of *nonduality* (不二法門) may teach us.¹⁴ As this concept is crucial for the reform Buddhism to transcend the limitation imposed by the conventional divide between the sacred and the secular, it is no surprise that the main gate of Fo Guang Shan is named “Bu’er Men” (Gate of Non-duality), further emphasizing this idea.

The flexibility in Buddhist religious practice, combined with the breakdown of ideological control, has proven to be the key for reform Buddhist teaching in achieving its success in Taiwan and reaching out to the whole world. In the context of an increasingly liberalized society in Taiwan, Chinese Buddhism and Buddhist songs are open to new inventions in style and form. Mediating between the traditional past and the progressive present, the unceasing effort of the enthusiasts introduces into the ancient religious order, which was once considered static and unchanging, a new vitality, enabling the Buddhist teaching to challenge the new social and cultural change of the modern age. In this process, music serves as an indispensable means.

¹⁴ *Nonduality*, which originated from ancient Indian philosophy, is a central concept of Buddhism. The idea assumes that the distinction between subject and object, phenomenon and the absolute, or mind and universe might not necessarily exist, as one in each pair forms an intrinsically inseparable part of the other. Those who are interested may refer to *Nonduality* by David Loy (1988).

Appendix: Autobiography of Yang Yongpu

(Note: including photographed original document and its translation)



自傳

楊勇溥 新蜀報 宣中

我姓楊名勇溥別字詠諧。民國七年三月出生於河南省開封縣城內。先父恩彥公為遼清文舉。民初起即供職法界。三十七秋逝世。先母俞氏夫人謝世甚早。兄弟姐妹共十人。除我與妻及二子在台外。家屬均隔於大陸。我行三。民國三十六年與王玉璧女士（四川省江津縣人）在重慶結婚。她現任教於宜蘭縣屬國民學校。長子念祖次子繼祖均尚在中學階段讀書。家庭生活量入而出。尚稱安康。

我於七歲起蒙由小學而中學。後以性近藝術。初中畢業後改入河南藝術師範學校就讀。民國三十年春蒙河南省教育廳

保送入中央訓練團音樂幹部訓練班受訓。該班課程以黨政軍事音樂佔三分之一，同屬重要。民國三十二年春考入國立上海音樂專科學校理論作曲組繼續深造，專心致力中國音樂理論及風格方面之研究。抗戰勝利後，三十五年復員還鄉。

民國二十六年秋奉委為河南省會獨立民眾學校校長。鑒於一般民眾雖然教育程度低，但大多純樸好學，令人欣慰。後以日本軍閥壓境，遂奉命將國定之教學方式改為流動之宣教教方式以配合戰時需要。於是河南省民教工作團應運而生。我先後奉派團內幹事及股長職務三年，担任音樂及戲劇指導工作。民國三十年秋轉任重慶衛戍總司令部音樂教官二年。民國三十五年春轉任陸軍通

校音樂教官。三十八年春季起至四十三年秋季止。先後受聘任於湖南省立第二師範及台灣省立宜蘭中學音樂教員六年。四十四年春復轉任陸軍通校中校音樂教官十二年。其間並先後受聘兼任省立宜蘭中學、縣立宜蘭高職及員山中學音樂教員十二年。五十五年七月於通校奉准退休。八月受聘担任員山中學專任教員兼訓育組長一年。並應縣立宜蘭高職之聘轉職高職。回憶我自民國二十六秋起迄今近三十年始終未曾離開音樂教育工作崗位一步。內心引以為榮。今後有生之年。還計劃繼續不斷的從事音樂教育工作。以進求真善美的人生。

我於民國三十八年八月經廣州來台。瞬屆了有八載。檢討大陸失敗主要原因乃為當時各階層受了奸匪分化滲透之影響。以至士氣民心瓦解。精神武裝崩潰有以致之。自由中國在 蔣總統英明的領導之下。精

謝爾治：各方的便看整人的成就：日親之信好應內外之
 民不聊生：一旦政府自社會一下：海內外同胞心合意一
 光復大陸：解脫同胞：其誠意乃意行中已。

Autobiography

Yang Yong-pu, 10 August [year] 55 [of Republic Era], Yuan Zhong (Yuanshan Middle School); 18 August [year] 56 [of Republic Era], Yi Shang [Yilan Vocational School of Commerce]

I was named Yang, with a given name Yongpu (勇溥), also self-called Yongpu (詠譜). I was born in Kaifeng, Henan province in March, year 7 of the Republican Era (1918). My late father Enyen was a *wenju* [provincial graduate] of the abdicated Qing dynasty. Since the beginning of the Republican Era, he had served in the legal office until his death when he was thirty years old. My mother passed away very early.

We are ten brothers and sisters. Except for me, my wife and my two sons who are living in Taiwan, the rest of the family are all on the Mainland. I am the third son. In year 36 of the Republican Era (1947), I married Ms. Wang Yubi (a native of Jiangjin, Sichuan) at Chongqing, Sichuan. She is now teaching at an elementary school in Ilan. My first son, Nianzu, and second son, Zizu, are going to middle school. Family finances are maintained with careful calculations, balancing between spending and earning. Otherwise, all is in peace.

I was inspired towards learning at the age of seven. In the following years, I completed my elementary school education, and after that my middle school. After discovering my talents in arts upon my graduation from middle school, I chose to attend the Henan Normal School of the Arts. In year 30 of the Republican Era (1941), I received unconditional admission offered by the Ministry of Education of Henan province to the training program in music leadership sponsored by the Central (Governmental) Training Corps. The program consisted of three workshops in administration of public affairs, military skills, and music, respectively. The three were equally weighed. In the spring of year 32 of the Republican Era (1943), I passed the entrance examination of Shanghai Conservatory of Music and began my pursuit in music theory and composition with a focus on the study of the theory and the styles of Chinese music. In year 35 of the Republican Era (1946), I was decommissioned and returned to my home province upon the victory over the Japanese in the Resistance War.

In year 26 of the Republican Era (1937), I was appointed the principal of the Independence School of the People of the capital city of Henan. At the time, the general public was poorly educated, but I found that most of them, pure and honest, were willing to learn with strong motivation. This sign encouraged me. However, the Japanese army soon arrived. According to government policy, I changed the usual stationary method of teaching into a mobile one, bringing education to the people. This was the background for the Civilian Education Corps of Henan Province to be organized. I was assigned to act as an assistant and section leader and stayed in the positions for three years, directing works associated with music and drama. In autumn of year 30 of Republic Era (1941), I was transferred to a new position as music instructor officer at Chongqing Garrison Command (重慶衛戍司令部) and remained in this position for two years. In year 35 of the Republic Era, I was transferred again

and became a music instruction officer of the Communication Academy of the Army. Between spring of year 38 and autumn of year 43, I was employed by Hunan Provincial Second Normal School and Taiwan Provincial Ilan High School as a music instructor for six years. In year 44, I returned to my position as a music instructor with the rank of lieutenant colonel at The Communication Academy of the Army and remained there for next 12 years. I also held part-time positions at Ilan High School, Ilan County Vocational School and Yuanshan Middle School during the same 12 years. In July, year 55, I retired from my position at the communication academy. In August, I accepted the offer from Yuanshan Middle School for the position of a music instructor plus the supervisor of the student life division. I remained in the position for one year before I was offered yet another position at the Ilan County Vocational School of Commerce. Reflecting upon my life of the past 30 years since year 26 of the Republic Era, I found that there was never a moment when I was kept away from my work in education. For that, I am deeply proud of myself. For the rest of my life, I plan to continue my work in music education, work that affords me the pursuit of the true, the good, and the beautiful.

I came to Taiwan via Guangzhou in August, year 38 of the Republic Era. It has been 18 years in a blink of eye. Reflecting upon the loss of the mainland, I believe that the main cause was the vicious bandits (communists) who were skillful in penetrating our organization and causing the organization to corrupt. The damage eventually spread to the morale of our comrades and the trust of the people (in our government). Over time, our willpower was no longer strong enough to stand the attack. The Free China under the leadership of the President Chiang was making progress in all aspects with astonishing accomplishment. Conversely, the vicious bandits who controlled the mainland were causing the people great suffering. As soon as our government is able to combine the strength of the people living within the borders and those living overseas, the success of recovering the mainland and saving our people there is foreseeable.

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