East Meets West: A Musical Analysis of Chinese Sights and Sounds, by Yuankai Bao

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EAST MEETS WEST: A MUSICAL ANALYSIS OF CHINESE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS, BY YUANKAI BAO

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts

in

The School of Music

by

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ABSTRACT

In the wake of the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966-76) and with China’s new “Open Door” policy toward Western culture and Western music, Chinese composers have adapted Western compositional techniques. The new generation of Chinese composers have expressed in various ways of their research to the heritage of Western composers. Yuankai Bao is one of the new generations of Chinese composers. The topic of this paper is the integration of Chinese and Western compositional techniques in Chinese folk songs. The purpose of this research is to find out how Yuankai Bao connects Chinese pentatonic scale to Western harmony, and how he helps develop Chinese new music and applies some characteristics of Western music to his composition, *Chinese Sights and Sounds-24 Pieces by Themes on Chinese Folk Tunes*. This research will facilitate a better understanding to Western performers of Chinese folk songs and piano music and assist in the achievement of a more authentic performance.
CHAPTER 1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Every art music is originally from folk music.

--Geza Csath

A folksong is a perfect artistic paragon.

--Bela Bartok

For decades many audiences in China have found Western classical music very difficult to listen to. It seems too distant, beyond their comprehension. One example is Bach’s Toccata and Fugue. Chinese audiences can see why it is considered a great piece but they cannot come to a point where they can say it personally touches them as a masterwork. Even though they struggle to like Western classical music, they love Chinese folk music. They have heard the melody since they were little, the form is simple, and all verses of the text are sung to the same music. Some find folk music challenging, because it seems outdated. Western music is attractive because of its novelty and complexity.

Just as Chinese listeners struggle with Western classical music, the rest of world has trouble appreciating Chinese folk music. What kind of music would be acceptable to both Chinese people and the world? Is it possible to create a work that will become a classic? Some possible answers can be found in an article, by Yuankai Bao, in the fall 2002 issue of Journal of Music in China:

It was in 1990 when I began to restudy various Chinese folk songs, dance music, ballad music, traditional operas, and instrumental music. My plan was to compose orchestral

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works based on the best tunes selected from our musical tradition in order to make the colorful and charming Chinese traditional folk music to be enjoyable for all people in the present world. I supposed that the new works should be both “Western” in form and “Eastern” in essence…To combine Chinese folk or traditional music with Western modern musical forms is a practical way to break up the isolation of Chinese music and bring it to the world’s stage.²

Yuankai Bao was born on January 4, 1944 in Beijing, China. He studied flute and composition in the middle school of the Central Conservatory of Music, and graduated in 1967 from the Central Conservatory, where he got his Bachelor's degree in composition and theory. Since 1973 he has taught the Tianjin Conservatory of Music in northern China. He has also served as a visiting faculty member at Nankai University, Tianjin Normal University, Taiwan’s Nanhua University-Conservatory, and Xiamen University. Bao works as deputy director of the Composition Committee of the Chinese Musicians’ Association; he is also director of the Institute of Arts at Xiamen University, and an executive member of the China Sun Yat-sen Cultural Exchange Association. In appreciation of his contributions to Chinese musical culture, he was awarded a special grant from the Chinese State Council. He also received the Golden Bell Award for musical composition, the best Chinese Musicologist award by the Department for Cultural Affairs, and the Outstanding Music Educator Award from the Chinese Ministry of Culture.³

Bao was born in the year before the end of World War II and lived in Beijing until the age of seven. His father Xiangqun Bao had a wide knowledge of Eastern and Western culture, including sculpture, opera, and languages. He learned poetry and music by himself and taught his son music theory. From a young age, Bao was able to read books on astronomy and geography

and to write poetry and calligraphy. This wide range of interests enabled Bao to absorb Western science, which became a cornerstone of his future career.

From the age of seven, Bao spent seven years in Tianjin, where the Central Conservatory of Music was located at the time. The quality of music education was high, and Bao’s father had lots of connections conservatory. Many professors at the Central Conservatory came from the Soviet Union, and they brought their educational experience and teaching materials to China. Bao was greatly impressed by these musicians, and during this time, Bao fell in love with Soviet music and began to study it.

During Bao’s fifth grade year of elementary school, one of his father’s friends, Professor Jinxian Huang, taught Bao piano, sight-singing and dictation. At Professor Huang’s home, Bao first listened to Schubert’s “Unfinished Symphony” and Beethoven’s Pastoral Symphony. Bao was deeply touched, and discovered that music is not just singing. At that time, Bao forged a bond with Western music that would last throughout his life.

In 1957, Bao published his first composition, *Deng Shan (Climbing the Mountain).* Soon he received admission to the middle school of the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, where he majored in flute performance. During Bao’s studies in Beijing, two professors, Zhenjing He and Xia Su, inspired Bao to study Chinese folk music. Professor He taught Bao how to appreciate folksong in class, where the students enjoyed listening to music inspired by nature. Bao was greatly affected by Professor He’s commitment and deep knowledge of folksong. Professor He had sown a seed of Chinese folk arts in Bao’s young heart.⁴ Professor Su was Bao’s

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⁴ Bao, “Ideal and Practice,” 188.
first composition advisor in the Central Conservatory. He discouraged the direct imitation of western musical style, instead encouraging his students to study Chinese traditional music. Under Professor Su’s instruction, the students learned to arrange the folksongs into piano pieces with harmony. Through the study of piano works by Grieg, Bartok and other nationalist composers, Bao learned to set proper harmony to Chinese melodies. By the time he finished college, Bao had accumulated a large quantity of arranged folk songs. These studies prepared the way for Bao to compose New Chinese music in the future and laid the foundation for Bao’s self-development.

Bao’s compositional style was also affected by the fact that he graduated at the onset of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. The Revolution was a decade-long political movement lasting ten years between 1966 and 1976. During this time, many people were persecuted and suffered a range of abuses, such as public humiliation, arbitrary imprisonment and seizure of property. Bao was one of the victims. He was imprisoned for five years because he was too influenced by the west. In the prison, music became the only comfort for Bao. The government banned all activities associated with Western art. Many instruments were either sealed (wrapped with paper to prohibit their use) or destroyed. Bao was lucky to have a prison guard teach him how to play guitar. Guitar was one of the few Western instruments that common people could find on the market at that time. Due to his knowledge of Western music theory, Bao picked up the guitar very quickly, and soon the prison guard turned to acknowledge Bao as his mentor. Thanks to the

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5 Ibid.

6 Bao notes: “I was born and brought up in Tianjin, a metropolitan city far from folk music. I began my early musical education in playing flute, a Western musical instrument, in 1957 at the Affiliated Middle School of the Central Conservatory of Music, and then turned to composition. Among my advisors, two professors, He Zhenjing and Su Xia, gave me the lifetime influence in recognizing Chinese folk music.” [Ideal and Practice,] Journal of Music in China 4, no1&2 (Fall 2002):188.
prison guard, Bao fell in love with Spanish guitar songs and wrote a *Spanish Guitar Guidebook* in 1982.

For a while, Bao was very interested in Spanish music. He liked to listen to the works of Issac Albéniz and felt that the Spanish flavor reflected in his compositions differed from the music of composers of other nationalities. Bao determined to seek inspiration in the Spanish composers’ style.

About 92% of China's people are Han Chinese, and there are various regional styles of Han culture. Han folk music is the music of common people who live in the country. The Han people have several languages and many dialects, and there are many regional styles of folk music also. For instance, Hebei province is a representative area in northeastern China (See Figure 1.1).

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7 Bao, “Ideal and Practice,” 189.


Hebei folk song is an ancient Han music. It features simple, yet profound melodies. The lyrics depict the real life of Hebei people, and the music represents the honest temperament of those working people.

Yunnan folk song belongs to a different style. Yunnan is a province of southwestern China (See Figure 1.2).

![Figure 1.2. Yunnan province](image)

Some of Yunnan folk songs reflect love stories; others are written for dancing. A few folk tunes sing about the wild, which are often used to ease labor. Much of the music represents their desire for love and happiness and expectation for the future. Obviously, the folk songs from Yunnan are more about people’s personal feelings; the ones from Hebei are more about people’s work. In Bao’s article, he suggested breaking up the isolation of Chinese music. His music *Hua Xua Xian Yun Shi Nei Yue Ji* (*Chinese Melody of the Strings, Quartet Series Arranged by Chinese traditional Music*) is a good example, in which he uses these Yunnan and Hebei’s melodies interpreted through Western techniques to evoke the Chinese landscape.

With the Open Door policy in China beginning in the 1970’s, Bao had the opportunity to discover many of the most influential nationalistic composers of the West. In 1979, Bao studied

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10 “Yunnan Province,” Wikipedia, last modified December 9, 2015, accessed December 14, 2015, https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki%E4%BA%91%E5%8D%97%E7%9C%81.
the works of Bélà Bartók as a graduate student in Tianjin Conservatory. Bartók’s use of Hungarian folk songs and his comments these songs were regarded as brilliant models by Chinese composers. The more Bao studied, the more he realized that Bartók’s ideas coincided his own. For example, Bartók used both classical and contemporary compositional techniques to illuminate the spirit of folk music. Bao said that people should root their new music in the soil of their own tradition and popularize it to the world. Therefore, Bao composed six symphonies in this point, such as Symphony No.3 *Jing Ju* (*Peking Opera*), Symphony No.5 *Yu Wang* (*The King Yu*), and Symphony No.6 *Yan Zhao* (*The Kingdoms of Yan and Zhao*). In Symphony no.3, he used a classical symphonic genre to highlight a Peking opera, which is a traditional Chinese opera style. Bartók also concentrated on collecting and arranging folk music from native people. In 1936, he travelled to Turkey to collect and study folk music. Likewise, in 1980, Bao set out on a field trip to Yunnan to collect folksongs. Upon his return from Yunnan, Bao created a series of works based on the materials of Yunnan folk song. (See analysis below of the Suite No.3.)

Bao has pointed out that Chinese music has rich and broad virgin fields and musicians need to dig into the treasure of local music. In the 1990’s, with the rise of the Asian economy and the Open Door policy, China retained its primitive pattern of agriculture and still had rich resources of traditional music. Never having been through the Western Industrial revolution and the European Renaissance, Chinese music has had its own advantages over the West. While much of ancient European music was forgotten during these times, ancient Chinese music

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11 Bao, “Ideal and Practice,” 190.

12 Ibid., 192.
survived because the Chinese were slower to change. With the economic development and revival of Eastern culture, the West now has access to the Chinese tradition music. Bao argued that because of these conditions, ‘artistic’ work must be done by Chinese composers with their traditional music; otherwise, the melodies that recorded the life of their ancestors would have to remain on paper for another hundred years.

Chinese composers have tended to ignore their own traditions because they see them daily. Bao decided to do his best to discover his own national folksongs. He wrote *Chinese Sights and Sounds* in 1991. It consists of 24 orchestral pieces on themes selected from Chinese folk songs and was premiered in Tianjin in 1991. He composed *Chinese Sights and Sounds* for solo piano seventeen years later and dedicated it to his graduate school Tianjin Conservatory of Music. Even though the piano version is a transcription, Bao tried to reproduce the sound of the orchestra and create a work which would encourage more people to play and hear Chinese folk tunes. According to Bao’s article, he chose to write a piano transcription because of the piano’s expressive capabilities. European examples similar to *Chinese Sights and Sounds* are such as *Romanian Folk Dances* by Bela Bartok and *Norwegian Folk Songs and Dances* by Edvard Grieg. Bao says:

> Originated in religious music, European professional music is highly developed with strict notation, systematized harmony, dynamic part writing, and logical structure; Chinese traditional music, on the contrary, implies verve in the facets of simple events. The difference provides us with a good opportunity to show our creativity.

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14 Bao, “Ideal and Practice,” 192.

Through citing Chinese folk music in his own compositions, Bao has brought the music of China to international attention, as well as helping to develop a national identity. *Chinese Sights and Sounds* has been performed in many cities, including Tianjin, Beijing, Shenzhen, Xi’an, Guangzhou, Hongkong, Taipei, Paris, Berlin, London, Helsinki, Amsterdam, Montreal, Budapest, Toronto, New York, Los Angeles, Sydney, and Tel Aviv, with more than four hundred performances in the past twenty years. Many recordings have been made by musicians from China and other countries. Thanks to them, *Chinese Sights and Sounds* has been highly praised by audiences in the United States and Europe.
CHAPTER 2. FEATURES OF NEW CHINESE MUSIC THEORY

Because Chinese folk music dates back more than one thousand years, it is stylistically rich and diverse. It is largely based on the pentatonic scale. Most Chinese music is comprised of single melodies without harmonies. There is no harmonic progression in the music. In the early 20th century, there were major changes to Chinese music because of the New Culture Movement. The modernization of Chinese music, which can be referred to as New Chinese music, involved the adoption of Western forms and values, such as the harmonic system and notation system.

What is Chinese music theory? The Chinese pentatonic scale has five pitches: do, re, mi, sol, and la. In Chinese they are called Gong, Shang, Jiao, Zhi, and Yu (see Figure 2.1).

![Figure 2.1. The Chinese Pentatonic scale.](image)

Compared to the Western conventional major scale, Figure 2.1 shows that the fourth and seventh scale degrees are missing. Another example shows that the five modes share the same key signature. Accordingly, in Chinese music IV and VII chords are barely used, as well as the notes fa and ti. The tonality (key signature) is always more essential than the mode, because the music usually modulates without preparation, and sometimes modes are mixed together. The tonic note is always easier to find first, and then the mode can be decided by the last note of the piece.16 For example, if the key signature is F major and the music ends on F, then the tonic is F

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and the mode is F Gong (See Figure 2.2). In The Cowherd Boy, the original folk song ends on C. According to the key signature (one flat), the mode of The Cowherd Boy is considered as C Zhi (because C is the fifth degree of F Gong mode). But in this paper, Bao’s version will be analyzed by the Western major and minor system. Thus Gong, Shang, Jiao, and Zhi modes will be indicated by major key, Yu will be minor (because Yu is the sixth degree of Gong mode, similar to the relationship between major and minor key). The Cowherd Boy of Bao’s version will be analyzed in a major key. In the next chapter, all the music will be introduced by a table of structure, which will show their modes, with Western key signature in parenthesis.

The position of Gong is of central importance in Chinese folk music. The method of deciding the mode is quite similar to the practice of the Western Middle Ages. For example, the F Ionian mode begins and ends on F.

Chinese pentatonic scale has more than five pitches. The five main pitches are called Zheng Yin. The extra four pitches are known as Pian Yin. They are Qingjiao, Bianzhi, Run, and Biangong, which are fa, #fa, bti, and ti. They are built up to three types of Chinese pentatonic scale, Qing Yue, Ya Yue, and Yan Yue. Ya Yue has been used in several pieces of Chinese Sights and Sounds of Bao’s version, no. 4 Can You Guess What Flower It Is, no.22 Happiness at the Lantern Festival and no. 24 Going to Watch Yangge Dance. (see Figure 2.2)

\[\text{In next chapter, Chinese Sights and Sounds, No.4, No. 5, No. 6, No.7, No. 11, No. 12, No. 13, No. 20, and No. 23 are analyzed in minor keys, the others are in major.}\]
Figure 2.2 Five modes.

The position of Gong is of central importance in Chinese folk music. The method of deciding the mode is quite similar to the practice of the Western Middle Ages (see Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3 The Chinese Pentatonic scale F Gong.
Figures 2.3, 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 are showing how this paper is going to analyze the music. In the next chapter, all the music will be introduced by a table of structure, which will show their modes, with Western key signature in parenthesis.

![Figure 2.4. The original folk song The Cowherd Boy.](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>G Zhi</th>
<th>F Gong</th>
<th>Bb Shang</th>
<th>Eb Gong</th>
<th>Ab Shang</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(C Major)</td>
<td>(F Major)</td>
<td>(Ab Major)</td>
<td>(Eb Major)</td>
<td>(Gb Major)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Figure 2.5. An example from structure of Little Cabbage.](image)

![Figure 2.6. The Ionian mode from the Western Middle Ages.](image)

*Yi Yin* is the note that is added to melody to provide decoration. *Yi Yin* is similar to the ornamentation in some way. *Yi Yin* is referred to any notes besides *Pian Yin* and *Zheng Yin*. *Yi Yin* gives the composer more options to arrange the music. Bao uses *Yi Yin* to create harmonies.
and they are functional, the examples can be found in no.3 *Jasmine*, no.11 *Going to Jiangzhou* of Bao’s version *Yan Yue* can be seen in no. 11 *Going to Jiangzhou*. (see Figures 2.7, 2.8 and 2.9)

\begin{center}
\textbf{Zheng Yin:} \quad \textbf{Gong} \quad \textbf{Shang} \quad \textbf{Jiao} \quad \textbf{Zhi} \quad \textbf{Yu} \\
\textbf{Pian Yin:} \quad \textbf{fa} \quad \#\textbf{fa} \quad \textbf{bti} \quad \textbf{ti} \\
\end{center}

Figure 2.7 Zheng Yin and Pian Yin.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Qing Yue} \quad \textbf{Qingjiao} \quad \textbf{Biangong} \\
\textbf{Ya Yue} \quad \textbf{Bianzhi} \quad \textbf{BianGong} \\
\textbf{Yan Yue} \quad \textbf{Qingjiao} \quad \textbf{Run} \\
\end{center}

Figure 2.8 Chinese Pentatonic scales with Pian Yin.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Yi Yin} \quad \textbf{Yi Yin} \\
\end{center}

Figure 2.9 Yi Yin.
In sum, the keys structure of Western major and minor scales might have some similarities, but will never be as the same as Chinese modes. The differences are:

1. Western relative major and minor scales (C major-a minor) have their own fully functional system; yet five Chinese modes are built on a common note (Gong). Each mode is set up by Gong and cannot be divided independently.

2. Due to the integrity of the tuning system, Western major and minor scales can be either integrated or used independently, while the five Chinese modes are not fully functional and will be transferred randomly during the music; therefore they cannot be completely divided. (See examples from Chapter 3\(^{18}\))

3. The Western harmony system is precise, built on diatonic scales and chords. Because of the feature of the rare notes (IV and VII), Chinese modes have some substitute chords to reduce the integrity of each mode, which blur the boundaries between the modes. (See examples from Chapter 3\(^{19}\))

4. The tonality of the Western harmony system is explicit, as the music is built upon the tonic chord. The tonality of Chinese modes is relatively free; one cannot find the tonic chord from the beginning and will have to wait until the end of the song to determine it. Sometimes it is

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\(^{18}\) Figure 3.9.1. The original folk song *A Teenage Girl Fetches Water*. The song has eight measures; the first five measures are in Zhi mode, and the last three are in Shang mode. Figure 3.15.1. The original folk song *Embroider on a Pouch*. The first nine measures in this song can be divided into two phrases; four bars on the first, five bars on the second. The beginning two bars are in Yu mode, and the phrase ends on Shang. The second phrase is mainly in Zhi mode and Gong mode and ends on Gong.

\(^{19}\) Figure 3.3.4. *Jasmine* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, mm. 50-55. This example shows that Bao removes *Pian Yin* (E) and substitutes triads without the middle note, which brings in elements of the Chinese style.
hard to decide which mode is used at the end, and it will not be possible to establish the chord progression. Therefore, the five modes are unified and use Gong as a tonic chord when analyzed.

Nowadays, the new generation of Chinese composers writes music using Western conventional harmony. Unlike Western composers, however, Chinese composers tend to use Gong as the tonic for all the modes, except for Yu mode, which are in the same key signature. For instance, if one used western conventional harmony to analyze traditional Chinese music, the music might be in D Shang mode. The tonic pitches should be D F A. Yet Chinese composers would prefer to use the Gong chord, C E G, as the tonic (See Figure 2.10). This is an example of what the harmonies of New Chinese music look like:

Figure 2.10. The harmonies of New Chinese music in D Shang mode.

In the next chapter, discussion of how Bao integrates Western harmony in Chinese folk songs will be given. An analysis of each piece will be offered, including the following aspects:

1. General explanation: The origin and the story behind the folk material will be discussed.

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20 Yu mode is similar to minor scale; the tonic would be a minor chord. For example, F Yu mode can be analyzed as f minor and the tonic is f minor chord.

2. Folk tunes and lyrics: When a folk song spreads to the rest of the country, the context has been integrated into the local customs and the melody has also been changed. The material I found is as close to the melodies that the composer cited in his program note. The melody and lyrics show the original folk material.

3. Formal analysis: Through a table of structural analysis, the musical form and tempo will be described.

4. Harmonic Analysis: The chords used in the song will be explained by analyzing the sound effects they produce.

5. Commentary: the style and theme of the music will be elaborated on.

Western musical forms enrich the meaning of Chinese folk songs and Western musical forms and structures are expressed through familiar folk melodies. Although the musical style is intended to be accessible to educated and uneducated listeners alike, Bao’s music does not write down to his audience. The next chapter shows the composer’s careful crafting of rich harmonies and textures that embody the characteristics of Chinese music. The orchestral version has added a number of Chinese musical instruments, such as the Banhu, Sanxian and Suona.

In the piano solo version, the unique tones of the traditional Chinese instruments are imitated at the keyboard. When these tones are blended into the sound effects, they never cause any conflict nor destroy the harmony of the music; on the contrary, they present the cultural qualities of the Chinese in an authentic way. In Kan Yangge (Going to Watch Yangge Dance)

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22 Bao wrote a program note for his orchestra version of Chinese Sights and Sounds. The program note includes the names of those original folk songs which he cited in his music, and the lyrics which I used in this dissertation.
playing, the imitation tone of the Chinese instruments becomes the imagery of an experience and conjures up the image of a battle scene in the Eastern operatic style. When the application of traditional musical instruments is sensitively rendered in performance, the audience’s appreciation is enhanced. The audiences already know the sounds and folk melodies, which lead them into a familiar scene. Thus this music has widely appeal to people around the world (see Figure 2.11).

Figure 2.11. Chinese instruments: Banhu, Sanxian and Suona.23

CHAPTER 3. CHINESE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS FOR PIANO SOLO

Bao composed *Chinese Sights and Sounds: 24 Pieces by Themes on Chinese Folk Tunes* for orchestra in 1990. Beginning in 2006, Bao and one of his graduate students, Peibing Zhu worked together and transcribed these 24 pieces for solo piano.\(^{24}\) That same year, Alexander Bildau, a German pianist, performed the first four piano transcriptions of *Chinese Sights and Sounds* in public in Tianjin. In 2010, the complete piano version of *Chinese Sights and Sounds* was published by People’s Publishing House in Beijing.\(^{25}\)

The first four pieces are directly adapted from folk songs of Hebei, a province in northeastern China. They are *Little Cabbage* (No. 1), *The Cowherd Boy* (No. 2), *Jasmine* (No. 3), and *Dialogue on Flowers* (No. 4). In spite of their overt Chinese style, Bao was eager to try various Western musical devices that he had learned, including polyphonic writing.

No.1 Little Cabbage

General Explanation

The first piece of the suite is *Little Cabbage*, based on a Hebei folk song of the same name. The lyrics tell the story of a little girl whose mother has died. Her father has married

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\(^{24}\) Peibin Zhu (1972- ), a Chinese composer. He studied composition and music theory with Yuankai Bao in Tianjin Conservatory of Music when Zhu was doing his master degree. He wrote quite a few articles on the theoretical and polyphonic techniques of *Chinese Sights and Sounds*. Now he is the director of the Music Theory Section of the Music School of Tianjin Conservatory.

another woman. Her stepmother did not treat her well, and the little girl misses her own mother very much and thinks of her mother’s funeral.  

**Original Folk Tune**

Here is the original folk song (see Figure 3.1.).

Figure 3.1. The original folk song *Little Cabbage*.

**Translation**

Little cabbage, become yellow in the ground; I was two-year-old, my mother died. Sigh biological mother, biological mother Sigh!

Followed father, continued to live; I was scared, because daddy married stepmother. Sigh biological mother, biological mother Sigh!

---

After married stepmother, three and a half years passed; gave birth of a younger brother, stronger than me. Sigh biological mother, biological mother Sigh!

Little brother eats noodles, I can only drink the rest of soup; I am holding the bowl, and crying. Sigh biological mother, biological mother Sigh!

Biological mother liked me, but who cares right now; I dream the biological mother in a dream. Sigh biological mother, biological mother Sigh!

Peach blossom, apricot drop; Remembered my mother, like a gust of wind. Sigh biological mother, biological mother Sigh!²⁷

The mode of *Little Cabbage* is G Zhi. Bao’s piano version is in ternary form. The texture of *Little Cabbage* is shown by the following diagram (see Table 3.1).

**Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-20</td>
<td>G Zhi (C Major)</td>
<td>21-49 F Gong-Bb Shang-Eb Gong-Ab Shang</td>
<td>50-60 G Zhi (C Major)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1 shows the modulations that Bao used. The parentheses are the key signatures of the Western major scales. From measure 20 to 21, Bao transfers C major into F major, which is the fourth scale degree of C major. Then Eb major comes in measure 32, which is the flat third of C major and the flat sixth of F major. This kind of modulation is unusual in Chinese music but is common in Western music. The modulation from F major to Eb major can be called distant relationship. (An example of this in Western music is in the middle section of Schubert’s famous song *Der Erlkönig*. Schubert transferred C major into Eb major and then went to D minor.) In addition, the influence of Western music can be found in the harmony of *Little Cabbage*. A

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parallelism of seventh chords is found in measure 5 where a IV\(_7\) goes down to a b\(\text{III}\)_\(7\) (see Figure 3.2).

![Parallelism of Seventh Chords](image)

**Figure 3.2.** *Little Cabbage* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, m. 5.

**Commentary**

The piano begins in a voicing that suggests a string quartet. The top notes, just like the first violin, play the first theme in a mood of sadness. The inner voices, representing the second violin and viola, are like flowing tears and the little girl’s grief and helplessness. At measure 7, the first theme repeats and represents the girl’s recall of the past: her mother’s kind face, loving eyes, and warm hug. The second voice comes in as a canon two beats behind. The second voice starts with G, which is a fifth below the first theme, and answers the melody, like a water reflection of the girl’s mother. From measure 13, the third voice plays the main theme one octave lower, while the first voice responds in free counterpoint. The girl’s memory of her mother ends with the first voice playing the main theme at measure 20. In section B, the tempo changes from *Andante* to *Moderato*. The frequent modulations represent the struggle of the girl’s inner heart. At measure 32, the first voice plays the main theme again, but this time one octave higher. The staccato in the left hand imitates the pizzicato of the viola and the cello from measures 42 to 48,
representing a child mourning her mother’s death and the injustice of her fate. Section A’ begins with repeated sixteenth notes at measure 50. The main theme occurs in a higher octave representing an angelic tone coming from heaven. Hope enters the girl’s heart, and she experiences relief from the abuse of her stepmother.

No.2 The Cowherd Boy

General Explanation

*The Cowherd Boy* is originally from a folk-dance opera in northern China. The main characters in the lyrics are a shepherd boy and a country girl. The girl goes up to the boy, asking for directions. The boy raises a few questions for the girl: Who built the *Zhaozhou* Bridge? Who decorated the marble balustrades on the bridge? Who rode a donkey over the bridge? Who rolled a cart up a groove? They sing as they dance. The tune is bright and smooth, characterized by the art of the narration. The dance's form is vivid, lively, and witty. ²⁸

Original Folk Tune

The original music is on page 24.

Translation

Who built the *Zhaozhou* Bridge? Who decorated the marble balustrades on the bridge? Who rode a donkey over the bridge? Who rolled a cart up a groove?

Ban Lu built Zhaozhou Bridge. A wise man decorated the marble balustrades. Guolao Zhang rode the donkey over the bridge. An old man Chai rolled a cart up a groove (see Figure 3.3).

²⁸ Bao, *Chinese Sights and Sound*, 162.
Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version

Figure 3.3. The original folk song *The Cowherd Boy*.

Section A of Bao’s version is based on the pattern aabb. The B section has three variations, using the second half of the main theme. The formal analysis is given by the following chart. (see Table 3.2.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure Number</td>
<td>1-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode and Variations</td>
<td>D Zhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(G Major)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The composer applies the traditional variation technique to the music. The key remains in D Zhi mode (G major) all the way through the piece. The choice of D Zhi is common in traditional Chinese music, representing a plain and simple style. The harmony in this piece is very traditional, basically triadic, with an occasional secondary dominant. The harmonies remain
unchanged, presenting traditional musical style and maintaining the consistency of the main theme.

Commentary

The music starts with a trill and glissando, imitating the sounds of the Chinese flute and Zheng. The Chinese flute that is commonly used is made of bamboo and has a buzzing membrane. The sound of the bamboo flute is sharper and brighter than that of the Western flute. The Zheng is a 21- or 25-stringed plucked instrument, somewhat similar to the zither. Glissando is one of most frequently used performance techniques on the Zheng, intended to imitate the sound of flowing water (See Figure 3.4).

![Bamboo flute and Zheng](image)

Figure 3.4. Chinese instruments: Bamboo flute and Zheng.

The sound effects of the introduction are intended to project the image of a beautiful village with the sun shining through an early morning mist. The first theme indicates that a shepherd boy is riding a cow, playing the bamboo flute, headed toward the outside of the village. The second theme represents the boy meeting a country girl, who asks the boy for directions. The boy deliberately poses several questions in the first variation, represented by staccato notes and big leaps in the left hand. The second variation, with rapid sixteenth notes in the right hand, shows

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the boy and the girl singing and dancing joyfully. The last variation is smooth, and the dynamics change from soft to loud, pushing to the high point at the end.

No.3 Jasmine

**General Explanation**

The folk song, *Jasmine*, has been popular in China since ancient times. From the many variants of *Jasmine*, Bao chose the one from the Nanpi region in Heibei province, near his parent’s hometown. The lyrics describe a girl who compares herself to a jasmine flower, giving it the fantasy of romance and displaying her feelings about love.³⁰

**Original Folk Tune**

The first half of the melody of *Jasmine* is in *Gong* mode for eight measures; the second half is in *Zhi* mode for seven measures. The starting note is A, which is also *Yu* in *Gong* mode (See Figure 3.5). The note A plays a significant role in the whole song.

**Translation**

What a jasmine, no one is more beautiful than it in the whole garden, I intend to pick one Jasmine to wear, but I'm afraid that the gardener would scold me.

**Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version** (see Table 3.3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>E Zhi</td>
<td>D Zhi</td>
<td>C Zhi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-22</td>
<td>(A Major)</td>
<td>(G Major)</td>
<td>(F Major)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-37</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a1</td>
<td>a2</td>
<td>Coda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38-52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53-55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

³⁰ Bao, *Chinese Sights and Sound*, 162.
The original folk song is as follows (see Figure 3.5)

![Musical notation for Jasmine](image)

Figure 3.5. The original folk song *Jasmine*.

To avoid monotony at the end of a1 and a2 (measure 37 and 52), Bao arranges the ending note *Zhi* (D) as the new mode’s *Yu*, modulating downwards a major second. In measure 37, the sequence is designed as an ascending scale, filling the music with tension. The music modulates to unexpected keys, similar to the remote key changes of Western music. In this way, each theme presents charming tonal differences.
The version of *Jasmine*-from Hebei province-has two special notes that are rarely seen in the Chinese pentatonic scale, C sharp and G sharp, which are called *Yi Yin*. These elements provide the composer with more compositional choices (see Figure 3.6).

![C Gong Mode with Yi Yin](image)

Figure 3.6. C Gong mode with *Yi Yin*.

The harmonies of the music are mostly based on major or minor triads, with occasional diminished chords to vary the musical colors. The second half of a1, from measures 42 to 45, borrows chords from parallel minor, d minor, and uses triads with a passing six. The final cadence ends in a different key-C *Zhi*-than it began (see Figure 3.7).

![Jasmine from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm. 50-55](image)

Figure 3.7. *Jasmine* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, mm. 50-55.
The whole song contains a prelude and four cadences. The composer ends with a triad with an added fourth cadence. At the end of the piece, the composer brings in elements of the Chinese style, replacing Pian Yin (E) and substitutes triads with an unresolved suspended fourth, which produces a hollow sound (see both Figures 3.7. and 3.8.).

![C Zhi Mode and its Pian Yin](image)

Figure 3.8. C Zhi Mode and its Pian Yin.

**Commentary**

The top line and the middle line play a soothing introduction, evoking garden flowers, such as jasmine, waving in the breeze, emitting a slight fragrance. The main themes are played twice by each part, sometimes tranquil and quiet, while the dissonant chords represent the girl’s melancholy heart. When the main theme comes back the third time, the middle parts are added as counterpoint, like pieces of poetic love songs. After this, the top notes sing a meditative melody. The dissonant chords before the end represent the girl’s heart troubled by a trace of confusion.

No.4 Can You Guess What Flower It Is?

**General Explanation**

This song was originally called *Flowers (Fan Dui Hua)*, and was popular during World War II in China. It is a new folk song, using one of Heibei’s traditional pieces, *Flowers*, coupled with new words. The entire song is filled with various sound effects and rhythm, depicting the
various flowers. The first two phrases are the main melody of the song, with lots of repeats and changes. The song embodies a bright and lively image through the dotted rhythms and syncopations, and the singer’s imitation of a drum beat sound. In piano score, a slow song, *Kite Flying*, is inserted during the middle section, evoking a sunny day in March and girls having fun with kites. The slow song *Kite Flying* reveals the girls’ youthfulness with its beautiful and soft tunes (see Figure 3.9).  

Original Folk Tune

![Flowers](image)

Figure 3.9. The original folk song *Flowers.*

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Translation of Flowers

What flower will bloom in January? Winter jasmine will bloom in January, who will wear the winter jasmine? Heroes in the army will wear it; heroes in the army will wear it.

What flower will bloom in February? Begonia will bloom in February. Who will wear the Begonia? Explosion heroes will wear it, explosion heroes will wear it.

What flower will bloom in April? Peony will bloom in April. Who will wear peony? The supporter of the military will wear, the supporter will wear it (see Figures 3.9 and 3.10).  

![Figure 3.10. The original folk song Kite Flying.](image)

32 Bao, Chinese Sights and Sounds, 163.
Translation of *Kite Flying*

Early March is the Qingming Festival, sisters go for a walk, and bring kites with them.

The older sister wears in green, the younger sister wears in garnet red, with a mid-waist skirt.

Hold the kite spindle and cast the line, kites fly in the wind.

The older sister flies a butterfly kite, which has two lively eyes, and whose body carries a bow.

The younger sister flies a centipede kite, which shakes its head and lashes its tail in the air, and is livelier than a dragon in the water.

The older sister collects kite lines, the little sister carries her centipede kite, they go home happily (see Figure 3.9 and Table 3.4).\(^{33}\)

**Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version** (see Table 3.4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-8</td>
<td>D Yu (d minor)</td>
<td>9-45</td>
<td>B Gong (B major)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-109</td>
<td>D Yu (d minor)</td>
<td>110-136</td>
<td>D Yu (d minor)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following are features of the music:

1. The melody of *Flowers* is very short, but brisk and lively (see Figure 3.9.). Bao uses the transformation of rhythms plus the counterpoint of timbres so that the music creates a lively atmosphere.

2. There are three important notes in *Flowers*: Mi, Sol and La, which are A, C and D in D Yu mode (d minor) (see Figure 3.9.). According to different rhythms and parallel motions, these three notes form a plurality of lines at the same time. From measure 28 to measure 44, there are

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\(^{33}\) Bao, *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, 163.
no chords, but all are the three-center notes as if all the people are bustling and competing with their singing (see Figure 3.11.).

![Figure 3.11. Can You Guess What Flower It Is from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm.28-31.](image)

3. In Section B, each appearance of the theme *Kite Flying* is transferred to a distantly related mode, from G Gong, Eb Gong to B Gong, by the guidance of the Chinese mode *Ya Yue* scale (new mode’s Mi and #Fa) (see Figure 3.12).

![Figure 3.12. Ya Yue scale and the modulations in Section B.](image)

This not only smooths the remote key change, but also creates a new mode color and tension in the piano timbre. The reason for using this guide is that the theme of the previous melody's tone does not include Fa and will not conflict with the sound of #Fa. In addition, the scale with #Fa is a typical feature of Chinese music (*Ya Yue*). The minor third, from the ending
tone of previous mode, *Do*, to the beginning tone of the new mode, *Sol*, is typical of the Chinese pentatonic scale. This ingenious design produces a colorful style throughout the music.

4. When the slow section shifts to the fast one from measures 100 to 109, Bao develops the music from B *Gong* to D *Yu* gradually. At measure 106, the composer quotes the first phrase from the first theme. At measure 107, he changes the note Bb to B natural. The left hand plays the *Ya Yue* mode because of B natural, which predicts the D *Yu* mode (see Figure 3.13).

At measure 108, D *Yu* shifts to B *Jiao*. The first phrase of the main theme completes the alternation of keys and modes, which can be seen at measure 109 where the note B natural has formed the mode B *Jiao* and then come back to the D *Yu* mode. From measure 106 to measure 113, the use of the main theme makes a wonderful transition between keys and modes and pitches, reflecting the multi-level changes in the middle of the music. This is typical of Chinese musical style, and Bao modulates freely between the Chinese modes. When the song becomes lively and fast, Bao often uses traditional harmonies, both to avoid making the sound too complicated, and to allow the melodic lines to sound like conventional singing. The chords of this music are based on traditional triads, I and V; chords outside the mode, such as ii and iii, appear several times—in order to delay the cadence.

The slow B section repeats three times. The first time, the harmonies include the mode scale, mostly broken chords. Phrase b1 has fewer additional chords, and stays with the main triads. Phrase b2 changes to B *Gong*, and the arrangement of harmonies raises diminished sevenths from measures 93 to 98. Besides the shift of keys, the harmony makes the last part of the music echo the previous music. The recapitulation section has the same harmony as the A section, and the end is an unusual cadence from iii to vi (see Figure 3.13).
Figure 3.13. Can You Guess What Flower It Is from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm.106-114.
Commentary

The prelude creates a rough and powerful sound with changing rhythms, contrasting tone colors, and dynamic changes. It represents people gathered in a square, singing and talking. The first theme, a, depicts people in a happy mood. In phrase a1, the theme gradually gathers strength and expresses the excited state of mind of the people. When section B brings the main theme in different modes again and again, the scene changes to a group of dancers who are performing the lotus dance. They are holding bamboo sticks to beat the rhythms and they dance with graceful gestures. The contrast between masculinity and femininity are expressed by using the antiphonal style.

The following four pieces are from Yunnan province: Flowing Stream (No.5), The Wrangler’s Song (No.6), Blossoming for Rainwater (No. 7), A Song of Riddles (No.8).

No.5 Flowing stream

Original Folk Tune

This folk song is originally from Midu city in Yunnan and is divided into five phrases. It is in Yu mode. The note Yu is constantly repeated and every phrase picks up from the note Yu (see the circled note in Figure 3.14), except for the fourth phrase starting from Shang note (see the notes in rectangle in Figure 3.14). The tempo is somewhat free. The music has a distinctive style and presents a moonlit scene of lovers and a forest stream. The lyrics describe a girl
comparing water and moonlight to her lover, who is always in her heart. The melody is rustic and true love has turned into a gentle song (see Figure 3.14 and 3.15).³⁴

![Figure 3.14. The original folk song Flowing Stream, Shang (in rectangle) and Yu (in circle).](image)

**Translation**

Hey! The moon comes out, and shines brightly. It reminds me of my lover, who is in the mountains. He who is like the moon is always there with me. My lover, the rippling brook is clear and moves leisurely.

Hey! The moon comes out, which brightens the mountains. It reminds me of my lover when I watch the moon. A breeze blows uphill. My lover, can you hear me calling for you? (see Figure 3.15)³⁵

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Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version

Table 3.5. Structure of *Flowing Stream* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Prelude</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>a1</th>
<th>Interlude</th>
<th>a2</th>
<th>Coda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Yu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bb</td>
<td>Yu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g minor)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b\textsuperscript{b} minor)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The piece starts with five measures of the G octave, played in the right hand, on the offbeat. In measure 3 to 6, the two bass voices move in parallel fifths. The pianissimo chords sound thick and full, creating the effect of a soft moonlight night (see Figure 3.16).

Starting from measure 16, arpeggios and broken chords continue the impressionistic style. At measure 21, in order to reduce the sense of cadence, Bao adds secondary seventh chords to
the third and fourth beats. After a short cadence, the harmony immediately proceeds to the secondary dominant chord, then ends on the tonic (see Figure 3.17).

Figure 3.17. Flowing Stream from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm.20-25.

From measure 25 to 36, triplets and arpeggios increase to enhance the harmonic background. The chord configuration is different from the previous one. There are only a few secondary chords; most are original chords with additional notes. At measure 34 the cadence progression is based on a IV chord added sixth instead of the dominant function of the III chord. At measure 37, the A flat becomes the leading tone, which means the chords come back to the tonic.

The interlude section is a reproduction of the prelude. Here Bao takes advantage of the text to create a sense of space and time. Space is evoked by the mountains, water and wind, while time is evoked by the dark sky with the moon. Bao uses musical figures, such as an ostinato and octaves for the sky, glissando and arpeggios for the water, creating a clear, sparkling effect (see Figures 3.18 and 3.19).
Figure 3.18. *Flowing Stream* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, mm.32-37.

Figure 3.19. *Flowing Stream* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, mm.38-42.
While the harmony primarily uses secondary chords again (see Figure 3.19), more chords, such as diminished and half-diminished seventh chord, make the rhythm like water rolling forward. When the main theme appears at measure 47 again, it uses the tonic with added sixth (see Figure 3.20).

![Figure 3.20. Flowing Stream from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm.47-50.](image)

Although there is only one chord, the tonic with added sixth, the glissando and arpeggios create a sense of movement. It is worth mentioning that when the theme occurs the third time from measure 47 to 58, the top voice is presented together with its augmentation in the bass (see Figures 3.20 and 3.21).

![Figure 3.21. Augmentation.](image)

---

36 Here augmentation means that a melody is presented in longer note-values than were previously written. Peibing Zhu. “Study of polyphonic technique used in Chinese Sights and Sounds.” Journal of Xinghai Conservatory of Music 2, (2011):118.
The coda uses a sustained tonic chord. Instead of a cadence ending on the D flat Zhi mode, the music ending consists of D Jiao mode. The rhythm and chord configuration have been changed, which turns a silent night into a shining world (see Figure 3.22).

![Figure 3.22. Flowing Stream from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm.64-68.](image)

**Commentary**

In the prelude, syncopations and dissonant harmonies lay out the starry, deep obscurity of night. The melody in the right hand is the main theme, which represents the girl standing at the river and softly calling her lover. When the theme comes back the second time, the arpeggios represent gurgling water and rippling moonlight. After the interlude, the rapid sixteenth notes and arpeggios sound like the breeze. The bass note represents moonlight on the river, reflecting the longings of romantic love. When the theme becomes silent, the music changes from dark to bright and represents the glowing eyes of the happy girl.
No. 6 The Wrangler’s Song

Original Folk Tune

This is a popular Yunnan folk song, presenting the nomadic people's simple character. Lyrics are simple and the content is the portrayal of nomadic life. However, the structure is quite refined. There are only two phrases; the second one is changed on the basis of the form of the first phrase. (see Figure 3.23)^37

![The Wrangler’s Song](image)

Figure 3.23. The original folk song The Wrangler’s Song.

Translation

The first month of the year is the right time to ride a horse. We ride the horses and pasture them in the grasslands.

The bigger horses run in the front, with the ponies following.

^37 Bao, Chinese Sights and Sound, 164.
In February there is a lot of rich grassland for pasturing. Ponies run to the deep mountains to eat. If horses eat no weeds, they will not grow fat. If grass has no dew to absorb, it will not grow.\textsuperscript{38}

In the piano version, Bao uses the folk song \textit{Horse Tune} that has smooth rhythm and a sweet melody in the middle section; this depicts people resting after riding (see Figure 3.24).

\textbf{Translation}

When people cut firewood they do not cut vines. A good woman will not fall in love with a man who wastes time. An aspiring man is like an evergreen that persists throughout the year, while a useless man whiles away his precious time.

When people hoe the soil they do not hoe the rocky places. A good man will not fall in love with a lazy woman. A smart girl can do everything while a lazy girl does nothing (see Table 3.6).\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{38} Bao, \textit{Chinese Sights and Sound}, 164.
\textsuperscript{39} Bao, \textit{Chinese Sights and Sounds}, 164.
Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Versio (see Table 3.6)

Table 3.6. Structure of *The Wrangler’s Song* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-21</td>
<td>A Yu</td>
<td>F# Yu</td>
<td>A Yu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a minor)</td>
<td>(f# minor)</td>
<td>(a minor)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The simple rhythm (see Figure 3.25) shows the riders’ optimistic outlook. The middle section has contrasting polyphony.

Figure 3.25. *The Wrangler’s Song* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, mm.1-16.
Overall, there are no special techniques; the analogy with natural sounds is an important characteristic of the music. Four natural sounds are represented; as the horse's hoofs (broken chords on left hand), horse's bell (staccato on both hands), people's cry (glissando) and whipping sound (grace notes or full chords on right hand in Figure 3.26).

The whole song is based on standard diatonic harmonies. Section A is in Yu mode. From the beginning to measure 22, all harmonies are minor chords and section A ends on the note Yu.

Figure 3.26. *The Wrangler’s Song* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, mm.17-21.

From measure 25 to 48, the tonic chord remains in the root position, and the rest are in the first inversion. Until the end of section B, it only takes a major triad, the $b\text{II}$ chord, in measures 36 and 46 provides a harmonic color change (See the circle notes in Figure 3.27).

Figure 3.27. *The Wrangler’s Song* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, m.36 and 46.
Commentary

The music imitates the sounds of galloping horses and cracking whips. People are singing songs, enjoying the nomadic life all day on the open grassland. After a short solo in the right hand, the “horse tone” melody is presented, representing the riders taking a rest. Simple polyphony between hands illustrates the talking and laughing.

No. 7 Blossoming for Rainwater

Original Folk Tune

This is a love song, popular in the country (see Figure 3.28). 

![Music notation](image)

Figure 3.28. The original folk song *Blossoming for Rainflower*.

Translation

A man is like a dragon flying in the sky, while a woman is like a blossom on the ground. If the dragon does not turn over there will be no rainwater, if it does not rain, the blossoms will not grow red. 

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41 Bao, *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, 164.
Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version (see Table 3.7)

Table 3.7. Structure of Blossoming for Rainflower from Chinese Sights and Sounds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>Prelude</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>Interlude</th>
<th>a1</th>
<th>a2</th>
<th>Coda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure Number</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>7-16</td>
<td>17-18</td>
<td>19-28</td>
<td>29-35</td>
<td>36-46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>C Yu</td>
<td>(c minor)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Triplet figures in both hands symbolize raindrops throughout the piece. The main melody and the triplet figures form groups of three notes against four notes and the extensive use of high notes depicts the gentle rainfall. (see Figure 3.29)

![Figure 3.29. Blossoming for Rainflower from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm.4-9.](image)

After three measures of quarter notes, triplets are added at measure, the opening (1-21) is not triadic but built on fourths. The chords of the first theme are dense and complex, and each measure has several harmonic changes. The second half of the theme is (from measure 11 to 13) based on A♭ Gong mode, highlighting its mixed modal colors (see Figure 3.30).
From measure 19 on, the harmonic rhythm slows to one chord change per measure (see Figure 3.31).

The coda is built on F Yu mode, with a fifth in the bass sustaining the Yu (F) note.

The ending chord is the iv chord with an unresolved suspended fourth, suggesting the Chinese pentatonic scale (see Figure 3.32).

Commentary

The introduction represents early morning twilight, slowly dispersing the night atmosphere. Triplets sound like diffusing smoke in the rain, and raindrops on the petals,
depicting a young girl as flowers, a young man as the rain. As the flowers long for rain, the young person longs for love! (see Figure 3.32)

![Figure 3.32. Blossoming for Rainflower from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm.41-46.](image)

No.8 A Song of Riddles

Original Folk Tune

This humorous song uses a rhythm known as a “tongue twister” in order to represent antiphonal singing between sisters. The conversation and melody are lively, and the tempo is fast-paced. The folk song has only eight measures; in the last two measures there is a slight easing, which reflects children's joyful playtime. (see Figure 3.33)

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42 The “tongue twist” type rhythm is like a Gilbert and Sullivan patter song. Each syllable of text corresponds to one or two note.

43 Bao, Chinese Sights and Sound, 164.
Figure 3.33. The original folk song *A Song of riddles*.

**Translation**

Little girl, little girl, come, you guess what we say, what is long, which is long enough to reach heaven? What is long, which grows in the sea? What is long, which is sold on the Long Street? What is long, which is right in front of the young lady?

Little girl, little girl, come, you say what we guess, the Galaxy is long, which is long enough to reach heaven, the lotus is long which grows in the sea, the noodle is long, which is sold on the Long Street, a silk thread is long, which is right in front of the young lady.

Little girl, little girl, come, you guess what we say, what is round, which is round enough to reach heaven? What is round, which grows in the sea? What is round which is sold on the Round Street? What is round which is right in front of the young lady?

Little girl, little girl, come, you say what we guess, the moon is round to reach heaven. The lotus leaf is round, which grows in the sea, the rice cake is round which is sold on the Round Street, and the mirror is round, which is right in front of the young lady.\(^{44}\)

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\(^{44}\) **Bao, *Chinese Sights and Sounds*,** 164.
The middle section quotes another Yunnan folk song called *Anning Town*. *Anning Town* has a total of 16 measures and can be divided into two phrases in eight measures. The second phrase is a variation on the first one (see Figure 3.34).

![Image of Anning Town](image)

**Figure 3.34. The original folk song Anning Town.**

**Translation**

In *Anning Town*, there is a peaceful lake running slowly, do not be afraid to drink the water, do not be shy to sing a folk song.

A man rides a white horse to the *Baipo* hill, the wind blows ponytail; the silk is made by people, which is fine and needs money to buy, the sisters cannot afford the silk but they get along well with each other. (see Table 3.8)

**Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>D Major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>G Major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>D Major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3.8. Structure of *A Song of Riddles* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-31</td>
<td>A Zhi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32-62</td>
<td>A Shang</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-103</td>
<td>A Zhi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bao chooses a *Run* note from the folk song, in accordance with the trend of the melody, and separates it into two tones - C sharp and C natural (see the bold note in Figure 3.35). This forms a melody in another style, and changes the harmonic configuration (see Figure 3.36).

![Figure 3.35. D Gong mode with Run.](image)

The piano generally cannot render the special color tone of the *Run* note. To suggest the characteristic sound of *Run* note, Bao transfers C sharp to C natural and then C sharp (see the circled note in Figure 3.36). When the *Run* note appears in the melodies, it is attached to a major $bVII$ chord which does not have a chord function. At measure 15, time signature changes from

53
2/4 to 3/8, resulting in a change of accent and rhythmic pattern (see the circled note in Figure 3.37).

![Figure 3.37. A Song of Riddles from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm.14-15.](image)

In section B, Anning Town belongs to the Shang mode. To avoid Pian Yin, C and F natural, the ii chord has a suspended fourth at measure 62 (see Figure 3.38).

![Figure 3.38. A Song of Riddles from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm.62.](image)

The coda repeats the main motifs in various keys, after which the last two notes suddenly return to the original mode (D major). (see Figure 3.39).
Figure 3.39. A Song of Riddles from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, mm.97-104.

**Commentary**

At the beginning, right hand plays the melody with occasional octave displacement. At measure 9, the theme is moved up to an octave higher. At measure 21 the theme is transferred to the left hand part with constantly sixteenth notes (see Figure 3.40). The music represents the sisters’ vivid on-going conversation without a break.

Figure 3.40. A Song of Riddles from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, the changes of theme.
The middle section *Anning Town* is developed from a single note melody, describing the beautiful and peaceful region. The lyrics at this point are “as long as you come here, do not be afraid, enjoy the life experience of nice people and the beauty of the rustic landscape.

The materials used in the following four pieces are from Shaanxi Province. The titles are as follows: *A Theme and Variations of A Folksong from Shaanxi* (No.9), *The Amusing Couple* (No.10), *Going to Jiangzhou* (No.11), *Lan Huahua* (No.12).

No.9 Theme and Variations on A Folksong from Shaanxi

**Original Folk Tune**

The melody of this song is from northern Shaanxi. A woman is remembering her sad life as a young girl. The song is also known as *A Teenage Girl Fetches Water*. It has dual modes; the first five measures are in *Zhi* mode, and the last three measures are in *Shang* mode. Both phrases of the theme are built on a typical antecedent-consequent model. The theme moves to the *Shang* mode at the end. The structure of the theme tends toward descent, reflecting the image of misery and frustration.45

**Translation**

When a cock crows early in the morning, when I open the front door, I see a teenage girls fetching water.

During the day they fetch water back and forth for eighteen times. They work until the late night.

When the pea blossoms, the ears of wheat grow long. My mother has sold me to other people without asking me.

---

I am sold to a village on the high mountains; I have to carry water and labor up the long hillside.

When I get the water and arrive on the flat ground, I run into my mother-in-law and my husband.

I have some words in mind. If I do not say these words to them, to whom else I can talk? (see Figure 3.41 and Table 3.9)\textsuperscript{46}

**Formal And Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version**

![Figure 3.41. The original folk song *A Teenage Girl Fetches Water*.](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>1-8</th>
<th>9-19</th>
<th>20-30</th>
<th>31-86</th>
<th>87-113</th>
<th>114-128</th>
<th>129-145</th>
<th>146-168</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>C Shang</td>
<td>C Yu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A Gong</td>
<td>C Shang</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(B♭ Major)</td>
<td>(Eb Major)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(A Major)</td>
<td>(B♭ Major)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{46} Bao, *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, 164.
This is the only variation form among the 24 pieces that uses a Western-style approach. Bao wrote this piece during his freshman year in college. The music basically follows the rules of Western harmony. Bao uses 4-3 suspensions frequently, and resolves them in the normal way. Variation 1 is in F Zhi mode, delaying the cadence and continuing the tense feelings of resentment (see Figure 3.42).

![Figure 3.42. Theme and Variations on A Folksong from Shaanxi, mm.9-16.](image)

The first variation is an example of typical Western-style part-writing. The second variation is configured mostly in seventh chords with an added fourth, with the melody in left hand. (see Figure 3.43)

![Figure 3.43. Theme and Variations on A Folksong from Shaanxi Variation I and II.](image)

At the measure 24, a triton fourth is inserted in an empty spot, strengthening the atmosphere of grief (see the circled note in Figure 3.44).
The variation ends on a V chord with unresolved suspended fourth. The third variation has descending parallel fifths in the left hand (Figure 3.45), against two-part counterpoint in the right hand.

From measure 83 to 85 the chords are presented in open spacing (see the notes in bracket in Figure 3.45).
From measure 87 there is a continuous sequence of variation form. At measure 111 in order to strengthen the music, Bao uses pentatonic scale with an added E-flat (see Figures 3.46, 3.47 and 3.48).

Figure 3.47. *Theme and Variations on A Folksong from Shaanxi*, mm.87-92.

The sixth variation (Measure 129) is mainly dual modes; the upper voices use D *Yu* mode, and the lower voices remain in G *Yu* mode (see figures 3.48 and 3.49).
Commentary

The music begins in the low register, suggesting that in the traditional society, women feel frustrated because of their low status. The harmonies generated by the contrapuntal writing reveal the inner world of the suffering women. The third variation has big intervals that may depict melancholy anxiety. Rising syncopations represent breathing after a struggle. The fourth variation reflects the women’s dislike of the old ethic. After contrapuntal section, the woman becomes at her tragic fate. The final homophonic statement of the theme suggests that the woman's courage and confidence will eventually overcome her suffering.
No. 10 The Amusing Couple

Original Folk Tune

This Shaanxi folk song depicts a couple's playful teasing in the form of a duet. The melody is playful, and the intervals are mostly disjunct. The music starts from Gong note, and ends with Zhi note. The husband and his wife use the third person to tease each other: the husband refers to the wife as “his children’s mother” and the wife calls her husband “her children’s father.” It can be seen that people in Shaanxi have straightforward and unpretentious personalities. The content describes the smallest living things, which reflects the simple people and their interesting lives.47

Translation

Told you that you are really dirty; your hair is tangled, my child’s mom, with a head of grey hair. What do you worry about? You buy a comb for your sister so she can comb it, my child’s dad, your sister can comb it.

Told you that you are really dirty; the front of your garment is wet with dirty water, my child’s mom. Why do you care about my wet garment? You buy a hoe for your sister so that she can use it, my child’s dad, your sister can use it.

Told you that you are really dirty, you have two big front teeth in your mouth, my child’s mom. What do you care about my teeth? You buy a watermelon for your sister so that she can roll it, my child’s dad, your sister can roll it.48

Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version

There are four principal-compositional aspects of this song:

1. Two distinctive folk instruments, Banhu and Sanxian. They are used to represent the two characters in the orchestral version. In the piano version, the main melody is played by the

47 Bao, Chinese Sights and Sound, 165.
48 Bao, Chinese Sights and Sounds, 164.
right hand and imitates the tone of the *Banhu* starting from measures 8 to 23 and then from measures 90 to 96. The left hand imitates the tone of the *Sanxian* from measures 24 to 55 (see Figures 3.50, 3.51 and Table 3.10).

![Figure 3.50 The original folk song *The Amusing couple*.](image)

Table 3.10. Structure of *The Amusing Couple* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure Number</td>
<td>1-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>D Zhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(G Major)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Banhu is a Chinese bowed string instrument, which has two strings and a soundbox made from a coconut shell. Its tone is sharper than that of the Sanxian. The Sanxian is a three-string plucked instrument, with a body is made from snake skin. It has a dry and percussive tone, which can be used both as a solo and accompanying instrument (see Figure 3.52).

2. The Bangu and Xiaoluo are traditional Chinese percussion instruments. In Bao’s arrangement, they are suggested by a stylized figure, equivalent to the painted humorous face of Beijing opera. The Bangu and Xiaoluo are suggested by staccato accompanimental figures (see Figure 3.53).

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The Bangu is a Chinese drum that creates a sharp dry sound. The Xiaoluo is a small flat gong that is struck with the side of a flat wooden stick. These instruments are often used in Chinese opera (Figure 3.54).

The use and imitation of traditional instruments depicts the simple home life of the couple.

3. During the interlude, when imitating the tone of the percussion instruments, Bao varies the rhythm and the register to present the humorous characters of the husband and wife (see the notes with arrows in Figure 3.55).

4. In the coda, the meter changes from 2/4 to 3/8 and back to 2/4. The resulting displaced accents add humor and freshness to the music (Figure 3.55 and 3.56)

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“Xiaoluo”, A Li Ba Ba, last modified March 1, 2016, accessed on March 5, 2016, https://www.1688.com/pic/-D0A1C2E0.html
Figure 3.55. The Amusing Couple from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm.56-67.

Figure 3.56. The Amusing Couple from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm.92-99.
The harmonies are mostly triadic, with occasional use of the dominant seventh chord at cadence.

The left hand imitates the *Bangu* and *Xiaoluo*, suggesting the couple’s banter. The themes between the hands imitate the tones of the *Banhu* and *Sanxian*, vividly depicting the couple's playful ridicule. The *Bangu* and *Xiaoluo* have completely different sounds and musical properties, which are represented by staccato chords, and suggest conversation between husband and wife.

**Commentary**

The interlude uses the interval of a minor second, together with percussive figures in the left hand, adding a playful sense. In the B section the tonality is suddenly changed, and the continuous sixteenth notes present a variation of the main theme. After a period of laughing and chatting, the coda abruptly misplaces the accent and eases the mood.

No.11 Going to Jiangzhou

**Originl Folk Tune**

This song is popular in Shaanxi and Shanxi and is also called *A Pole*. People sing while walking briskly towards *Jiangzhou*, their poles across their shoulders, carrying their baskets or buckets. The note *Run* is often used in *Shaanxi* Folk Songs, known as a “bitter” tone. In the ancient Chinese, *Run* is a flat seventh degree of *Yan* mode scale (see the circled note in Figure 3.57).\(^{51}\)

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\(^{51}\) Bao, *Chinese Sights and Sound*, 165.
In the second half of the melody, the note *Bianzhi*, which is a sharp fourth degree, adds some fun to the music (see Figure 3.58).

![Figure 3.58. Ya Yue with Bianzhi and Bianggong.](image)

There is no *Jiao* note in the *Zhi* mode, which is a typical type in Chinese music. The music is surrounded by three main notes *Gong*, *Shang*, and *Zhi* which are highly distinctive. The eighth and sixteenth note figures represent the elastic movement of the poles, displaying a beautiful countryside scene.

**Translation**

A pole is so flexible. With bearing on the pole I am about to go to Jingzhou, the willow is green while the blossoms are red. I am about to go to Jingzhou.\(^{52}\)

**Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version**

The melody represents the Chinese instrumental tone, *Banhu* (see Figure 2.4), and presents a happy folk character; on the other hand, the eighth-sixteenth figure symbolizes that the pole moving up and down as when it is carried on the shoulders. The original tune of *Going to Jingzhou* by Bao, *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, p. 165.

\(^{52}\) Bao, *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, 165.
**Jiangzhou** has no **Jiao** (the third degree of **Gong** scale). On his harmonies, Bao uses chords with the suspended fourth. Taking into account the style and unity of the harmony configuration, both notes, **Jiao** (B) and **Biangong** (F#) cannot appear in the music. The other chords also try to avoid these notes. The first three bars are a half cadence based on the resolution of the secondary chord V7/V (see Figures 3.59, 3.60 and Table 3.11).

![Figure 3.59. The original folk song *Going to Jiangzhou*.](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>1-50</th>
<th>51-91</th>
<th>92-122</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>D Zhi</td>
<td>B Zhi</td>
<td>D Zhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(G Major)</td>
<td>(E Major)</td>
<td>(G Major)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3.60. *Going to Jiangzhou* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, mm.1-4.

The tonic I is based on a chord with suspended second (A) and suspended fourth (C) at measure 5 (see Figure 3.61).

Figure 3.61. *Going to Jiangzhou* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, mm5-8.

The note-substituted chords are frequently used in the music. The *Run* (F) is used as color tone in the secondary chord (V7 / V) in the cadences (see Figure 3.62).

Figure 3.62. *Going to Jiangzhou* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, mm.24-25.
The chord progression of each theme cadence is: V7/IV → V7/V → V, Bianzhi (C#) and Run (F) make the chord to achieve great connection.

Commentary

The grace notes and minor seconds in the right hand introduce a youthful and energetic theme. The imitation of Banhu's tone is flexible and has rich dynamic change. When the theme occurs again and again, more and more sixteenth note figurations appear and represent the endless vitality of people in Shaanxi. The whole song is both bright and happy, showing that the people are not afraid of hard work and they feel content.

No. 12 Lan Huahua

Original Folk Tune

This is a narrative song from northern Shaanxi. Lyrics are a powerful indictment against the feudal practice of arranged marriages. The young woman Lan Huahua is praised for rebelling against this practice, and for instead pursuing a happy marriage. Sadly, her rebellion ends in her death.  

Translation

Blue silk thread and Green silk thread, Mrs. Lan gave birth to a child named Lan Huahua, who is adorable.

In May only sorghum grows fast and tall in the field, Mrs Lan’s daughter is the most beautiful girl among the villages, she is the only good one.

In January the matchmaker comes and in February the engagement is confirmed. In March Mr. Zhou pays the money and in April Huahua is going to marry to Mr. Zhou.

———

53 Bao, Chinese Sights and Sound, 166.
Three teams play the winds and two teams play the percussion, I am leaving my lover and am carried to Mr. Zhou’s house.

I look around after arrival, and I see Mr. Zhou who is so skinny and old enough to die.

If you die early then die, after you die I can leave right away.

I get the lamb and carry the cake, I run to my lover’s home desperately.

I see my lover and have lots to say to him, our love defies the limits of heaven and death (see Figure 3.63).  

Figure 3.63. The original folk song *Lan Huahua*.

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54 Bao, *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, 165.
**Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version**

The folk song itself has variations in structure. Each verse has a very substantial change depending on the lyrics. It is not just a traditional trophic song. The first and second stanzas are in the third person, and the other stanzas are in the first person. Each verse has a different aesthetic. The variation form of this song is different from the Western style variations, because Western variation also changes pattern values plus harmony, rhythm while keeping the melody. Here Bao uses the motive A, B, A, G and changes their note patterns, values or registers (see Table 3.12)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prelude</td>
<td>1-8</td>
<td>9-44</td>
<td>45-58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>A Yu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a minor).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.64 presents different personalities in the melody to show the emotional change. It is an authentic variation of Chinese folk music style and is also a typical of national vocal variations.

According to the musical structure of this song, Bao uses harmony, texture and intensity change practices to strengthen the beautiful theme, the character's disappointments, fears, and feelings of entrapment as she flees to find true love.

1. Capturing three notes, A, B and G, from the theme to create a motive, A, B, A, G, and A, is an important method through the whole song. This short motive develops the structure of this music.
2. Bao takes advantage of the piano's dynamics, strengthening the tension of the music (see Figure 3.64). The entire design of dynamic changes follows the structure of Chinese traditional music.

![Figure 3.64. Lan Huahua from Chinese Sights and Sounds, Variations I-V.](image)

3. In the third stanza the song ends on the note Jiao (E), the remaining stanzas fall on the Yu (A) note. Through the ingenuity of piano techniques, Bao uses the sad sound effect of
repeating *Yu* (A). On the other hand it reflects the character's inner feelings of conflict and reveal her psychological and emotional story (see Figure 3.65).

![Musical notation](image_url)

**Figure 3.65. Lan Huahua from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm. 45-48.**

At measure 45 Bao configures double octaves, expressing the woman's unrest and indomitable will.

**Commentary**

In the beginning of section A, the soft melody and simple rolling chords represent a beautiful and delicate woman who is dreaming of true love. By the end of section A the sudden tremolo playing suggests that the woman's fate will be changed. In section B the continuous accents symbolize the woman's protest and anger. The octaves set a vigorous tone, representing the character’s failure to break through the constraints of traditional society. The largo section indicates the tragic ending. The last section A represents the woman’s hopelessness in pursuing her happiness, only to die for love. She can only hope for an eternal lover after death. In the coda, the right hand softly plays the theme, leaving behind only the pursuit of a dream-love.
The following four pieces are about songs from Sichuan province: *Expecting the Blossom of the Scholartree* (No.13), *Yellow Poplar Shouldering Pole* (No.14), *Embroider on a Pouch* (No.15), *Happy at Sunrise* (No.16).

No.13 Expecting the Blossom of the Scholartree

**General Explanation**

This is a folksong from the southern Sichuan. The song has only four phrases but it is meaningful. The first note is the highest note of the whole song, bringing the listener into a place of mountains and woods. The second phrase pictures a girl looking forward to the arrival of her lover. The third phrase expresses the mother's concern about her daughter. The fourth phrase shows that the girl doesn’t want her mother to worry, that she was only looking forward to the blossom of the scholartree (see Figure 3.66).

**Original Folk Tune**

![Musical notation of the song](image)

Figure 3.66. The original folk song *Expecting the Blossom of the Scholartree*.

---

55 Bao, *Chinese Sights and Sound*, 166.
Translation

There is a scholar tree on the high mountain. I watch at the railing and expect my lover’s return; my mother asks me: what are you watching? I say, I am expecting the blossom of scholar tree. (see Table 3.13)

Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version

Table 3.13. Structure of Expecting the Blossom of the Scholar Tree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>a1</th>
<th>a2</th>
<th>a3</th>
<th>Coda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>G Yu</td>
<td>E Yu</td>
<td>G Yu</td>
<td>(g minor)</td>
<td>(e minor)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bao writes this piano version using complex harmony, presenting a world of colorful and emotional change. From measure 14 the theme appears again, configured with consecutive seventh chords (see Figure 3.67). The top line presents the original scales, the outer part (the highest part and the lowest part) proceeds on parallel thirds, so that it can dilute the dissonant feeling generated by the major seventh chords but still remain in modally rich (see notes in the brackets in Figure 3.67).

Figure 3.67. Expecting the Blossom of the Scholar Tree, mm. 14-16.
Bao uses complicated chord changes and other Western harmonies which enrich the pentatonic-style saturation and enhance the vivid images of the song.

Commentary

The opening features free beats and the main theme, portraying the feelings of the young girl. The overlapping arpeggio figure represents endlessly undulating mountain ranges. The Interlude goes down by fifths, expressing girl's looking forward to a better future. Before section B there is an elegant interlude. It is full of unexpected changes in harmonies, expressing the girl's expectations of seeing her lover as she awaits the blossoming of the scholar tree.

No. 14 Yellow Poplar Shouldering Pole

General Explanation

This is a song from southeastern Sichuan, usually used in the Lantern Festival as background music for dance performances or concerts in a play. The song is composed of two phrases; the first has notes Jiao (F#), Zhi (A), and Yu (B) and progressing back and forth; the second one uses the note Biangong (C#) to make the music temporarily transfer up to the fifth degree. It not only causes tonal freshness, but also expands the expressive melody. The melody ends on Yu note. Lyrics are humorous, showing the young man bearing the pole, and happily observing the lovely girls’ hair styles and pretty clothes (see Figure 3.68).56

Figure 3.68. D Gong Mode.

56 Bao, Chinese Sights and Sound, 167.
Original Folk Tune (see Figure 3.69)

Figure 3.69. The original folk song *Yellow Poplar Shouldering Pole.*

Translation

Yellow polar shouldering pole is flexible, I carry a pack of rice with the pole and go to Youzhou city.

It is said ladies in Youzhou are beautiful, all of them are good at braiding.

The first girl twists the braid into a dragon-coiled shape, the second girl fastens her hair with a flower-shape hairpin.

Only the third girl does a great work, with a braid called lion rolling silk ball.\(^{57}\)

---

\(^{57}\) Bao, *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, 165.
Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version

It is in Yu mode and the tonic, Yu, is G. The prelude uses a G major chord which has a B natural. The second measure's harmony configures with the III chord, the third measure uses the VI chord (see Table 3.14 and Figure 3.70).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-48</td>
<td>F Yu</td>
<td>(f minor)</td>
<td>F Yu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49-82</td>
<td>D Zhi</td>
<td>(G Major)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-130</td>
<td></td>
<td>(f minor)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.14. Structure of Yellow Poplar Shouldering Pole.

Simple melody is coupled with complex harmonies, making Yu mode in a pastel color and adding vitality and energy to the music. The theme is configured with traditional chords; from measure 11 Bao arranges the same harmonies as the prelude. The theme at measure 25 is terminated on the V chord with suspended fourth, by using VI chord as a common chord for the new mode, turning to the F Yu mode (see Figure 3.71).
In section B, the chord changes are less than those in section A, and the process uses light, thin, clear harmonies, with the focus on the polyphonic melody. The final chord only is presented by the tonic note which is simple and bright.

**Commentary**

The short powerful prelude depicts a young man bearing a pole, walking all the way to the Maozhou city, which has a lively crowded market. The lyrics describe three sisters with elaborate hairstyles and fashionable dresses which are attractive to the young man. The ascending scale on the theme is like one of the sister's pretty “dragon” hairstyle. The sixteenth note accompaniment on the theme shows the flower hair pins of the second sister. The polyphonic part shows that the little sister is the most beautiful sister. She has a beautiful hairstyle which is called *Gun Xiuqiu*. The rhythm of interlude reveals a bustling bazaar scene. The music goes to a smooth *Moderato*, representing the young man enjoying a rest. Although his burden is heavy, the man is optimistic.

No. 15 Embroider on a Pouch

**General Explanation**

The song "Embroider Pouch" is a common theme in Chinese folk music. Most of them are combined with local dialect features, forming a minor key tune that has local color. In China
three of the most familiar *Embroider on a Pouch* songs are from the Shanxi, Sichuan and Yunnan regions. The song used by Bao is from Sichuan (see Figure 3.72).\(^{58}\)

![Figure 3.72. The original folk song *Embroider on a Pouch.*](image)

**Translation**

In January we start to embroider a pouch, which may attractive to boys. If you want to get a pouch, just take it and do not make enemies with sisters.

The so-called pouch is used by Chinese men as a purse that is tied around the waist. It is used to hold money and small items. Usually a young woman embroiders the purse for her lover or fiancé. The Sichuan folk song *Embroider On a Pouch*, is divided into four phrases. The beginning two bars are in *Yu* mode and the note ends on *Shang* at measure 4. The second phrase is mainly in *Zhi* mode and *Gong* mode and ends on *Gong*. (see Figure 3.73)

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\(^{58}\) Bao, *Chinese Sights and Sound*, 167.
Through the content of the lyrics, we see that the girls from Sichuan have a straightforward character, and are also innocent and lively (see Table (3.15).

Table 3.15. Structure of *Embroider on a Pouch* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Measure Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Var. I</td>
<td>Var. II</td>
<td>Var. III</td>
<td>Var. IV</td>
<td>Var. V</td>
<td>Coda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>B♭ Gong</td>
<td>D♭ Gong</td>
<td>E Gong</td>
<td>B♭ Gong</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(B♭ Major)</td>
<td>(D♭ Major)</td>
<td>(E Major)</td>
<td>(B♭ Major)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The writing technique primarily uses the practices of alternate modal variations. For example, the phrase ends on *Gong*, which is used as a *Yu* in the new mode later on. This is the only transition way in the song, which means the previous *Gong* is equal to the later *Yu* and the original mode is moving up a minor third (see Figure 3.74 and 3.75).

The first theme has the triads (ii, iii, vi) mostly, the cadence proceeds from chord ii to the tonic I. The whole song focuses on the layout of gentle harmonies and creates a warm image.
Commentary

The beginning music is in five voices, as in a string quintet. In the simple harmonic background, the melody is soft and graceful. From measure 19, the first variation describes the girl's affectionate heart. After the transition the mood is gradually sublimated, and at measure 37 the double voices on the right hand are like the conversation between the lovers. The fourth variation has the melody with the counterpoint accompaniment, expressing the sincere wishes and beliefs of lovers. The fifth variation reproduces the theme, showing the girl's sewing the pouch with love. Among the variations, the decorative glissando, cadenza counterpoint and broken chord figures are just like the needle in the girl's hand, embroidering all her love into the pictures on the pouch. The music ends on an expectant note, hopeful for love.

No.16 Happy at Sunrise

General Explanation

This is a song sung by children in Sichuan, when they are hiking and gathering firewood. The song shows them facing towards the sun with one hand holding the ax, bearing their poles on their shoulders and singing. It expresses the children's optimistic nature and their love for
mountain life. The length of whole song is only ten measures, and the pitch ranges only to a minor sixth. The tune is very catchy, a very simple folk song (see Figure 3.76).^59

Original Folk Tune

![Original Folk Tune](image)

Figure 3.76. The original folk song *Happy at Sunrise*.

Translation

The sun comes out and we are happy, carrying the pole and go to the mountains.

Handing with an axe, do not afraid of tigers and leopards.

Do not care about the cliffs, busy with cutting wood and singing.

Climbing one mountain and another, this happens again and again.

As long as we are diligent, no need to worry about wearing and eating (see Table 3.16).^60

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**Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version**

Table 3.16. Structure of *Happy at Sunrise* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>1-11</th>
<th>12-21</th>
<th>22-31</th>
<th>32-41</th>
<th>42-50</th>
<th>51-66</th>
<th>67-76</th>
<th>77-85</th>
<th>86-92</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prelude</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a1</td>
<td>a2</td>
<td>a3</td>
<td>Interlude</td>
<td>a4</td>
<td>a3</td>
<td>Coda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>D Shang</td>
<td>(C Major)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The theme tune is fast and short. Bao uses the material from the song to create a prelude and compresses the same material for the interlude. Each appearance of the theme is emphatic. The mode remains on C Gong throughout the whole song. The first harmony is the ii chord with an unresolved suspension fourth, followed by the #V chord with added fourth. These two have the same structure, but the tension is created by moving on the augmented fourth.

The theme at measure 12 uses traditional triad chords and a secondary seventh chord of V (see Figure 3.77). The theme occurs again at measure 22 has no chord in order to carry out three parallel parts on the right hand (see the circled notes in Figure 3.78). The chords of the theme at measure 32 uses rhythm accents, all having the chords with suspended fourth using Chinese harmonic color (see Figure 3.79).

![Figure 3.77. Happy at Sunrise from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm.12-15.](image)

---

Referring to the harmony writing of the whole song, Bao presents the chords with suspended fourth, as in Chinese style.

**Commentary**

The harmonic progression of the tritone is a dynamic factor. The main theme is a strong statement (played first by strings and then by brass in the orchestral version), representing the children carrying machetes, knives, and the lug pole, happily greeting the sun. The strong octaves in both hands express the elation of the children. The strong beats of the melody illustrate their hard work. The children are strong, not afraid of steep mountains or wild beasts. If they work hard, they will be able to have a happy and healthy future.
The materials used in the following four pieces are from Jiangsu Province. The titles are as follows: *The Scenery in Wuxi* (No.17), *Green Willow* (No.18), *Pulling Out a Reed Catkin* (No.19), *Bamboo-flute Tune* (No.20).

No. 17 The Scenery of Wuxi

**General Explanation**

The folk song describes the beauties of Wuxi City, and is characteristic of popular music, since ancient times, of Jiangsu Provinces. The scenery is a source of inspiration for poets, painters and musicians. It is set in the old teahouse in Wuxi city. While enjoying lakeside scenery, guests are listening to the singer playing *Erhu* and singing local music. The singing helps travelers enjoy the quiet southern China life.  

**Original Folk Tune**

The main melody uses the note *Biangong*, which is used only at the end of the song. The melody is delicate and beautiful, elegant and smooth in the musical style of southern China. The whole folk song is divided into four phrases; the last notes of each which are *Gong, Zhi, Jiao,* and *Gong* (see the circled notes in Figures 3.80 and 3.81).

![Figure 3.80. C Gong Mode.](image)

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Figure 3.81. The original folk song *The Scenery of Wuxi*.

**Translation**

I got a feeling, want to sing and play for you all, you listen carefully, let me sing a song named *The Scenery of Wuxi*, listen carefully gentlemen.
Small town Wuxi city, from ancient to modern, a total of four gates, once in January of the Republic of China, a new gate called Guangfu was built.

People come and go in Wuxi, the trains are so convenient. A warehouse is under the Tongyuan bridge, whose modification is quite refreshing, the lively market like Shenjiang.

Go out for a walk in Spring, the top choice must be Mei garden, It is comfortable to go boating; pulling the boat by the Tai lake, It is amazing to see a whole garden with plum blossom.

The first good scenery, should be considered Guitou Zhu, best place to spend a summer, zigzag mountain road is elegant, with water by the mountain.

The second finest spring under Heaven, at the foot of mountain Hui, the spring water is clear and can be used for tea, Xi mountain is next to Hui mountain, at the foot of two mountains there is a clay Buddha store (see Table 3.17).\(^{62}\)

**Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Prelude</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>a1</th>
<th>a2</th>
<th>Interlude</th>
<th>a3</th>
<th>Coda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>11-29</td>
<td>30-48</td>
<td>49-67</td>
<td>68-77</td>
<td>78-96</td>
<td>97-99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>G Zhi</td>
<td>A Gong</td>
<td>C Gong</td>
<td>G Zhi</td>
<td>A Gong</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(C Major)</td>
<td>(A Major)</td>
<td>(C Major)</td>
<td>(C Major)</td>
<td>(A Major)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The writing techniques of *The Scenery of Wuxi* in general presents in three aspects:

1. When the modes in the Introduction changes from C Gong, E Gong to B Gong, the use of common notes and chord arrangements plays a very important role. Thus the modulations do not feel awkward.

2. The harmony configuration of the first theme is based on chords with added notes, such as the fourth, sixth, and second, characteristically Chinese.

3. The modulations between themes uses *Gong* in the old mode as *Yu* in the new one, that is, the last note of the old melody becomes a common note and is used as the first note of the new melody. This is one of Bao's common modulation practices. At the beginning, the tonic is a thirteenth chord, covering all the notes in the pentatonic scale. The second chord is the V chord with suspended fourth. The reason why Bao does this is that he uses chords stylistically rather than simply functionally (see Figure 3.82).

![Figure 3.82. The Scenery of Wuxi from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, mm. 1-2.](image)

The beginning chord is not played as a chord, but is played by arpeggios or broken chords. The theme at measure 30 is basically triadic. Most of the additional notes are played by the accompaniment. The harmony of the theme at measure 49 is also similar to the second one at measure 30. The entire song does not use any secondary chords, fully rendering the traditional style of harmonic color, and those added notes play an important role in supporting the style.

**Commentary**

The trill, arpeggios and grace notes depict a beautiful lake in Wuxi, and the modulations add a feeling of many-layered views. The main melody tells of Wuxi’s subtle beauty, with the
development of rich harmony configurations; clouds shrouded on the mountains, and the dense
mist on the Taihu Lake. The listener is immersed in the beauty of the music which describes
these graceful mountains.

No. 18 Green Willow

General Explanation

This happy song is popular in Eastern China. The song title comes from the last part of
the lyrics and is not directly connected to the music itself. The lyrics are not fixed, often filled
with witty and cheerful words. It generally depicts farm life.

Original Folk Tune

The folk music belongs to a body of four phrases. The fourth sentence is a
complementary sentence, which has a total of 7 measures and is not in a regular structure. 63

Translation

In the morning there is so much dew, the dew baths a field of Barley, willow is green, rocks are
loose, my lover, the leaves of the willow are green (See Figure 3.83 and Table 3.18). 64

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63 Bao, Chinese Sights and Sound, 168.
64 Bao, Chinese Sights and Sound, 168.
Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version

Figure 3.83. The original folk song *Green Willow*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a</th>
<th>a1</th>
<th>Interlude</th>
<th>a2</th>
<th>Coda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>1-23</td>
<td>24-47</td>
<td>49-55</td>
<td>56-85</td>
<td>86-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>D Gong</td>
<td>F# Gong</td>
<td>D Gong</td>
<td>(D Major)</td>
<td>(F# Major)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This piano piece is in five voices as in a string quintet. Chinese music has many specialized plucked string instruments whose tunes are rich and diverse. In the whole *Chinese Sights and Sounds* set, this piece is the only piece that imitates the sound of Chinese plucked instruments. Bao applied all aspects of the characteristics of piano sound, such as double octaves,
non-legato, parallel intervals, and accents on the off beats, changing the time signature and other techniques, to fully explore the string techniques (see Figures 3.84 and 3.85).

Figure 3.84. Green Willow from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm. 80-83.

Figure 3.85. Green Willow from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm. 49-52.

The harmonies are in traditional configuration, except measure 72 has a seventh chord that is built on the fifth.

After the second modulation in the bass (measure 25), the harmonies use broken chords, making an undulating vocal line.

The interlude (measure 49) uses the chords with fourths and fifths to imitate the open strings which contrast with the previous phrases (see Figures 3.86, 3.87, and 3.88).
The theme at measure 56 mixes the use of the previous two practices: parallel intervals and broken chords (see Figure 3.89).
The coda uses double octaves with full force and tight rhythm, gradually rising to a musical tension. It is a lighthearted journey of melodies and harmonies (see Figure 3.90).

Figure 3.90. *Green Willow* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, mm.86-89.
Commentary

The music imitates pizzicato strings, starting from two voices, and gradually building to full voices. The pizzicato like figures imitates the rhythm of Chinese folk percussion, highlighting the cheerful atmosphere and playful characters.

No.19 Pulling Out a Reed Catkin

General Explanation

This is a song from northern Jiangsu province. It begins in a very high register. From measure 11 to measure 18 it is an interlude. Measures from 19 to 24 the third phrase reveals a rustic country atmosphere. This is shown by the lyrics: “delicious white rice is planted by seedling, the fresh fish in the tasty soup is caught by netting......” The people are working hard, with an optimistic attitude towards life. This song shows a beautiful picture of the bucolic south.65

Translation

Call me then I came, pull out a reed catkin, fragrance rose and magnolia blossom, butterflies attracted to flowers and sisters look, mandarin ducks tumbling and lovers guess, my sweet lover, hibiscus and peony flowers blossom in the moonlight.

Cut golden wheat and plant, pull out a reed catkin, wash clothes and harvest mulberry, fear to do laundry after dusk, harvest mulberry and be afraid of dew wet moss. my sweet lover, the next month hibiscus and peony flowers blossom in the moonlight.

Lively fish hop in the net and needs to carry, pull out a reed catkin, diligent sister and brother compete, sister wins and brother sing mountain song, brother wins and sister gives a kiss, my

---

sweet lover, the next month hibiscus and peony flowers blossom in the moonlight (see Table 3.19 and Figure 3.91).  

### Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.19. Structure of <em>Pulling Out a Reed Catkin</em> from <em>Chinese Sights and Sounds.</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prelude</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mode</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(D Major)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Original Folk Tune

Figure 3.91. The original folk song *Pulling Out a Reed Catkin.*

---

This music is illustrative of Chinese style, as follows:

1. The use of octaves in the beginning produces a full sound effect. (see Figure 3.92)

![Octaves on Right Hand](image)

Figure 3.92. *Pulling Out a Reed Catkin* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, mm. 1-3.

2. The imitation of the sound of a Chinese flute, with trills and staccato notes. (see Figure 3.93)

![Trills and Staccato](image)

Figure 3.93. *Pulling Out a Reed Catkin* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, mm. 4-7.

3. The imitation of the percussion instrument *Bangu*, which has a large drum and lower and softer pitch, the staccato and double notes in the left hand form a Southern lyrical style (see Figure 3.94).
Figure 3.94. *Pulling Out a Reed Catkin* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, mm.20-23.

4. Starting from measure 33, all the running sixteenth notes on the right hand are based on pentatonic scales and are imitating the sound of the Chinese instrument *Zheng*. There is no other complex figure in this part (see Figure 3.95).

Figure 3.95. *Pulling Out a Reed Catkin* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, mm.33-35.

5. The use of the harmony is more traditional, the additional notes are almost built on the pentatonic scale. The entire song can be said to be Chinese music in the Western style. The music is basically built up on triads and chords with additional notes. The prelude starts with the tonic chord and the secondary V chord. The first theme is mainly based on triads. At measure 17, the iii seventh chord has a flat five, which is unique in this piece (see Figure 3.96).
The theme at measure 33 begins with the I thirteenth chord, which forms a pentatonic scale of D Gong and has a length of 10 measures (see Figure 3.97).

Commentary

The music is brisk and smooth, representing the attractive scenery of northern Jiangsu. The rich layers between right and left hands render two textures of Chinese instrumental style, like Bangu and Chinese Flute. Various names of flowers are named in the lyrics, such as reed.
catkins, hibiscus, peony, and rose. It is coupled with the high-pitched melody, just like the swaying flowers in the breeze, outlined a beautiful picture of northern Jiangsu.

No. 20 Bamboo Flute Tune

General Explanation

It is an originally popular song in the southern Jiangsu province. The song is about love and is used in the music of the Peking opera. Although the song is in Yu mode, during the middle of the music the cadences are ended at Gong or Zhi. Yu, as the main note in Yu mode, is of considerable importance in the whole song, making the melody soft and gentle (see the circled note in Figure 3.98). Such a way of transition is an important characteristic of southern folk music.67

Original Folk Tune

Figure 3.98. The original folk song Bamboo Flute Tune.

---

67 Bao, Chinese Sights and Sound, 169.
Translation

A straight Bamboo-flute, sent to brother to as a Xiao (Chinese Instrument), Xiao to mouth, mouth to Xiao, play Xiao with a flower tune. Ask my lover if this Xiao is good or not? (see Table 3.20)

Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>a1</th>
<th>a2</th>
<th>a3</th>
<th>Coda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>D Yu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d minor)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The song shows a traditional style of southern music in China. The harmonies have no modern techniques and no modulations. The folk music is played by Chinese bamboo flute and Pipa. (see Figure 3.99)

Figure 3.99. Chinese Bamboo Flute and Pipa.

The Chinese bamboo flute presents a high sound. In the piano version, the right hand replicates the sound of bamboo flute and always plays the main melody.

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68 Bao, Chinese Sights and Sound, 169.
"Pipa" has a low sound. In the piano version, the left hand imitates the sound of "Pipa" and accompanies for the melody. (see Figures 100, 3.101 and 3.102)

Figure 3.100. Bamboo Flute Tune from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm. 21-24.

Figure 3.101. Bamboo Flute Tune from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm.1-4.

Figure 3.102. Bamboo Flute Tune from Chinese Sights and Sounds, m.61.
Every occurrence of the theme uses the iii chord except for the first time at measure 1 and measure 61 (see Figures 3.101 and 3.102). It occasionally appears as a color tone and retains the simplicity of the music style (see Figure 3.103).

![Figure 3.103. Bamboo Flute Tune from Chinese Sights and Sounds, m.21 and m.41.](image)

The first theme uses sixteenth-note arpeggios as the accompaniment, displaying a leisurely southern picture. The theme at measure 21 does not change any chordal ideas, but slightly adjusts the rhythm patterns. The entire left hand plays broken chords on staccato, changing from single notes to double fifths and octaves, enhancing the rhythmic pacing. The theme at measure 41 turns the right hand into accompaniment patterns, with thirty-second scales and rapid arpeggios (see Figure 3.103). The cadence is from iii to vi which is a regular chord progression (see Figure 3.104). The same chord coupled with different voices and rhythm patterns can express a different aesthetic style of the song.

![Figure 3.104. Bamboo Flute Tune from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm.59-62.](image)
Commentary

The melody is delicate, accompanied by an orderly and relaxed rhythm. They are both smooth and graceful. The second theme is bright and lively, with clear phrasing, revealing the hidden message of romantic love in the lyrics.

The following four pieces are the folksongs from Shanxi Province: *Going to West Gate* (No.21), *Happiness of the Lantern Festival* (No.22), *A Tune of Mountain Climbing* (No.23), *Going to Watch Yangge Dance* (No.24)

No. 21 Going to West Gate

General Explanation

This folk song is mainly popular in the regions of Shanxi, Shaanxi and Inner Mongolia provinces. The same name and lyrics are used in different tunes. Because of poor soil around the Yellow river, the people there have very difficult living conditions. In order to help their families, many young men have to leave home during the spring to look for jobs. They return in the autumn. They have to leave their wives and children home, and it is a miserable time for all. The song is sung by those wives who are separated from their husbands, expressing their sadness and their love.70

Translation

Brother you want to go to West Gate, Oh, hard to persuade you staying, hand in brother's hand, walk brother to the door.71

---

71 “Brother” here means husband. In Chinese folk songs, women call their boyfriends or husband “brother”; men call their girlfriends or wives “sister”.
Brother you want to go to West Gate, Oh, I send you away, hold the small box, burst into tears.

Send brother to the front door, Oh, I do not lose the hand, there are two intimate words, say to brother and keep in mind.

Walk on the main streets, Oh, never take the paths, more people on the main streets, talk with them and relieve from worries.

Stay in a big hotel, Oh; never live in a small one, more people in a big hotel, thieves in a small one.

Sit in the back on a boat, Oh, never sit in the front, stormy waves hit the front boat, may drown in the water.

Drink running water, oh, never drink spring water, area around that spring, a snake wagging tail.

Brother you want to go to West Gate, Oh, never make friends, too many friends, then you would forget me.

When you are rich he is a friend, Oh, no money his eyes only look, only me, always by your side. (see Table 3.21 and Figure 3.105)

**Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version**

The folk music is generally divided into four phrases. Bao uses the melody which belongs to the northern Shanxi. The sixths intervals appear three times and represent melancholy and struggling. The fourth phrase turns to the subdominant mode, expressing even more sadness.

| Table 3.21. Structure of *Going to West Gate* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*. |
|------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                        | A              | B              | A               | A               | A               | A               |
| Number                 | 1-3            | 4-12           | 13-21           | 22-32           | 33-43           | 44-47           | 48-56           | 57-61           |
| Mode                   | E Zhi          |                |                |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
|                        | (A Major)      |                |                |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |

Figure 3.105. The original folk song *Going to West Gate*. 
The song uses various techniques to present complex emotions. Harmony arrangement expresses detailed ideas, as follows:

The first type is in contrasting pattern, starting from the first theme; the bass line and the top have a contrasting rhythmic line. When the melody is in complex rhythms, the bass uses contrasting long notes. (see Figure 3.106)

![Figure 3.106. Going to West Gate from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm. 4-8.](image)

The second category is imitative. In section B the top voice is the main theme, the third voice comes in two beats behind on the octave note below, in canon form. (see Figure 3.107)

![Figure 3.107. Going to West Gate from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm.22-24.](image)
The beginning starts with the I chord, followed by the bVII and bVI chords, then the V ninth chord. The dissonant intervals, major and minor seconds, create an uneasy atmosphere. (see Figure 3.108)

![Figure 3.108. Going to West Gate from Chinese Sights and Sounds, mm.1-3.](image)

The first theme uses parallel sixths as supplement for the melody in measures 5 and 7. Section A ends on a chord with an unresolved suspension fourth which dilutes the Western harmonic color. Section B the melody has a characteristic note *Bianzhi* (D#) belonging to a secondary chord on the V chord, which creates rich color. (see Figure 3.109)

![Figure 3.109. The V of V with *Bianzhi* in A Gong mode.](image)
The last three measures strengthen the bVII chord and reproduce the style of modal alternation. The cadence ends on a secondary chord of V, representing the hope of future.

**Commentary**

The meditative introduction and dissonant harmonies lead the listeners into melancholy moods. The main melody represents a feeling of sadness. The middle voices show the ambition of the young men and the huge contradiction between the ideal and reality, the joy of helping their families but the sadness of not being with them. Section B is the canon. The voices tell the story of a couple saying goodbye to each other with tears in their eyes. The ending is played by double octaves in a slow tempo, representing the helplessness and sadness of the wife, who can only reluctantly watch her husband’s back and yet hope for his early return.

No.22 Happiness of the Lantern Festival

**General Explanation**

This song uses two folk songs as materials; the first is *Happy Lantern Festival*, another song is *Embroidered Pouch*. *Happy Lantern Festival* is a kind of dance, popular in Qi County, Taigu City in the Shanxi regions. It is mostly for festivals, showing people all in high spirits at the Lantern Festival, bringing their whole family to watch the city lights in downtown Taiyuan. This ballad is characterized by: syncopated notes, no long notes, and a wide range of registers such as the frequent use of eleventh intervals. The second half of the song is transferred to a subdominant mode, making a very unique and joyous melody.  

---

Translation

Happy Lantern Festival on January 15th, the city of Taiyuan is fun, this side of the street there is a dragon boat race, the other side Yangge team dance and sing, music is so loud and dancing is so fun, sing in a good environment. Our country becomes more prosperous.\(^{74}\) (see Figure 3.110)

Original Folk Tune

Figure 3.110. The original folk song *Happiness of the Lantern Festival*.

*Embroidered Pouch* is one of the most popular tunes in all of China. Most of the variations share the same name but not the same tune. The content is a description of love between men and women. The music begins and ends with the note Shang. It is composed of two phrases. The melody is lyrical. (see Figure 3.111)

Figure 3.111. The original folk song *Embroidered Pouch*.

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\(^{74}\) Bao, *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, 169.
Translation

From the first day of January to the fifteenth, the moon on the fifteenth is high, spring breeze blowing branches of willow.

In March peach blossoms open, lover sent a message, he wants a pouch.

Embroider a boat on pouch, a sail propping boat, lover you guess the meaning.

Embroider two mandarin ducks, perched on the river, you and I can never be separated.

Brother is a young man, sister is like a new blossom, receive this pouch brother you need to come back as soon as possible. (see Table 3.22)

**Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Number</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Interlude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-54</td>
<td>E Shang (D Major)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54-72</td>
<td>G Shang (F Major)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73-100</td>
<td>D Shang (C Major)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101-172</td>
<td>E Shang (D Major)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The prelude and interlude uses four notes, E, A, B, and E, as the writing material. There is no functional harmony in these two sections; only stacking notes produce the intensity. The comparison of rhythms is wide and tight, from sparse to dense, gradually building the intensity and power. (see Figure 3.112)
The first half of the first theme is built up on E Shang mode. The configuration of harmony is based on triads. The second half (measure 28) is modulated to E Yu mode. The harmonic color contrasts between the two modes are distinct. (see Figure 3.113)

![E Shang Mode](image1.png)

![E Yu Mode](image2.png)

Figure 3.113. *Happiness of the Lantern Festival*, mm.25-32.

The modulations usually go up a minor third. For instance, in measure 65, the tonality changes from D to F; the middle section measure 73 tonality shifts from A to C. *Suona* as a Chinese folk instrument is originally used in the folk song, showing a lively rustic festive atmosphere (see Figure 3.114).

![Suona, Tanggu and Tongluo](image3.png)

Figure 3.114. *Suona, Tanggu and Tongluo*.  

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75 “Suona”, *Yueqi*, last modified March 1, 2015, accessed on March 5, 2016,  
“Tanggu”, *JD*, last modified March 1, 2015, accessed on March 5, 2016,  
http://item.jd.com/1006825042.html
Suona has a high sound. The piano imitates the sound of Suona through the right hand’s melody. (see Figure 3.115)

![Figure 3.115. Happiness of the Lantern Festival, mm.15-18.](image)

The percussions, Tanggu and Tongluo, Bao adds their tone colors to the piano version too, which is played by the left hand with staccato notes. Tongluo has more powerful sound than Tanggu does. The bass notes in left hand alw)ays imitate the sound of Tongluo (see the circled notes in Figure 3.115).

The adagio section Embroider Pouch is in B Shang mode. The theme is configured with the chords plus substituted note, in order to avoid Pian Yin and maintain the style of Shang mode (see the circled notes in Figure 3.116).

![Figure 3.116. B Shang mode with Pian Yin.](image)

At measure 87 it occurs continually *Pian Yin*, D and G, and the sound effect is not like the first theme, light and elegant, unlike the second theme is rough and rustic (see the circled notes in Figure 3.117).

![Figure 3.117. Happiness of the Lantern Festival, mm.87-88.](image)

Through gradually tightening the rhythm, the composer creates a scene of people joyfully going to the center of Taiyuan city and sharing the Lantern Festival. When the high-pitched theme appears, the right hand copies the tone of *Suona*, representing the shows. Usually the show includes the dragon and lion dance and the *Yangge* singers’ team with *Tongluo* percussion, which are presented by the second theme. The music represents Taiyuan people immersed in the celebration of the Lantern Festival.

**Commentary**

Bao inserted a beautiful song, "Embroider Pouch" to this “Happy Lantern Festival”. The slow melody flows into people's hearts with the introduction of sixteenth notes. It represents the separation from their relatives and how they miss having their whole family together.
General Explanation

“Climbing Tune” is one kind of Chinese folk song, which is popular in Shanxi and the Inner Mongolia area. It is also known as a “Mountain Song”, which is in a free form and composed of two sentences. The modes are basically Gong or Shang. The rhythm is free and the melody is in high register.\(^{76}\) (see Figure 3.118)

Original Folk Tune

![Original Folk Tune](image)

Figure 3.118. The original folk song *A Tune of Mountain Climbing*.

Translation

When the sun goes down, I drop the woods and kindle the flames. I am holding firewood, waiting for my brother (lover).

I look at the village but cannot find my brother, only see the smoke come out from chimneys.

The sunset glow red and the sky is blue, I cannot see my brother and start tearing up.\(^{77}\)

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\(^{76}\) Bao, *Chinese Sights and Sound*, 170.

\(^{77}\) Bao, *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, 169.
Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version

“Climbing tune” has existed for hundreds of years. These tunes can be heard everywhere, in hills and valleys, country roads, pastures and fields. They are sung by shepherds, coachmen, and farmers, whose voices have a strong mountain style. The subject matter is variable, and the singer often improvises the lyrics. The song that Bao uses here is a climbing tune comprised of two melodies and the lyrics are about a young woman waiting for her lover. (see Table 3.23)

Table 3.23. Structure of A Tune of Mountain Climbing from Chinese Sights and Sounds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>a1</td>
<td>b b1 a2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>7-12</td>
<td>13-18 19-24 25-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>F# Shang</td>
<td>B Zhi</td>
<td>F# Shang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(E Major)</td>
<td>(E Major)</td>
<td>(E Major)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section A is in Shang mode. In order to avoid Pian Yi (A), the ii chord occurs with a suspension fourth. (see Figure 3.119)

Figure 3.119. The ii chord with an unresolved suspension fourth.

The entire melody at measure 25 has no Shang (G#) and Biangong (D#), so the chords that carry Biangong (D#) are substituted by D natural, highlighting the Shanxi unique local flavor.
Commentary

The main theme is a sketch of a mountain village. The rhythm is free and cheerful, highlighting the serenity of mountain life. Men and women express themselves by singing, which brings the Shanxi people’s hearts into harmony with their mountain world.

No.24 Going to Watch Yangge Dance

General Explanation

Yangge is one of the most popular rural dance songs in Qitai city, Shanxi province. Yangge in Qitai is generated from Taigu city, are based on narrative songs and skits. The song "Going to Watch Yangge" describes two sisters going to a neighboring village to see Yangge and interesting things happen on the way. The song uses many percussive elements; the percussion sounds lead the music to a uniquely Northern Chinese-style climactic moment.78

Translation:

Live in Taigu city by Shahe river, the stage set up on the north side of city, sisters want to go and watch, fear of God will not help, hear from south mountain, a thunder is so loud, and see the sky becomes cloudy above south mountain.

Older sister say to the young one, you do not hesitate, fun to watch and need to go, wind and rains can do nothing, today Yangge dance is playing Yuanyang Pei (Peking opera), we dress up and leave early.

Older sister is right, young sister could not help to be exciting, busy with making up, comb the hair, powder and paint the faces, pencil the eyebrows, wear a pair of new shoes, put on a colorful clothe.

78 Bao, Chinese Sights and Sound, 170.
Clouds are gone then the sun comes out, sisters go out of the village, crossed the river and climb the mountain, what a good Mountain scenery, hear the other side of mountain, the sound of percussions is loud, two sisters are hurry on the road.\textsuperscript{79} (see Table 3.24 and 3.120)

**Formal and Harmonic Analysis of Bao’s Version**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>A1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prelude</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a1</td>
<td>a2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a3</td>
<td>Variation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a4</td>
<td>Coda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>1-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37-51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52-83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84-106</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107-117</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118-132</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133-135</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>G Yu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g minor)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3.120. The original folk song *Going to Watch Yangge Dance*.**

\textsuperscript{79} Bao, *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, 169.
This is the most exciting of all the songs. After a percussive, driving opening theme, delicate flute passages provide contrast while keeping the strong rhythms. These strong passages build to a driving fortissimo, using percussive, syncopated rhythms typical of the local music. (see Figure 3.121)

![Double Octave](image)

Figure 3.121. *Going to Watch Yangge Dance* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, m.9.

Harmony configuration is traditional. A *Pian Yin* (F#) appears in the melody so that the III chord has a dominant seventh chord function. (see Figure 3.122)

![Pian Yin](image)

**Bb: III (Dominant Function)**

Figure 3.122. The III chord with *Pian Yin* in Bb Gong mode.

In addition, in the cases of the III chord without *Biangong* (C), most of them are written on chords with suspended fourth and eleventh or thirteenth chords. Almost all the II chords include a *Bianzhi* (E) and belong to *Ya Yue* scale. (see Figure 3.123)
Commentary

Repeated tonic notes and syncopated rhythms, alternating with a patchwork of percussion rhythm, depict a picture of a temple setting during a festival. As they are walking to the village, the younger sister hears the Yangge sound coming from the other side of the mountain and she joyfully anticipates the festival, urging her sister on starting from measure 18. (see Figure 3.124)

They arrive at the festival at measure 118. Staccato rhythms imitate Bangu and the lyrical theme represents rising excitement of the celebration. The singing and dancing at the festival
bring joy and happiness (see Figure 3.124). Variation Sections from measure 107 to 117 evoke clouds forming (see Figure 3.125).

![Variation begins on left hand](image)

Figure 3.125. *Going to Watch Yangge Dance* from *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, mm.107-109.

Now the two sisters are worrying about possible rain. But bold powerful music shows the haze gradually dispersing, and the celebration goes on.
CHAPTER 4. CONCLUSION

Western music has been studied formally in China for less than a hundred years. Chinese composers were trying to learn the different stylistic periods of the history of Western music and adopt Western compositional style. But how to cultivate Chinese classical musicians is indeed a serious issue. We cannot always compose Europeanized music so there will be no new music coming up in China. Bao uses *Chinese Sights and Sounds* to open the subject for New Chinese music.

Classical music requires great expression techniques, sincere emotions and attitudes, and expresses the composer's style, character, temperament, and training. Bao applies classical and romantic harmony, Impressionism, and even tonal sequences to *Chinese Sights and Sounds*. The arrangement of Chinese-style harmonies is more nuanced, deepening the music mood. According to Bao's points, he focuses on more harmonies and structures. In *Chinese Sights and Sounds*, there are many pieces lasting within only two minutes, but they are composed with fine structure, rigorous harmony, exquisite counterpoint, and refined texture.

Through the analysis of Chinese sights and sounds, my paper aims at the following objectives.

1. As a reference for students and people who are interested in Chinese music, the paper analyzes the background of Chinese folk songs, musical harmony and structure so that people will understand the piano version of *Chinese Sights and Sounds* better and think of the music in a right way. If one tries to perform *Chinese Sights and Sounds* in an authentically sounding way, two things need to be paid attention. He or she should have a thorough knowledge of the story of the folk songs, which they can find in the sections of General Explanation and The Original Folk
Song. For instance, no. 12 *Lan Huahua*, Lan Huahua can be translated into Blue Orchid. But it is a name of a person, not a flower. No. 29, *Pulling A Reed Catkin*, the title actually does not mean anything, it is a farm song, used by farmers who hum this tune while working in the fields. The folk song ends lyrics with “Ba Gen Lu Chai Hua”, which means “pulling a reed catkin.” Therefore, the misunderstanding of the meaning of the title will influence the way of the performance. Moreover, based on the literary meaning and narrative structure of the lyrics in the folksongs, people should not merely treat the music as a Western forms, such as variation or binary forms. Most of the music in *Chinese Sights and Sounds* should be played to sound like a narrative piece in a free style. In section of Commentary, people can learn that they can imagine the different scenes of the stories and closely connect them with the different sections of the music. The characteristics will to some extent help people decide what tempo, mood, and timbre is most apt. For example, no. 5 *Flowing Stream*, the piano version is based on a love tune, which blends both the scenery and feelings. The high register uses a dimmed tone color to portray the misty moon, while the arpeggios represent the flowing stream of water. Understanding “rubato” in Chinese music is quite important. An “ad lib.” can be notated at measure 6 in *Flowing Stream* and at fermata in measure 8. Here, the arpeggios can be played freely and the high pitch “G” in measure 7 can be prolonged for a while. Also the eighth notes in measure 8 can be gradually slowed down and led to high G, then take a big breath on the fermata and begins the next phrase. This may be the real meaning behind the “rubato” in Chinese music.

2. Many of pieces are adapted from the most famous Chinese folksongs, such as no. 3 *Jasmine*, no. 5 *Flowing Stream*, and no. 12 *Lan Huahua*. Most people would have heard this *Jasmine* tune that was used in Puccini’s Turan-Dot. Other Chinese composers like Jianer Zhu, has composed a piano music based on the tune *Flowing Stream*. More than three versions of *Lan*
*Huahua* can be found in Chinese piano repertoire. The analysis of *Chinese Sights and Sounds* is a good source for composing, because the composer Bao has collected the most representative folksongs from different regions of China. Through this dissertation, it provides students and musicians studying composition and come up with some creative ideas. If the students learn from these twenty-four pieces and bring up their different ideas, they will get new experience and bring out more brilliant sparks for the future of Chinese music.

![Musical score](image)

**Figure 4.1. Flowing Stream, mm.5-8.**
3. It is my hope that Bao’s music will become part of the standard piano repertoire. It helps to popularize Chinese musical language to Western ears. *Chinese Sights and Sounds* will become a valuable repertoire and has a full of vitality of Chinese rich heritage.

In the twenty-first centuries, we should learn how to deal with different musical cultures from folk music. Unless it is in a fully closed state of society, the music will be improved and become more advanced. Because of the injection of different cultures, music will show its very broad and inclusive, and it has not been separated from the fusion of Chinese and Western music, which is an inevitable result.


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Li, Yinghai. 1959. *Modes and Harmonies of Han’s Music*. Shanghai: Shanghai Wen Yi Chu Ban She.


VITA

Jiazi Shi is a candidate to graduate with a doctoral degree in piano performance studying with Michael Gurt, and she is a collaborative pianist in the studio of Jan Grimes at Louisiana State University School of Music. Ms. Shi is an avid performer, and she performs in recitals with students regularly and collaborates with them in concerto competitions and festivals, such as LSU concerto competitions, Baton Rouge Youth concerto competition, MTNA Performance Competition, Snowy Range Piano Competition and National Music Festival in Maryland. She has traveled around the country as a soloist and collaborative pianist in many places, such as Washington D.C., New York, Baltimore, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Denver, Cheyenne, New Orleans and Mobile, AL. During her studies in the US, she received full assistantship and has been working for the school choirs, wind ensemble, and symphonic orchestras.

Ms. Shi is not only as a soloist, but also as a piano teacher. She has acquired much experience teaching students and helping professors teach group classes while working as a graduate assistant for the past five years. She also has been teaching private students since her college. Many of her students have won professional and non-professional competitions. She has positive attitude and patience and always motivates students to succeed. She currently works as a piano teacher at Live Oak United Methodist Church in Watson, LA. She has more than 20 students in her studio.

Ms. Shi also has been serving in Sherwood Baptist Church as worship pianist, Chinese Christian Church in Baton Rouge for three years as choir conductor, and had worked as music director in Chinese Christian Church in Laramie, WY for two years. Under her leadership, church choir and worship team have accomplished their music mission trip in many other
churches in different places, such as Fort Collins Chinese Church, Chinese Baptist Church of New Orleans, and Mobile Chinese Church. The mission is to utilize praise and worship, music composition and training as a conduit to spread the gospel, motivate, equip, and empower Christians, declaring God’s kingdom and to inspire and enable all young people to realize their full potential in God as productive and responsible individuals. Ms. Shi is from Guangzhou, China, and has been in the US for five years.