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Inventing Tradition: The Influence of Chou Wen-chung's Compositional Aesthetic and the Development of New Wave Composition

by

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ABSTRACT

Chou Wen-chung's innovative compositional synthesis has garnered significant acclaim. His contributions have revitalized and transformed Chinese and Western composition. However, a critical assessment of the construction of Chou's compositional method remains to be seen. This study will argue that Chou's success is due to his exemplification of an 'inventor of tradition,' as propounded in Eric Hobsbawm's *The Invention of Tradition* (1992). Chou cites his Confucian heritage and his incorporation of *wenren* and *qin* artistic aesthetics in order to authenticate his invented tradition. However, Chou's tradition becomes problematic upon its dissemination. In 1978 Chou returned to China and initiated the New Wave movement among Chinese composers. However, Chou has been critical of New Wave works of intercultural synthesis, which is problematic in that his criticisms are based on his selective and 'high brow' method of compositional synthesis. This study will investigate the remarkable value and inconsistencies of Chou's musical synthesis.

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"The fusion of Eastern and Western musical languages has been a subject of great interest in this century. Both Europeans and Americans, ranging from Debussy and Messiaen to Cowell, Partch, and Lou Harrison have been concerned with its problems and implications. Chou's approach, with its roots in Chinese music, presents a unique and fresh viewpoint…"[1]

The fusion between East and West in contemporary avant-garde music has been a subject of great interest in the academic community. The compositional philosophy and artistic aesthetic of Chinese-born, Western avant-garde composer Chou Wen-chung (1923-) provides a unique and effective vantage point from which to observe and analyze this growing movement. Chou Wen-chung is *the* pivotal figure in establishing a successful and sophisticated cross-cultural synthesis between Chinese and Western music traditions, which is a significant development for both musical cultures. In adopting the artistic philosophies and aesthetics characteristic of the Chinese classical arts, Chou has endeavoured to transform his method of musical synthesis into a legitimate music tradition.

Music scholars and critics have largely attributed Chou Wen-chung's successful synthesis to his unique understanding of both the Western avant-garde and the Chinese classical music traditions, producing an innovative brand of compositional synthesis that fuses the compatible elements of these two music traditions. Upon closer inspection, it is clear that Chou's critical success is due to several other factors, including increasing openness to intercultural influence in the development of Western classical music throughout the past few hundred years, the dire state of compositional creativity that

[1] Elliot Schwartz and Barney Childs, eds., *Contemporary Composers on Contemporary Music*, (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 1998), 308.

characterized China's artistic landscape in the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution, and the remarkable influence of Chou's self-presentations regarding his compositional philosophy and artistic aesthetic among music scholars, critics, and fellow musicians. However, music scholarship and criticism have largely overlooked the primary factor that allows Chou's self-presentations to be so persuasive: his evocating of historical continuity. Chou presents a sophisticated tradition of musical synthesis through his decidedly selective preference for 'high brow' artistic aesthetics and philosophies from China's music tradition, specifically focusing on *qin* tablature (the seven-string Chinese zither) and *wenren* (Chinese literati) artistic aesthetics and philosophies, in order to create the aura of historical continuity. By asserting continuity with the artistic philosophies and aesthetics of the Confucian elite, Chou endeavours to validate and authenticate his invented tradition. It is important to note that although Chou's tradition of compositional synthesis is invented, this does not signify that his tradition is inauthentic or insignificant. In validating his tradition of compositional synthesis, Chou is able to more successfully disseminate his compositional ideals, which have been made evident in the writings of music scholarship and criticism. However, music scholars and critics have largely taken Chou's method of musical synthesis at face value, often reiterating Chou's self-presentations while exhibiting a shallow understanding of Chou's carefully and conscientiously constructed music tradition. As a result, Chou's invented tradition of musical synthesis has been accepted and disseminated by the international music community without question and without a comprehensive understanding of Chou's and careful and conscientious selection of 'high brow' preferences on which to build his tradition.

Chou Wen-chung has also endeavoured to transform his method of compositional synthesis into an established music tradition by disseminating his compositional philosophies and artistic aesthetics among a new generation of Chinese composers. This process began upon Chou's first trip returning to China in 1977 and his subsequent partnership with the Beijing Central Conservatory of Music in 1978. Through this partnership, Chou provided inspiration for a directionless generation of Chinese composers who were unaccustomed to creating *l'art pour l'art* after the close of the Cultural Revolution. Consequently, the *xinchao*, or the New Wave, movement in composition was established amongst China's new generation of Chinese composers. Although New Wave composers have made remarkable contributions to intercultural synthesis, Chou has been critical of these composers' construction of more eclectic, less rigorous, and more 'low brow' compositional syntheses, and their failure to adopt Chou's 'high brow' compositional ideals. More specifically, Chou contends that New Wave composers are succumbing to the trappings of commodification and are incorporating aspects of *chinoiserie* in order to make their compositions more commercially viable. Chou indicates that New Wave composers' lack of knowledge concerning their own native musical tradition is the underlying problem to their supposed insufficient musical syntheses, and that the significant study of the *wenren* compositional approach will provide the ideal solution to this problem. However, Chou's assertions are problematic in that he has been decidedly 'high brow' in his selection of elements from the Chinese classical arts used to construct his compositional philosophy, and then utilizes this philosophy as a set of criteria from which to evaluate others. Consequently, Chou's 'high brow' approach leaves little room for recognizing and affirming the compositional

creativity of the New Wave that employs an equally selective, although alternative, approach to intercultural composition.

This study will serve to supplement existing music scholarship and criticism concerning Chou Wen-chung's invented tradition of compositional synthesis. I will illustrate how the successful dissemination of Chou's method of compositional synthesis is not only due to his fusing of compatible musical elements that are common in both the Western avant-garde and Chinese classical music tradition, but also to two additional factors. First, Chou's ability to create historical continuity through the selection of 'high brow' artistic philosophies and aesthetics from China's Confucian music heritage in order to authenticate his invented tradition. And second, Chou Wen-chung's ideal timing in providing post-Cultural Revolution Chinese composers with much needed artistic direction and in providing Western-avant-garde music with an innovative method of fusing Western and Asian compositional materials after centuries of interest in Eastern musical materials as compositional inspiration in the West. I will conclude that although the musical syntheses of Chou Wen-chung and New Wave composers are both highly selective, and neither encompasses all the philosophies and artistic aesthetics characteristic of China's dynamic and complex music tradition, both 'high brow' and more eclectic 'low brow' methods of musical synthesis are viable and sophisticated, and deserve further study and appreciation.

A Biography of Chou's Road Towards Musical Synthesis

Chou Wen-chung was born on July 28, 1923 in Yantai, Shandong province. Between 1928 and 1937 the Chou family moved to Hankou and then to Nanjing. In Hankou, there was a concession with business offices and shops rented by Westerners.

Through frequent visits to the international concession, Chou glimpsed the Western way of life, and was able to partake by learning the violin under his eldest brother's tutelage. Upon moving to Nanjing, Chou became serious about studying music.[2] In Nanjing, Chou began studying the *erhu* (Chinese two stringed bowed musical instrument), and dabbled in the harmonica, mandolin, *xiao* (Chinese vertical flute), and the musical saw.[3] At age twelve, Chou was introduced to the *qin* (Chinese seven-string zither, also referred to as the *guqin*), which was one of the most important and least popular of Chinese instruments.[4] Chou would listen to radio broadcasts of *qin* music before going to school, and the *qin*'s unique artistic aesthetic made a profound impression on him. When the Sino-Japanese war broke out in 1937, the Chou family fled for safety to Shanghai. Shanghai's cultural life was already quite diverse and cosmopolitan due to nearly a century of Western influence. Western classical music and jazz became increasingly more accessible in the Shanghai community, and the taste for Western music became an emblem for cultural sophistication and prestige among members of the middle and upper classes. Perhaps due to the prestige associated with Western music, all seven of the Chou children studied Western musical instruments and took part in family chamber music recitals.[5] After Chou completed high school, he enrolled part time at the *Shanghai Yinyue Guan*, or the Shanghai Music School, which was founded by professors from the

[2] Peter Chang, "Chou-Wen-chung's Cross-Cultural Experience and His Musical Synthesis: The Concept of Syncretism Revisited," *Asian Music* 32, no. 2 (2001): 96.
[3] Peter Chang, *Chou Wen-Chung: The Life and Work of a Contemporary Chinese-Born American Composer* (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2006), 16.
[4] David Ewen, *American Composers A Biographical Dictionary* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1982): 128.
[5] Chang, *Chou Wen-chung*, 19.

National Shanghai Conservatory.[6] It was here that Chou considered seeking the best musical instruction abroad, either in Europe or America. However, Chou decided to pursue more useful and patriotic careers, such as those in science and technology, "It was unthinkable in a war, with bombs dropping all around you to say, 'Oh, I want to be a composer.'"[7] Chou's mother reinforced this decision by trying to convince her son that traditionally, professional musicians were looked down upon and treated as outcasts. After becoming acquainted with the work of English art critic John Ruskin, who asserted that architecture was frozen music, Chou decided that architecture would be a perfect blending of his ideals, and decided to enrol in post secondary studies in Shanghai.[8] When Shanghai fell to the Japanese when Chou was aged 23, he fled with a group of youths to Guilin in 1942. In 1944, Chou was forced to flee to Chongqing, where he earned a bachelor's degree in science a year later from the National University of Chongqing. Finally, in 1946, Chou followed his eldest brother, Chou Wen-Tsing, to America.

Chou was accepted on scholarship to study architecture at Yale University in 1946. Separation from his parents had the beneficial effect of removing Chou's reservations towards music; however, the idea of switching fields was an agonizing decision,

> In fact, I felt that I was really taking a chance. I agonized for years before I finally gave up the opportunity of becoming an architect all because of a rather stupid faith in myself…Whenever someone asks whether he or she should be a

[6] According to Peter Chang's *Chou Wen-chung,* 19, The National Shanghai Conservatory had been taken over by the puppet government set up by the Japanese, so conservatory professors Ding Shande and Chen Yu-Xin founded the Shanghai Music School.
[7] Chang, *Chou Wen-chung*, 19; and
Chou Wen-chung in Preston Wright's "An interview with Chou Wen Chung," in *American Mavericks* (American Public Media, with Philip Blackburn, American Composers Forum, July 2002), http://musicmavericks.publicradio.org/features/interview_chung.html, (Accessed July 13).
[8] Chou Wen-chung in Wright, "An interview with Chou Wen Chung."

> composer, I usually say, do you feel that you would rather die without being a composer? Otherwise, I wouldn't.[9]

Shortly after his arrival in the U.S., Chou decided to abandon architecture for music and auditioned for the New England Conservatory. Chou was accepted as a performance major in violin, which he soon switched to composition. For three years he attended the Conservatory on a Carr Scholarship, studying composition with Carl McKinley and Nicolas Slonimsky.[10]

In 1949, Chou followed his brother, Chou Wen-Tsing, to New York, where he began studying composition with composer Bohuslav Martinu. This was when Chou first began to experiment with fusing Chinese and Western music traditions. Thanks to Martinu, Chou was introduced to composer Edgard Varèse and began private compositional studies with him from 1949-1954. Varèse challenged and fundamentally reshaped Chou's artistic aesthetic, which redirected Chou's compositional approach from this point onwards. In 1951 Chou began graduate work in music at Columbia University under the guidance of Otto Luening. After a series of compositional successes, including *All the Spring Wind* (1952-53), *And the Fallen Petals* (1954), *The Willows are New* (1957), *Soliloquy of a Bhiksuni* (1958), and *To a Wayfarer* (1958), Chou was appointed assistant professor of music at Columbia University. He became a full professor in 1972, associate dean of the School of Arts in 1975, and then vice-dean for academic affairs in 1976.[11] From the 1960s onwards, Chou demonstrated compositional maturity that was met with resounding acclaim. Some of Chou's most important compositions from this period include, *Riding the Wind* (1964), *Yü Ko* (1965), *Pien* (1967), and *Echoes from the*

[9] Chang, *Chou Wen-chung*, 22-23.
[10] Ewen, American Composers A Biographical Dictionary, 128.
[11] Ewen, American Composers A Biographical Dictionary, 128-29.

Gorge (1989). In addition to these compositional successes, the highlight of Chou's career was the founding of the Center for U.S.-China Arts Exchange between Beijing's Central Conservatory of Music and Columbia University. The Center has provided him with great opportunity to share compositional developments occurring in both the East and West, and to educate and inspire new generations of composers. In the 1980s, Chou fostered academic exchanges so that promising Chinese composers could refine their skills at Columbia.[12] Chou also contributed to Columbia's music department by developing the curriculum for the ethnomusicology program and by establishing the Fritz Reiner Center for Contemporary Music in 1984.[13] After a widely successful academic career, Chou retired from Columbia in 1991, but continues to compose and to speak publicly on his innovative compositional aesthetic.

The Significance of Innovation in Traditional Chinese Music

Despite the significant developments occurring in contemporary Chinese music, it is important to recognize that this is not a unique phenomenon in Chinese music history. The acceptance and dissemination of Chou Wen-chung's method of musical synthesis among Chinese composers was assisted by the development of Chinese music, which has been a history of mutual influence, exchange, and assimilation of diverse musical cultures, including the interaction of China's various regions and nationalities, as well as China's neighbouring countries. Prior to Western influence, the most notable transformations in Chinese music included the gradual historical process of the Han Chinese's southward migration from the North China Plain to the Yangtze valley and

[12] Chou Wen-chung, "Biography of Chou Wen-chung," http://www.chouwenchung.org/biography/biography.php, (Accessed July 5, 2011).
[13] Chang, *Chou Wen-chung*, 30-31; and Chou, "Biography of Chou Wen-chung," http://www.chouwenchung.org/biography/biography.php.

their westward expansions during the Han (206 BCE-220 CE) and Tang (618-907 CE) dynasties.[14] With the opening of the Silk Road during the Han and Tang dynasties, China initiated the exchange of goods, ideas, culture, and music between China and the "West Regions," which included an influx and appropriation of Turkic and Tungusic musical ideas.[15]

In addition to foreign music influences, Chinese music also experienced significant change and revitalization within its own tradition due to the vertical movement characteristic of Chinese music's various social settings, as well as continued developments in Chinese instrumentation. Historically, Chinese traditional music was divided into four social settings: music of the court (*gongting*), music of the literati (*wenren*), religious music (*simiao*), and music of the commoners (*minjian*). There was continual interaction and mutual influence amongst these social settings, which proved to be as much a revitalizing force in Chinese music as the absorption of foreign ideas.[16] Likewise, China's instrumental tradition also underwent continual evolution independent of Western influence, including innovations in instrument design, performance techniques, and instrumentation. One of the most prominent examples of instrumental development in the 20th century was the *erhu*'s (two-string bowed instrument, also known as the spiked fiddle) growing prestige. Although the *erhu* was the most recent addition to China's silk string family, it has become the classical instrument of choice among Chinese musicians, even surpassing the *pipa*'s (four-string lute) prominence in the

[14] Chou Wen-chung, "Asian Esthetics and World Music," in *New Music in the Orient: Essays on Composition in Asian since World War II*, ed. Harrison Ryker (Buren, The Netherlands: Frits Knuf Publishers, 1991), 177.
[15] Zhang Qian, "The history and future of the reception of Western music by China in the 20th century," in *Tradition and its future in music: Report of SIMS 1990 Osaka*, ed. Kanazawa Masakata et al. (Tokyo: Mita Press, 1991), 407.
[16] Chou Wen-chung, "Asian Esthetics and World Music," 179-80.

north.[17] The history of China's musical tradition has been characterized by continual revitalization and change, which prepared the way for the incredible transformations in 20th century Chinese music.

The Four Stages of Chinese Musical Hybridity in the 20th Century

China's music scene during the 20th century has been fundamentally reshaped through the conflict, exchange, and fusion of musical traditions, which has prepared the way for Chou Wen-chung's innovative method of compositional synthesis. It is useful to briefly discuss Chinese music's four stages of intercultural development during the 20th century: the influence of Westernization via Japan, the May Fourth Movement, the Maoist period, and Chou Wen-chung's initiation of the New Wave movement. However, prior to Chou Wen-chung's return to China in 1977, previous compositional syntheses of Western and Chinese musical traditions did not generate anything artistically significant. Initial musical mixings were superficial and exhibited a shallow understanding of Western music, a situation that necessitated artistic revitalization.

During the first two decades of the 20th century, bureaucrats sought to strengthen China against foreign, imperialistic aggressors. The establishment of the Republic of China in 1911 resulted in the appropriation of numerous Western political, social, economic, educational, and technological systems.[18] China recognized the effectiveness of Japan's efforts in Westernization and made efforts to emulate some of its successes. Japan's intensely nationalistic genre of school songs, or *shoka*, was an important part of

[17] This transformation is due to the influence of the great *erhu* musician and composer Liu Tianhua at Beijing University during the 1920s, who emphasized the *erhu*'s great musical possibilities and solo potential. More information about the growing prominence of the *pipa*, as well as other 20th century instrumental developments can be observed in Shen Sin-yan, *Chinese Music in the 20th Century,* (Chicago: Chinese Music Society of North America, 2001), 170.
[18] Chang, *Chou Wen-Chung*, 180.

this effort.[19] China appropriated Japan's system of Western-style music education and adapted the *shoka* into Chinese school songs by replacing the original Japanese lyrics with Chinese ones.[20] School songs developed into one of China's first examples of musical synthesis, characterized by diatonic and pentatonic melodies. The lyrics were intended to promote social and political change, as their texts reflected the general concerns of the nation, such as patriotism, self-discipline, self-reliance, morality, social reform based on Western liberal ideals, and civic-mindedness.[21] Also at this time, Western notation, musical theory, and instruments were introduced into China.

With the May Fourth Era in 1919, Chinese music, not to mention Chinese society and culture in general, was completely refashioned, thereby ending centuries of Confucian governance. Beginning in the 1930s, Chinese composers created a new hybrid genre of music by setting Chinese melodies to Western harmonies, instrumentation, and orchestration, effectively creating songs in the European classical style. This genre of "light music" would become the repertory most widely disseminated and promoted by such state agencies as the Central People's Broadcasting Station and Chinese Central Television, due to the fact that an established proletarian music genre did not exist.[22] This hybridized style exhibited a superficial compositional synthesis, which was accessible and comprehensible to the masses. The composers who defined the era were Nie Er, who wrote countless revolutionary songs, and Xian Xinghai, who wrote the celebrated *Yellow River Cantata* (*Huanghe dahechang*) in 1939.

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[19] Andrew F. Jones, *Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in the Chinese Jazz Age* (London: Duke University Press, 2001), 33.
[20] Jones, *Yellow Music*, 33.
[21] Isabel K.F. Wong, "*Geming gequ,*" in *Popular Chinese Culture and Performing Arts in the People's Republic of China, 1949-1979*, ed. Bonnie McDougall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 116.
[22] Charles E. Hamm, "Music and Radio in the People's Republic of China," *Asian Music* 22, no. 2 (1991): 8-9.

With the Communist victory in 1949, revolutionary-minded musical production became entrenched in state orthodoxy, creating a musical monoculture that would last until the late 1970s. During the Maoist era, little musical development occurred and "revolutionary songs," or *geming gequ*, became the defining musical medium. Derived from Soviet mass music, geming *gequ* were dominated by march rhythms, orchestral effects, and choral singing.[23] Their texts were written in easily comprehensible vernacular and were intended to familiarize the masses with government policies and to motivate them to support the realization of these policies (often using key words that come straight from party directives, as published in official newspapers like the *Renmin ribao*, or "People's Daily").[24]

Not all new compositions in 20th century China were relegated to the superficial mixing of Chinese melodies with Western harmonies, counterpoint, and structure. There were significant examples of fusing traditional Chinese music with the newest advances in Western avant-garde composition. Some of the most striking instances include Sang Tong's *Evening Scene* (1948), which used the twelve-tone serial technique, excerpts from Luo Zhongrong's *Wading across the Lake to Pick Flowers*, which combined an ancient Chinese melody and the Western twelve-tone serial technique, excerpts from Huang Anlun's ballet *Dream of Dunhuang*, and Luo Jingjing's *Melody on a Dunhuang Poem.*[25] These examples indicate a compositional middle ground between superficial syntheses and Chou Wen-chung's innovative approach.

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[23] Jones, *Yellow Music*, 69.
[24] Wong, "*Geming gequ*," 112.
[25] Li Huanzhi, "People's Republic of China," in *New Music in the Orient: Essays on Composition in Asian since World War II*, ed. Harrison Ryker (Buren, The Netherlands: Frits Knuf Publishers, 1991), 210.

The Maoist period also featured the establishment of Western-style music institutions, beginning with the establishment of major conservatories in Shanghai and Beijing, followed by the foundation of conservatories and music departments in education institutions across China. These departments featured Western-style composition, conducting, musicology, and performance. China also introduced primary and middle schools of music, symphony orchestras, opera houses, ballet theatres, music publishers, scholarly books, journals, and other printed materials, at a whirlwind pace.[26] However, the disastrous Cultural Revolution (1966-76) completely interrupted musical exchange between China and the West and inhibited all musical activities except for the performance of the *geming yangbanxi,* the 'Eight Model Works.' These pieces were the most sophisticated instances of China's compositional hybridity up until this point. However, they were also completely saturated with political ideology.

Following the Cultural Revolution, the era of mass songs and the 'Eight Model Works' ended, resulting in an explosive desire among Chinese artists to create *l'art pour l'art*. However, the Cultural Revolution created an artistic void whereby Chinese composers did not have the technical knowledge necessary in order to progress their craft. Chou Wen-chung's return to China was the opportune moment to lead a directionless generation of Chinese composers from the restraints of superficial musical mixings, and provided them with the compositional tools and comprehensive artistic aesthetics necessary to create innovative and sophisticated works of intercultural synthesis. This movement in China's musical history is known as *xinchao*, or the New Wave. New Wave compositions are characterized by the use of traditional Chinese and

[26] Zhang, "The history and future of the reception of Western music by China in the 20th century," 407-8.

Western avant-garde musical materials and compositional techniques, including mixing Chinese and Western instruments to create unique combinations of instrumentation, developing new sources of sound and tone colour, utilizing non-standard rhythms, and incorporating Western harmonic language and musical styles, including dodecophonic music, noise music, minimalistic music, electronic music, and many others.[27] The combination of these techniques with China's musical heritage has resulted in novel and unique compositional styles that blend East and West. The Chinese scholar Luo Yifang describes these composers as "a rising generation," whose compositions "are a phenomenon truly unprecedented in the musical life of contemporary Chinese—or even in the history of modern music in China."[28] Some musicologists have even called this unprecedented stage of musical development "Chinese composition's very own Great Leap Forward," an incredible phenomenon that has even outshone other areas of Chinese culture.[29] Of the New Wave's numerous practitioners of New Wave music in the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and abroad, the composers who have met with the most international acclaim are those who comprised the first class of Beijing's Central Conservatory of Music after it reopened its doors at the close of the Cultural Revolution in 1977. Many of these students were brought over to the United States by Chou Wen-chung and studied under him at Columbia University. Chou's students, including Tan Dun, Chen Yi, Zhou Long, Bright Sheng, and Qu Xiaosong, have become the most visible examples of China's New Wave. The success of Chou Wen-chung's

[27] Adapted from Wang Zhenya," Wenge hou Xifang xiandai zuoqu jifa," 75-90 in Liu Jingzhi, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, trans. Caroline Mason (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2010), 541.
[28] Luo Yifang, in his article "Xin shiqi yinyue," in Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, 542.
[29] Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, 16, 544.

students, and of New Wave composers in general, illustrates the remarkable significance of Chou Wen-chung's method of compositional synthesis.

Changing Perceptions in Scholarship Towards Interculturality in Chinese Music

Throughout the 20th century, Chinese composers and musicologists from around the world have struggled with the analysis of the West's influence on China's musical tradition. Furthermore, the ways in which scholars have viewed interculturality in 20th century Chinese music has greatly changed over time. There have been three major shifts in perception towards interculturality in the academic music community. The first shift in perception occurred during the May Fourth Era, wherein Chinese reformists believed in the superiority of Western music and sought to replace traditional Chinese music with the wide scale importation of Western music. The second major shift occurred during the 1979 Asian Composer's League Conference in Seoul, Korea, where scholars and musicians held a negative perspective towards intercultural works, maintaining that Western influence in Asian works amounts to a modern-day occurrence of cultural imperialism. The final shift in perception regarding intercultural works occurred in 1990 at the Fourth Symposium of the International Musicological Society, held in Osaka, Japan. Scholars and musicians agreed that although intercultural works can negatively impact native music traditions, these works have considerable value in the development of intercultural music. This section will explore these shifts in perception in detail in order to illustrate the academic climate that has surrounded Chou Wen-chung's contributions to intercultural music.

Initial changes in perception towards interculturality in the Chinese setting began during the May Fourth Era, largely as a result of China's greater political and social

climate. May Fourth Era reformers generally believed that China's inability to deter the invasion of Western culture was due to weaknesses inherent in China's political, social, and technological systems.[30] As a result, proponents of the May Fourth Movement praised the superiority of the West and imported a variety of Western technologies, educational practices, and cultural institutions while condemning traditional Chinese institutions and practices. Sudden changes in attitude towards Chinese music were a clear example of this. Wang Guanqi, the father of modern Chinese musicology, was representative of many in contending that Chinese music was the result of "a thousand years of stagnation," and was a tradition "at a standstill," defined primarily in terms of what it presumably lacked: a tempered scale, functional harmony, counterpoint, orchestration, standardized notation, and the engineering prowess embodied by Western instruments like the piano.[31] May Fourth Era reformers strived for the total westernization of Chinese music, based on the belief that this would transform Chinese music into a high musical art.[32] Western music was understood to be more revolutionary than Chinese music, and the Chinese intelligentsia equated "modern" with "revolutionary."[33] Consequently, music associations were first established in Shanghai and Beijing in order to introduce Western music theory. Xiao Youmei first established the Conservatory of Music at Peking University in 1920, and in 1927, he established the Shanghai Conservatory of Music—the first Chinese musical colleges that employed Western-based education models.

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[30] Chang, *Chou Wen-Chung*, 180.
[31] The first phrase derives from Xiao Youmei, "Yinyue de shili" (The power of music), *Yinyue jiaoyu* 3 (March 1934), 9. The second phrase derives from Chao Mei-pa, "The Trend of Modern Chinese Music," *T'ien Hsia Monthly* 3 (March 1937), 271. Both quotes are found in Jones, *Yellow Music,* 25.
[32] Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, 13.
[33] Hamm, "Music and Radio in the People's Republic of China," 10.

Despite the growing prominence of hybridized music in China that featured the superficial mixing of Chinese melody with Western harmony and instrumentation, some musicians recognized flaws in these efforts of intercultural synthesis. Alexander Tcherepnine, the Russian-American composer who lectured at the Shanghai Conservatory in 1934, was the first to notice a shallow understanding of Western music among Chinese composers, which resulted in a superficial mixing of the two musical traditions.[34] Beyond the use of Chinese melody, no other Chinese musical elements were deemed desirable. Tcherepnine is congruent with the interpretations of contemporary scholarship. Contemporary sinologist Barbara Mittler's observations reiterate Tcherepnine assertions. Mittler describes the compositional style of Chinese composers from the 1930s to the 1960s as "pentatonic romanticism": a style of composition that employed a harmonic framework reminiscent of the Western musical language of the late 19th century that accompanied Chinese pentatonic melodies.[35]

The 1979 Asian Composer's League Conference in Seoul, Korea represented a dramatic change in perception among Chinese composers and scholars towards interculturality in Chinese music. During the conference, Asian musicians moved beyond the optimistic view of interculturality that was characteristic of the previous generation, and concluded that the Western influence on Chinese music, and on Asian music in general, amounted to "cultural imperialism." This was made apparent in the general vocabulary of mid-century music, such as complex rhythmic notation, extremes of pointillism, mathematical organization of various parameters of music, a vocabulary of sound and gesture arising out of tape and electronic music, and so forth. They asserted

[34] Chang, *Chou Wen-Chung*, 182.
[35] Barbara Mittler, *Dangerous Tunes: The Politics of Chinese Music in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China since 1949* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997), 149, 33.

that when this vocabulary was taken over from the West and applied to Asian music, it constituted a brand of "cultural imperialism."[36] These perceptions were further reinforced by the nature of the composing profession. The practice of concert music, as known in the West, was only about a century old in China, Korea, and Japan, and even less in other locales.[37] At the time, there was a striking tendency among Asian composers to explain one's work in relation to the society in which they lived, a tendency of which comparatively few Western composers had ever considered. Some of this soul-searching could be seen as a type of nationalist striving in regions with a history of colonialism and cultural chauvinism. Out of this environment rose a secondary need for self-definition: how to rationalize one's relationship to 'outside' influences.[38] Furthermore, there was a necessity to define Chinese music. One hundred years ago, this definition was unnecessary, but in 1979, "Chinese music" was understood within the context of Western music. An understanding of Western music theory and first hand experience Western music-making was the basis for determining whether or not an individual was a qualified musician.[39] Although there were many different kinds of musicians in China, it was clear that those with a strong Western musical education was preferred because this was the only demographic that was given institutional recognition. For instance, these kinds of individuals occupied almost all of the positions in music-art organizations and specialized music-education, guided new media connected with music, and controlled the direction of almost the entire national music-education-system from kindergarten to primary and

[36] Harrison Ryker, introduction to *New Music in the Orient: Essays on Composition in Asian since World War II*, ed. Harrison Ryker (Buren, The Netherlands: Frits Knuf Publishers, 1991), 13.
[37] Ryker, introduction to *New Music in the Orient*, 12.
[38] Ryker, introduction to *New Music in the Orient*, 12.
[39] Shen Qia, "Traditional Chinese Music Culture and its Future: What can we do?" in *Tradition and its future in music: Report of SIMS 1990 Osaka*, ed. Kanazawa Masakata et al. (Tokyo: Mita Press, 1991), 165.

middle schools, and almost every kind of adult education and social education.[40] Therefore, participants of the 1979 conference maintained that China's national consciousness towards music was "Westernized."

The Fourth Symposium of the International Musicological Society, held in Osaka, Japan in 1990, marked another significant shift in perception concerning interculturality in China. Musicians, musicologists, and ethnomusicologists responded to the merits and the concerns that surrounded intercultural reception. In contrast to the pessimistic perceptions that had largely characterized scholarship since the end of the Cultural Revolution, participants at the Osaka Symposium by-and-large agreed that while the intercultural reception of music could unfavourably impact native music traditions, considerable examples of intercultural synthesis could also ensue.

Although the majority of participants at the symposium agreed on the positive value of hybridized music, some scholars were opposed, which illustrated the difficulty in developing criteria for the analysis of authenticity in intercultural music production. Shen Qia was typical of these scholars in his assertions that the creation of hybrid genres of music resulted in the loss of original Western and Chinese identities. Shen contended that only the preservation of traditional Chinese music culture could protect the future of traditional Chinese music.[41] However, Bruno Nettl, the pre-eminent ethnomusicologist, was representative of a larger contingent of scholars and musicians, who were optimistic about the future development and reception of intercultural music. Nettl took a culturally relativistic attitude, maintaining, "I refuse to believe that the world's societies would be better off if they knew more of Mozart or Bach, except in the sense that they all might be

[40] Shen, "Traditional Chinese Music Culture and its Future: What can we do?" 165.
[41] Shen, "Traditional Chinese Music Culture and its Future: What can we do?" 166.

better off if they knew much more of everything. I also refuse to believe that they would be better off if they had been prevented from exposure to Beethoven or Broadway musicals or rock and country music."[42] Furthermore, Nettl drew attention to previous errors in perception, which suggested that musical traditions existed in isolation, without contact or mutual influence. Rather than taking a moral position regarding the present state of global music as being either positive or negative, Nettl asserted that the world was witnessing an acceleration of what has always been happening.[43]

At the Osaka Symposium, one paper in particular provided an unprecedented conceptual framework for the analysis and understanding of intercultural works: Tatsumura Ayako's "Understanding music as 'other': toward an aesthetic of intercultural reception of music" was a critical contribution to the future study of intercultural reception. Tatsumura's analysis of 'music as other' was not characterized by the differences among cultures, but rather, by the sensibility of each individual.[44] When an individual encountered 'music as other,' the encounter was marked by the polarity of strangeness and sympathy. Tatsumura supported his assertions with the work of German philosopher H.G. Gadamer, who insisted that in the act of interpreting a literary text, there was a tension between the strangeness (*Fremdheit)* and the familiarity (*Vertrautheit*) that the text imparted (*vermittelt*) to the reader.[45] The strangeness of the 'music as other' had the ability to speak to the individual, which compelled the individual

[42] Bruno Nettl in Charles E. Hamm and Kanazawa, chair persons, "Round Table C: The future of intercultural reception in music," in *Tradition and its future in music: Report of SIMS 1990 Osaka*, ed. Kanazawa Masakata et al. (Tokyo: Mita Press, 1991), 576.
[43] Bruno Nettl in Hamm and Kanazawa Masakata, chair persons, "Round Table C: The future of intercultural reception in music," 576.
[44] Tatsumura Ayako, "Understanding music as 'other': toward an aesthetic of intercultural reception of music," in *Tradition and its future in music: Report of SIMS 1990 Osaka*, ed. Kanazawa Masakata et al. (Tokyo: Mita Press, 1991), 523.
[45] Gadamer 1986 in Tatsumura, "Understanding music as 'other,'" 524.

to find interest in the music. The act of interpreting 'music as other' meant to bring two things, which were very different, immediately close to one another, which created a 'living metaphor' (*metaphor vive*). Philosopher Paul Ricoeur explained that a 'living metaphor' was a newly created metaphor, which gave heretofore non-existent predicate to a subject. For instance, when a poet said, "time is a beggar," he created with this expression quite a new relationship between the two words.[46] Therefore, a 'living metaphor' was simultaneously an interpretation and an event (*événement*), an event of creation.[47] In terms of the reception of music, a 'living metaphor' was created through the tension between strangeness and sympathy that an individual experienced while listening to the 'otherness' within the music. Tatsumura's analysis of 'music as other' was a crucial contribution to the interpretation of compositional synthesis and the critical reception of intercultural works.

Literature Review

In addition to the growing academic scholarship concerning the New Wave movement and intercultural composition in general, there is significant scholarship concerning the importance of Chou Wen-chung in stimulating intercultural composition and inspiring the development of the New Wave. However, academic scholarship has tended to focus predominantly on Chou's innovative and successful method of compositional synthesis between East and West. More specifically, scholarship has tended to emphasize the subject of music theory by analyzing how Chou's compositional techniques can be traced throughout his works. Although musicology and ethnomusicology have also analyzed Chou Wen-chung's compositional experience, little

[46] Tatsumura, "Understanding music as 'other,'" 524.
[47] Tatsumura, "Understanding music as 'other,'" 525.

work has been done to critique the accuracy of Chou's compositional aesthetic and his philosophical claims.

The majority of scholarship concerning Chou Wen-chung has been based primarily on Chou's own self-presentations of his compositional aesthetic. Chou has been a prolific writer throughout the years, publishing numerous articles, essays, and keynote speeches. Many of Chou's articles and essays have simply been re-printed in edited volumes concerning the development of New Music. Some of these works include: Chou's "Asian Influence on Western Music, Influence or Confluence?" in The Korean National Commission for UNESCO's *Traditional Korean Music* (1983), Chou's "Asian Esthetics and World Music" in Harrison Ryker's *New Music in the Orient: Essays on Composition in Asian since World War II* (1991), Chou's "Towards a Re-merger in Music" in Elliot Schwartz' and Barney Childs' *Contemporary Composers on Contemporary Music* (1998), and Chou's "*Wenren* and Culture" in Yayoi Uno Everett's and Frederick Lau's *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music* (2004).

Music theory is the foremost area of scholarship concerning Chou Wen-chung. Eric C. Lai's book, *The Music of Chou Wen-chung* (2009) goes deeper than any previous work of music theory in offering new insights into Chou's compositional technique. Lai's biographical profile and descriptions of Chou's artistic philosophy and how it relates to other contemporary composers are useful. Moreover, Lai brings insight to Chou's artistic philosophy by presenting a detailed analysis of Chou's evolving system of variable modes and Chou's use of elements other than pitch, which is a significant contribution to

the area of music theory in that the majority of scholarship has focused on Chou's use of pitch.[48]

Further significant contributions to the field of music theory regarding Chou's compositional aesthetic consist of unpublished Ph.D. dissertations, including: Chen Chia-chi's 2006 dissertation, "Part I. Two Chamber Music Works: 'Sleep', 'Valley' and 'Carnival Legend.' Part II. Chou Wen-Chung: His Life, the Inspiration of his musical language, and an analytical study of 'Windswept Peaks' from the perspective of Chinese aesthetics," Chew Seok-Kwee's 1990 dissertation, "An analysis of the selected music of Chou Wen-chung in relation to Chinese aesthetics," Chun-Ming Kenneth Kwan's 1996 dissertation, "Compositional Design in Recent Works by Chou Wen-chung," He Jian-Jun's 2000 dissertation, "Chou Wen-chung's *Cursive*," Huang Joan Qiong's 1991 dissertation, "An early fusion of Oriental and Occidental ideas: A discussion of the characteristics of three orchestral works by Chou Wen-chung and 'Three Images of Tang' for orchestra," Eric Lai's 1995 dissertation, "A Theory of Pitch Organization in the Early Music of Chou Wen-Chung," and Chung Yiu-Kwong's 1995 dissertation, "I Ching Compositional System: The Symbolism, Structures, and Orderly Sequence of the Sixty-Four Hexagrams As Compositional Determinants."[49]

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[48] Eric C. Lai, *The Music of Chou Wen-chung* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2009): 3-4.
[49] Chen Chia-Chi, "Part I. Two Chamber Music Works: "Sleep", "Valley" and "Carnival Legend". Part II. Chou Wen-Chung: His Life, the Inspiration of his musical language, and an analytical study of "Windswept Peaks" from the perspective of Chinese aesthetics," Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 2006; Chew Seok-Kwee, "An analysis of the selected music of Chou Wen-Chung in relation to Chinese aesthetics," Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1990; Chun-Ming Kenneth Kwan, "Compositional Design in Recent Works by Chou Wen-Chung," Ph.D. diss., State University of New York at Buffalo, 1996; He Jian-Jun, "Chou Wen-Chung's *Cursive*," Ph.D diss., West Virginia University, 2000; Huang Joan Qiong, "An early fusion of Oriental and Occidental ideas: A discussion of the characteristics of three orchestral works by Chou Wen-chung and "Three Images of Tang" for orchestra (Volumes I and II) (with Original composition), Ph.D. diss., University of California in Los Angeles, 1991; Eric Chiu Kong Lai, "A Theory of Pitch Organization in the Early Music of Chou Wen-Chung," Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1995; Chung Yiu-Kwong, "I Ching Compositional System: The Symbolism, Structures, and Orderly Sequence of the Sixty-Four Hexagrams As Compositional Determinants," Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 1995.

Lai's dissertation "A Theory of Pitch Organization in the Early Music of Chou Wen-chung" focuses solely on pitch as the parameter through which to examine and interpret Chou's music, resulting in a remarkably detailed study of pitch transformation, generation of chromatic structure, and motivic analysis of Chou's early works, specifically focusing on *Landscapes* (1949), *And the Fallen Petals* (1954), *The Willows Are New* (1957), and *Soliloquy of a Bhiksuni* (1958).[50] However, this dissertation does not examine Chou's 'Each Tone is a Musical Entity,' the *Yijing*, *qin* tablature, or *wenren* philosophies, since these philosophies that mark Chou's compositional maturity did not fully develop until the 1960s. Only Lai's analysis of *The Willows Are New,* which compares Chou's composition with the original composition *Yangguan* for *qin,* examines Chou's efforts to recreate the unique sound of the *qin* tradition. However, Lai focuses predominantly on how new materials are integrated with the original ideas from the *qin* rendition in order to see how the resulting structure reflects Chou's techniques of pitch organization, which reveals the means by which Chinese pitch concepts can be expressed through Western means and within a Western framework.[51] Although Lai's highly theoretical study of Chou's manipulation of pitch material in a pentatonic or chromatic context, or a combination of both is pivotal in accommodating the diversity of musical transformations expressed in this group of compositions, Lai's study somewhat inapplicable to my analysis of Chou's invented tradition.[52]

Seok-Kwee Chew's dissertation "An analysis of the selected music of Chou Wen-Chung in relation to Chinese aesthetics" focuses on timbre and register in Chou's works *The Willows Are New* (1957), *And the Fallen Petals* (1954), and *Pien* (1966) within the

[50] Lai, "A Theory of Pitch Organization in the Early Music of Chou Wen-Chung," 9-10.
[51] Lai, "A Theory of Pitch Organization in the Early Music of Chou Wen-Chung," 176.
[52] Lai, "A Theory of Pitch Organization in the Early Music of Chou Wen-Chung," 251.

context of ancient Chinese aesthetics, with a particular focus on *qin* aesthetics, *Yijing* principles, and ideogram construction. Some of her findings include the constant shifting of register characteristic of *qin* music, flux of stasis and motion that is related to the Chinese aesthetic principle "motion in stasis, stasis in motion," moving image, poetic intent, and living sound that are common between Chinese music and ideograms, the opposition of symmetry and structural ambiguity in Chinese calligraphy, and the use of the "reflection" principle from the *Yijing* in Chou's construction of *pien* modes.[53]

Chung-Ming Kenneth Kwan's dissertation "Composition Design in Recent Works by Chou Wen-chung" is notable in that it focuses on Chou's later works that are from his mature stage of compositional development, which exhibit a sophisticated understanding of Chinese artistic philosophies and aesthetics. These works include *Beijing in the Mist* (1985), *Echoes from the Gorge* (1989), *Windswept Peaks* (1990), and the *Cello Concerto* (1992). Kwan offers a detailed analysis of Chou's construction of an *Yijing*-based modal system, which focuses on the idea of the *pien* ("changing") tone in Chinese music, and the different scalar structures of ascending and descending scales of the same mode. According to Kwan, this modal system controls every aspect of Chou's compositions, including pitch organization, rhythm, dynamics, and articulations.[54] Kwan focuses on Chou's current modal practices that he has adopted since 1985. It is interesting that Kwan's analysis of *Windswept Peaks*, which Chou dedicated to the *wenren*, does not address *wenren* aesthetics and philosophies.[55] Instead, Kwan describes *Windswept Peaks*

[53] Lai, "A Theory of Pitch Organization in the Early Music of Chou Wen-Chung," 257.
[54] Kwan, "Compositional Design in Recent Works by Chou Wen-Chung," 8.
[55] In the score for *Windswept Peaks,* Chou describes the *wenren* as "frequently suppressed and persecuted, they stand tall among the mightiest peaks in the history of humanity. The image of windswept peaks suggest the unadorned beauty of inner strength, as symbolized by the gnarled pines and craggy rocks. This stark imagery began to permeate my musical thinking when the tragic event of June Fourth, 1989, at

as another opportunity for Chou to fully realize his modal ideas by providing his with the chance to work in the 12-tone medium.[56] Finally, although Kwan's conclusion likens Chou's creative endeavours to the work of Chinese landscape painters, Kwan does not provide specific examples of how Chou's compositions incorporate these movements or philosophies.

Chen Chia-chi's dissertation "Part I. Two Chamber Music Works: 'Sleep', 'Valley' and 'Carnival Legend.' Part II. Chou Wen-Chung: His Life, the Inspiration of his musical language, and an analytical study of 'Windswept Peaks' from the perspective of Chinese aesthetics" also offers an analysis of Chou's *Windswept Peaks* and offers a discussion of the Asian influence in Chou's musical language. This dissertation is particularly useful in analysing Chou's expression of various Asian influences in his works. Chen's second and third chapters trace these influences through the use of musical examples from Chou's compositional oeuvre, illustrating Chou's compositional evocation of Chinese philosophy and the schools of Confucianism and Taoism, *qin*, Chinese architecture as expressed in garden design, the principle of *yin* and *yang*, the application of the *Yijing,* and Chou's modal method.[57] In Chapter four, Chen reveals how all of these influences are at work in Chou's *Windswept Peaks*.

Joan Qigong Huang's dissertation "An early fusion of Oriental and Occidental ideas: A discussion of the characteristics of three orchestral works by Chou Wen-chung and "Three Images of Tang" for orchestra. (Volumes I and II) (with Original

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Tiananmen took place soon after I started this piece." Chou, Wen-chung. *Windswept Peaks: Clarinet, Violin, Violoncello and Piano.* New York: C.F. Peters Corporation, 1995.

[56] Kwan, "Compositional Design in Recent Works by Chou Wen-Chung," 275.

[57] Chen, "Part I. Two Chamber Music Works: "Sleep", "Valley" and "Carnival Legend". Part II. Chou Wen-Chung: His Life, the Inspiration of his musical language, and an analytical study of "Windswept Peaks" from the perspective of Chinese aesthetics," 6-7.

composition)" is a detailed study of the relationship between Chou's music and many aspects from his culture, including philosophy, calligraphy, and poetry. Huang dissects Chou's *Landscapes* (1949)*, All in the Spring Wind* (1953), and *And the Fallen Petals* (1954) in order to reveal how Chou incorporates Chinese traditional musical language into his compositions.[58] Most applicable to my study is that Huang includes a brief section on Chou's philosophy, 'Each Tone is a Musical Entity,' in her section called 'The World of the Single Tone,' which addresses the importance of tones in the *Yue Ji* and in the *qin* tradition. Huang traces these influences in Chou's composition *Yü Ko* (1965). Furthermore, Huang shows the influence of Chinese calligraphy in Chou's *Cursive* (1963) and *The Willows Are New* (1957). However, this work repeatedly makes reference to Chou's self-presentations in Huang's analyses of his works. In describing the musical texture of *Landscapes, All in the Spring Wind*, and *And the Fallen Petals*, Huang uses phrases such as "delicately colored just as in Chinese paintings and can also be compared with the economy and elusiveness found in Chinese painting," "In many passages, the music stands out as coloristic brushwork, pointillistic and athematic in character," and "can compare with the darts, flecks, slashes and twists in the exquisite brushwork of Chinese painting."[59] Huang's authority for these statements seems to be based on Chou's own words.

It can be suggested that these scholars have focused on Chou's use of pitch of timbre because Chou has asserted, "From the very beginning in the tradition of Chinese

[58] Huang, "An early fusion of Oriental and Occidental ideas: A discussion of the characteristics of three orchestral works by Chou Wen-chung and "Three Images of Tang" for orchestra," 2.
[59] Huang, "An early fusion of Oriental and Occidental ideas: A discussion of the characteristics of three orchestral works by Chou Wen-chung and "Three Images of Tang" for orchestra," 31. Further examples of Huang's repetition of Chou's self-presentations regarding his compositional methods can be found on pages 33 and 45.

music, the emphasis is on timbre and pitch. These two physical properties of sound have equal value, and I have used this same principle in all of my works."[60] These are clear instances of music scholarship that take Chou's self-presentations at face value, offering thorough analyses of Chou's method of compositional synthesis without providing critical insight into Chou's selection of compositional materials, philosophies, and aesthetics that he uses to authenticate his invented tradition.

Other than the contributions of music theory, scholarship concerning Chou Wen-chung has been rather limited, but the field of musicology has made important contributions. Peter Chang is the leading specialist in Chou Wen-chung's artistic aesthetic, and his scholarly works are significant. Chang's 1995 dissertation, *Chou Wen-chung and His Music: A Musical and Biographical Profile of Cultural Synthesis*, is groundbreaking in constructing a methodological framework through which scholars can analyze the concept of syncretism and cross-cultural compositional materials in not only Chou's music, but other contemporary avant-garde works as well.[61] Up until this point, no theory or workable model had been available to provide a sufficient analysis of Chou's cross-cultural compositions.[62] Chang begins his work with a critique of the insufficiencies of Richard Waterman's theory of syncretism (1952). Waterman views syncretism as a product of acculturation, wherein shared musical features between two musical cultures are needed for fusion.[63] In its place, Chang offers a methodology for

[60] Chou in Robert Kyr, Searching for the Essential and Between the Mind and the Ear: Finding the Perfect Balance: Interviews with Earl Kim and Chou Wen-chung (Boston: League-ISCM, April 1990), 16.
[61] Peter Chang, "Chou Wen-Chung and His Music: A Musical and Biographical Profile of Cultural Synthesis," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1995), 1.
[62] Chang, "Chou Wen-Chung and His Music," 1.
[63] In William Bascom's, "The Main Problems of Stability and Change in Tradition," *JIFMC* 11 (1959): 7-12, Waterman's theory contends, "Syncretism [is] the tendency to identify those patterns in a new culture with similar elements in the old one, enabling persons experiencing the contact to move from one to another with psychological ease" (Waterman, "African Influence on the Music of the Americas," 1952).

studying syncretism as a process, which is of far greater use in the analysis of Chou's works. For a successful analysis of musical synthesis, the methodology must include the cultural insiders', or composer's, reinterpretation of their own tradition, an analysis of their motivation for cultural survival, an analysis of the nature of the individual's role in initiating musical fusion, the broader repercussion of Western musical influence on itself and on artistic and social conditions contributing to the synthesis' success, and considerations regarding the future of intercultural analysis. Although many aspects are available for musical synthesis, these are not limited to musical materials, but may also include aesthetic values that govern all branches of the fine arts, such as poetry, painting, calligraphy, and music.[64] Chang clearly and effectively examines Chou's modest *oeuvre* of twenty-four works (composed prior to 1995), tracing distinctive stylistic changes and clearly illustrates Chou's revolutionary process of musical synthesis. However, Chang fails to address the veracity and effectiveness of Chou' compositional methods and aesthetics.

Chang's article, "Chou Wen-Chung's Cross-Cultural Experience and His Musical Synthesis: The Concept of Syncretism Revisited" (2001), focuses specifically on the concept of syncretism. This article builds on his dissertation, and is constructive in understanding the concept of syncretism in its historical context and how it relates to Chou's understanding and application of syncretism in his musical works. Chang asserts that Chou is able to synthesize two musical cultures at the conceptual level by re-living and reinterpreting his previous cultural experiences, a choice that was rationally made.[65]

Anthropologist William Bascom builds on Waterman's theory of syncretism by asserting, "innovations which are incompatible with the pre-existing patterns are usually rejected."

[64] Chang, "Chou Wen-Chung and His Music," iii.

[65] Peter Chang, "Chou-Wen-chung's Cross-Cultural Experience and His Musical Synthesis," 114.

Peter Chang's work on Chou Wen-chung culminated in his major monograph, *Chou Wen-Chung: The Life and Work of a Contemporary Chinese-Born American Composer* (2006). In this work, Chang attempts to provide a foundational volume concerning the life and works of Chou Wen-chung. The most significant and detailed section of the book is his second chapter, an extended biography of Chou in his various roles as a composer, teacher, diplomat, and cultural conservationist.[66] This chapter covers Chou's life from his beginnings in China, to his education in the United States, including his apprenticeship with Edgard Varèse, his more recent activities as a promoter of cultural exchange with the establishment of the Center for the U.S.—China Arts Exchange at Columbia University, and his most recent efforts in cultural conservation in Yunnan province. The core analytical chapters of the book, chapters three through five, offer perceptive observations regarding how Chou's compositional philosophies and techniques are displayed in the progression of his compositional life. As in his dissertation, Chang does not question the veracity of Chou's compositional aesthetic.

Aside from the work of Peter Chang, Yayoi Uno Everett's article "Calligraphy and Musical Gestures in the Late Works of Chou Wen-chung" (2007) in *Contemporary Music Review,* features insightful and groundbreaking scholarship into Chou's method of combining attributes from Chinese calligraphy with the creation of musical gestures in music composition. Of particular importance is her five-part analysis of Chinese calligraphy's characteristic movements and their correlation with Chou's topography of gestural movement. Everett's analysis includes: the compound movement of the initial brushstroke, the invisible motion between strokes, the parallel brushstrokes and 'echoing

[66] Eric Hung, review of *Chou Wen-Chung: The Life and Works of a Contemporary Chinese-Born American Composers*, by Peter Chang, *American Music* 26, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 118.

contour,' the change in speed and density of strokes, and the topography of the gestural movement.[67]

Other than these major contributions, the remaining scholarship concerning Chou Wen-chung is confined to dictionaries of American and avant-garde composers, featuring short chapters or articles summarizing Chou's compositional techniques and compositional *oeuvre*. Some of these works include: David Ewen's *American Composers: A Biographical Dictionary* (1982), Brian Morton's and Pamela Collins' *Contemporary Composers* (1992), John Vinton's *Dictionary of Twentieth-Century Music* (1974), and Joanna C. Lee's article in *Grove Music Online.*

Methodology: Inventing Tradition

Chou Wen-chung is the only composer from both Asia and the West who has presented a comprehensive and sophisticated method of compositional synthesis that is founded on both traditions' underlying artistic aesthetics. His educational experiences in the United States have provided him with an extensive understanding of not only Western avant-garde compositional techniques, but also a means for expressing compositional synthesis. Furthermore, through his efforts to 'rediscover' his Chinese roots and educate himself on the performance practices and philosophies of the *qin* (the seven-string Chinese zither), Chou has gained an impressive understanding of *wenren* (the Chinese literati) artistic aesthetics and the importance of mastering all the classical Chinese art forms. In this regard, Chou is unique among his contemporaries.

Not only has Chou Wen-chung established himself as the leading pioneer of a sophisticated musical hybridization between East and West, he has inspired a generation

[67] Yayoi Uno Everett, "Calligraphy and Musical Gestures in the Late Works of Chou Wen-chung," *Contemporary Music Review* 26, no. 5/6 (2007): 578-81.

of Chinese composers with his compositional methods to employ intercultural synthesis in their own compositions. This study argues that Chou's success in establishing the New Wave compositional movement is due to his exemplification of Eric Hobsbawm's concept, 'inventor of tradition.' As propounded in his seminal work, *The Invention of Tradition*, Hobsbawm's concept of 'invented tradition' is

> taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.[68]

Inventing tradition is essentially a process of formulization and ritualization, characterized by reference to the past.[69] Chou Wen-chung has evoked formulization and ritualization by incorporating various aspects of Chinese artistic culture into his works. Chou's appropriation of the *wenren* spirit and the construction of his innovative philosophy 'each tone is a musical entity,' derived from *qin* tablature and its underlying artistic aesthetics, can be seen as Chou's efforts to legitimize and authenticate his compositional synthesis and transform it into an established tradition.[70] Chou stands at an artistic crossroad, neither belonging completely to Chinese traditional music nor to

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[68] Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition,* ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, 1-14 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 1.

[69] A Chinese example of an 'invention of tradition' that predates Chou is laid out in Joseph R. Levenson's "A Tradition's End: The Suggestiveness of Vestiges: Confucianism and Monarchy at the Last," in *Confucianism and Chinese Civilization*, ed. Arthur F. Wright (New York: Atheneum, 1965), 291-93.

[70] In terms of the *wenren* ideology, Chou is particularly captivated by the scholarly-elites mastery of all the classical arts. Musical composition and performance is only an aspect of the *wenren*'s artistic training. Their mastery of all the classical arts is necessary to fully grasp the artistic aesthetics inherent in musical composition and performance. Furthermore, Chou subscribes to the ideology 'Each tone is a single entity,' which is predicated on the belief that the complexity in performing a single tone on the *qin*, the Chinese seven-stringed zither, or on any other Chinese instrument, can be as artistically complex as an entire melody, or even an entire piece of music. It is a sonic event unto itself, capable of evoking poetry and sonic beauty. In *qin* performance, a single tone, when plucked by the right hand, can be altered with the use of one or more fingers from the left hand in order to alter the note's pitch, timbre, duration, dynamic, etc. The result is a single tone that evokes incredible sonic complexity. These two concepts will be explored in further detail in Chapter 1.

Western classical music, and he cites his incorporation of Chinese traditional music's artistic principles in order to create historical authenticity and artistic continuity with the Chinese classical music tradition. Although Chou has attempted to create an invented tradition of compositional synthesis, this is not to say that it is a false tradition. Like other composers, Chou has created a selective process on which he bases his invented tradition. Chou incorporates the 'high brow' features of China's classical music tradition, such as *qin* tablature and *wenren* artistic aesthetics, in order to authenticate his invented tradition.

Hobsbawm's proposition that the process of inventing a tradition is most clearly exemplified "where a 'tradition' is deliberately invented and constructed by a single initiator" is exemplified in Chou's initiation of the New Wave movement.[71] Chou's establishment of The Center for U.S.-China Arts Exchange in October of 1978 was pivotal in inspiring this new generation of composers to create works of intercultural synthesis through this organization's exchange of scores, recordings, and personnel between China and the West. In addition to these artistic exchanges, Chou's self-presentations clearly illustrate the deliberate construction of his invented tradition, which details his artistic aesthetic and his desire for contemporary Asian composers to follow in his footsteps. However, Chou's unique position as an innovator and inventor of a tradition of musical synthesis is also due to the unique social and political circumstances that have surrounding his artistic life. According to Hobsbawm, the invention of tradition can be expected to occur more frequently when the rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns from which the 'old' traditions had been designed, thereby producing new patterns in which these 'old' traditions are no longer

[71] Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," 4.

applicable.[72] Furthermore, when unprecedented political institutions and ideological movements and groups are established, the invention of historic continuity is often necessitated.[73] After the close of the Cultural Revolution in 1976, Chinese composers were at a loss in terms of composing music independent of state regulations. Chou Wen-chung's compositional method and artistic aesthetic became a catalyst and a voice for artistic freedom among this new generation of composers. In other words, the groundbreaking nature of Chou's musical synthesis necessitated the creation of historical continuity with China's musical tradition.

Chou Wen-chung's self-presentations have had a tremendous influence on the reception and interpretation of his compositional legacy. Chou's academic writings and first-hand interviews have been the primary source of information in music scholarship and criticism regarding Chou's compositional method. In fact, scholars and critics alike largely reiterate Chou's own words, including his criticisms concerning the compositional aesthetics of the New Wave and of composers of intercultural synthesis in general. This is problematic for two reasons. Firstly, there evidence that music scholars and critics exhibit a shallow understanding of Chou's invented tradition in their failure to mention or analyze Chou's selective preference for 'high brow' elements from China's classical music tradition in order to authenticate his musical tradition. Secondly, Chou's criticisms of the New Wave are problematic because Chou utilizes his invented tradition, which is comprised of a selection of 'high brow' elements typical of *wenren* music, as a set of criteria against which to assess the work of others. In music scholars' and critics' failure to recognize Chou's set of criteria, they are further disseminating value

[72] Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," 4.
[73] Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," 7.

judgements on the New Wave. In contrast to Chou's approach, New Wave composers have focused on a more eclectic approach to compositional synthesis, which includes the incorporation of 'low brow' elements from China's musical tradition, as well as developing their own individual styles and compositional methods rather than whole-heartedly appropriating Chou Wen-chung's artistic aesthetic. As a result, Chou has laid heavy criticisms on these composers, charging them with employing exoticist tendencies and possessing an incomplete knowledge of China's comprehensive artistic traditions, resulting in inauthentic, uninformed, and unsophisticated musical syntheses. Despite Chou's criticisms and their failure to be analyzed in the work of music scholarship and criticism, New Wave composers have made significant contributions to intercultural composition and to the maturation of avant-garde music in both China and the West. This study will employ a more balanced perspective in the analysis of New Wave composers' compositional developments and the significance of their works.

Chapter Summary

Chapter One will illustrate the factors responsible for the creation of Chou Wen-chung's invented music tradition. Although scholars and music critics predominantly attribute Chou's critical success to his successful method of compositional synthesis, his success is largely due to the state of mid-20th century Western avant-garde composition, which featured increasing openness towards intercultural influence in composition. Chou Wen-chung's method of compositional synthesis will be outlined in order to illustrate how his compositional approach filled this fascination in Western music. The chapter will then outline Chou's compositional approach, and demonstrate how Chou's critical success is also due to the persuasiveness of his self-presentations among the scholarly

community and music critics. Chou's attempts to establish continuity between his method of musical synthesis and China's centuries-long classical music tradition by citing his family lineage, his knowledge of the Chinese Classics, and his incorporation of *wenren* and *qin* artistic aesthetics in order to authenticate his claims. Upon closer examination, it is apparent that Chou's invented tradition of musical synthesis has been founded on his distinctly selective compositional process, which focuses on the 'high brow' elements that he asserts are essential to China's classical music tradition. Unfortunately, music scholarship and criticism has exhibited a shallow understanding of Chou's conscientious efforts to create his invented tradition of musical synthesis, which has resulted in their written work that largely reiterates Chou's self-presentations with little critical insight. This has led to the dissemination of Chou's compositional ideals without the foundation necessary to investigate the construction of these ideals. This chapter will investigate the construction of Chou's innovative and sophisticated tradition of musical synthesis and will conclude by presenting some inconsistencies and questions that are suggested in Chou Wen-chung's compositional philosophy.

Chapter Two concerns the dissemination of Chou Wen-chung's invented musical tradition, specifically focusing on Chou's return to China in 1978 and the subsequent creation of the New Wave movement. Despite the great contributions New Wave composers have made to the area of intercultural composition, Chou is highly critical of these works, asserting that New Wave composers are guilty of succumbing to the trappings of compositional *chinoiserie* and commodification, which are largely the result of their insufficient knowledge of their own native music tradition. Chou's assertions are problematic in that Chou utilizes highly selective and 'high brow' invented tradition of

compositional synthesis to inspire and direct this new generation of Chinese composers, and then uses these selective and 'high brow' elements as a set of criteria in which to assess and critique the works of the New Wave. Although New Wave composers employ a more eclectic, commercial, and even 'low brow' approach to compositional synthesis, their selections of Chinese elements on which to base their compositional syntheses are no less valid than Chou's selections. Furthermore, this chapter will assert that a complete understanding of the Chinese classical music tradition and a completely consistent tradition of compositional synthesis are unnecessary for creating viable methods of compositional synthesis. This chapter will conclude by suggesting that both 'high brow' and 'low brow' approaches to compositional synthesis are both effective and valid methods for the development of intercultural music and compositional synthesis.

CHAPTER 1: THE CONSTRUCTION OF CHOU WEN-CHUNG'S MUSICAL SYNTHESIS

Chou Wen-chung and his sophisticated compositional philosophy and artistic aesthetic concerning intercultural synthesis have had a significant impact on the development of avant-garde music in the West and on the establishment and subsequent development of New Wave music in China. Scholars and music critics alike attribute the success of Chou's unique brand of musical fusion to the compatibility of essential elements between Chinese artistic aesthetics and the compositional principles that govern Western avant-garde music. However, a more detailed analysis of Chou Wen-chung's journey towards musical fusion reveals that Chou's critical success is also largely the result of increased openness in mid-20th century Western avant-garde composition towards intercultural influences and the effectiveness of Chou's self-presentations. The first portion of this chapter will focus on the increasing incorporation of intercultural influences in 20th century Western avant-garde music and the important role Chinese traditional music has played in the development of this tradition. In view of the wide developments taking place in Western avant-garde music, Chou Wen-chung's successful brand of musical synthesis can be seen as a timely addition, considering the growing impact that Chinese musical materials, and Eastern musical materials in general, has had on the development of Western classical music in modern times. The second portion of this chapter will analyze Chou Wen-chung's self-presentations towards his method of musical synthesis. Chou cites his family lineage, his knowledge of the Chinese Classics, and his incorporation of the *wenren* and *qin* artistic aesthetics in order to authenticate his invented tradition and to create musical continuity between his music and the Chinese music tradition. However, as this chapter will illustrate, Chou's creation of continuity is a

selective process: Chou focuses on the 'high brow' elements of the Chinese music tradition in order to authenticate his invented tradition. Although Chou's selections do not represent the whole of the Chinese music tradition, they are extremely effective in creating a sophisticated tradition of compositional synthesis. It is noteworthy that music scholars and critics have predominantly overlooked the selectivity inherent in Chou's 'high brow' incorporation of Chinese elements, resulting in scholarship and criticism that exhibit a shallow understanding of Chou's thoughtful and conscientious construction of his musical synthesis. Consequently, music scholars and critics largely reiterate Chou's self-presentations with limited critical insight. This chapter will highlight the gaps in existing music criticism concerning Chou Wen-chung's compositional innovations and will investigate the factors Chou utilizes to authenticate his 'high brow' tradition of musical synthesis.

The History of Western Music's Receptivity to Oriental Materials

At the beginning of this [20th] century Mahler wrote Das Lied von der Erde as a spiritual summation of his time and a farewell to life on earth. Was it merely a matter of chance that he chose Hans Bethge's translation of Chinese poems as his text, a choice that surely affected his musical material and orchestral sonorities? If Mahler is a key link between the Romantic era and our own, and the last figure of the orthodox tradition in Western music, then perhaps it is more than symbolic that his "farewell" should have taken on an Asian accent.[74]

Chou Wen-chung's comprehensive artistic philosophy, which is grounded in an understanding of Chinese and Western musical traditions and aesthetics, is cited as the primary cause for his successful musical synthesis. Unexpressed and perhaps unrecognized by Chou, music critics, and the academic community is the fact that his widespread success and critical acclaim in the West is also due to the growing interest in

[74] Chou Wen-chung, "Asian Concepts and Twentieth Century Western Composers," *The Musical Quarterly,* 57, no. 2 (1971): 228.

mid-century Western avant-garde music to the incorporation of intercultural materials. Eric Hobsbawm, in his work *The Invention of Tradition*, asserts that the success of an invented tradition is in direct proportion to its success in broadcasting on a wavelength to which the public is already attuned.[75] Chou's particular method of intercultural synthesis was particularly attractive to avant-garde composers because it was a continuation of an almost three-centuries long practice of incorporating aspects of Eastern music into Western classical composition.

Intercultural influence in the works of Western classical music has had a history of compositional innovations through their representation of the musical 'other. This is represented in such works as Jean-Philippe Rameau's opera-ballet *Les Indes galantes* (1735), Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (1782), and Beethoven's Symphony no. 9 (1823), which exhibit compositional developments such as 'misplaced' downbeats, unexpected modulations, dissonances, and disjunct melodies.[76] However, until the turn of the 19th century, depictions of the musical 'other' were largely the result of the composer's *perception* of these musical traditions. The 1889 *Exposition universelle* in Paris was a turning point for intercultural synthesis in Western music by providing the first opportunity for Western composers, music critics, and the public at large to listen to over 50 music traditions from around the world. Among those in attendance were many young composers, such as Debussy, Ravel, Dukas, and Roussel, who were eager to explore new paths in composition.[77] As a result, these composers began questioning the

[75] Eric Hobsbawn, "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914," in *The Invention of Tradition,* ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 265.
[76] Timothy D. Taylor, *Beyond Exoticism: Western Music and the World* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007), 11.
[77] Glenn Watkins, *Soundings: music in the twentieth century* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1975), 131; in James R. Briscoe, "Asian Music at the 1889 Paris Exposition," in *Tradition and its*

common perception that Western music was self-informed, immutable, and superior to all other musical traditions. Rather, these composers believed that Western classical music could benefit from intercultural influences.

Claude Debussy's (1862-1918) works are significant because he incorporated Asian elements more integrally than any other Western composer before him, and is now considered the father of modern avant-garde music.[78] Debussy's boundless enthusiasm and incorporation of the subtle sounds and shifting textures he heard in the *kampong javanais* at the Paris Exposition was intended to point out the limitations of Western music. In comparison to Javanese *gamelan* music, Debussy asserted that Palestrina's polyphony seemed like "child's play" and Western percussion instruments like "the barbarous noise at a fairground circus."[79] Debussy's initial works of cross-cultural synthesis featured the pentatonic scale, a central aspect of the *gamelan*, within a Western harmonic framework. His use of pentatonicism would become increasingly more sophisticated over time and incorporated more consistently in both melody and accompaniment than in work of any previous composer.[80] In particular, his piece *Prélude à l'après midi d'un faune* (1892-94) revolutionized the course of Western music. By stripping harmony of its functionality, Debussy was able to use chords and harmonies purely for their sound and not for their harmonic function. In other words, chords and harmonies were treated as analogous to timbre.[81] Debussy's developments had a profound effect on numerous composers of the first half of the 20th century, including

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future in music: Report of SIMS 1990 Osaka, ed. Kanazawa Masakata et al. (Tokyo: Mita Press, 1991), 496.

[78] Briscoe, "Asian Music at the 1889 Paris Exposition," 497.

[79] Debussy, article 15 February 1913, *Monsieur Croche*, 229; in Ralph P. Locke, *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 230-31.

[80] This is exemplified in Debussy's piano work *Pagodes* (1903); in Locke, *Musical Exoticism*," 234.

[81] James L. McHard, *The Future of Modern Music: A Philosophical Exploration of Modernist Music in the 20th Century and Beyond* (Livonia, Michigan: Iconic Press, 2008), 351.

André Jolivet, Olivier Messiaen, Francis Poulenc, Harry Partch, Henry Cowell, Colin McPhee, and Lou Harrison, however, Debussy's greatest influence was on his student Edgard Varèse. Varèse became preoccupied with timbre, with the ordering the value in sounds and their transformations rather than the ordering of pitches. Furthermore, Varèse was very much interested in the tones themselves, and he experimented with sound sources in order to discover and elicit new sounds. These influences live on in the works of Varèse's student, Chou Wen-chung.

Chou's critical success is not only due to his innovative artistic philosophy, but also to mid-century Western avant-garde composers' growing interest in global music traditions as a valuable source of compositional inspiration and innovation. According to Chou, post-war era composers sought to revitalize their tradition by searching for a new means of expression that would go beyond the traditional boundaries of Western polyphony. As a result, there was a growing interest in the interplay of all properties of sound.[82] This necessitated the re-examination of Western music's foundations and to recognize compositional alternatives that were once considered absolutes.[83] Chou's opinion regarding mid-century Western avant-garde composition reflects the history of China's artistic tradition, in which sinologist Joseph Levenson suggested that an art form is "exhausted" when its practitioners think it is.[84] However, mid-century Western avant-garde composition was not a stagnant tradition in need of revitalization, it was a vibrant and continually evolving tradition, which was exemplified in its growing interest in

[82] Chou Wen-chung, "East and West, Old and New," *Asian Music* 1, no. 1 (Winter 1968-1969): 19.
[83] Milton Babbitt, "Who Cares if You Listen?" (1958), in *The American Composer Speaks: A Historical Anthology, 1770-1965,* ed. Gilbert Chase (Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1966), 236.
[84] Joseph R. Levenson, "The Amateur Ideal in Ming and Early Ch'ing Society: Evidence from Paintings," in *Chinese Thoughts and Institutions*, ed. John K. Fairbank (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 339.

intercultural music materials that was occurring before Chou's arrival to the West. In their quest for new compositional techniques, methods, and philosophies, composers such as Mahler, Bartók, and Messiaen, while being faithful to their own tradition, have incorporated Asian artistic aesthetics and philosophies into their compositions, including Zen Buddhism, Daoism, and the *Yijing.* Consequently, these composers have opened the gates towards a merging of Western and Chinese music traditions. The growing attractiveness of Asian music traditions as compositional source material is made clear in the assertions of minimalist composer Steve Reich, who asserted, "Non-Western music is presently the single most important source of new ideas for Western composers and musicians."[85] Reich went on to say that non-Western music is, "the most attractive path to restoration and innovation for Western composers…a way to reconnect with musical basics."[86]

Despite these composers' contributions to intercultural synthesis, Chou contends that their attempts to integrate Chinese aesthetics and philosophies into Western composition were superficial. In Chou's 1971 article "Asian Concepts and Twentieth-Century Western Composers," Chou describes the growing influence of Asian music in the development of Western classical and avant-garde music since the time of Debussy. Although Chou points out the contributions of these 20th century composers, he is clear to point out that they did not fully explore the qualities intrinsic to the Asian music traditions that inspired them. Chou draws attention to the aleatoric works of John Cage in order to illustrate this tendency. Initially, Cage's use of the *Yijing* (Book of Changes) was

[85] Steve Reich, *Writings on Music: 1965-2000*, ed. Paul Hillier (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 70; in Locke, *Musical Exoticism*, 286

[86] Steve Reich, Forward to Michael Tenzer, *Gamelan gong kebyar: The Art of Twentieth-Century Balinese Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), xvii; in Locke, *Musical Exoticism*, 288.

viewed as a sophisticated synthesis of East and West because of its incorporation at a structural level rather than at a melodic level. However, Chou criticises Cage for translating each hexagram into a pre-assigned musical value while failing to take the *Yijing*'s text into consideration, as is exemplified in his 1961 work *Silence*.[87] Chou quotes composer Pierre Boulez to reinforce his critique; Boulez describes Cage's use of the *Yijing* as an "adoption of a philosophy tinged with Orientalism that masks a basic weakness in compositional technique."[88] In critiquing the limited significance of Western compositional syntheses, Chou has in effect bolstered the critical value of his compositional synthesis in the development of intercultural music in the West and has further authenticated his invented tradition.

Chou's Approach to Composition

> *The mechanism for processing and fusing seemingly incompatible musical elements in two different traditions is seen as a process in which the fusion-maker reinterprets the foreign elements in his own cultural terms and seeks parallels in his own tradition. The result is a conceptual fusion conditioned by set political, social, and artistic constraints.*[89]

Chou Wen-chung's compositional approach represents a sophisticated synthesis of China's music tradition and Western classical music, the significance of which is seen in Chou's ability to fuse Western and Eastern musical traditions at the level of philosophy and artistic aesthetics. This strongly contrasts previous superficial mixings of Western

[87] Chou, "Asian Concepts and Twentieth Century Western Composers," 224.
[88] Boulez in Robert Dunn, *John Cage Catalogue* (New York, 1962), p. 17; quoted in Chou, "Asian Concepts and Twentieth Century Western Composers," 226. Cage's use of the *Yijing* is controversial and some scholars uphold a similar position as Chou's. For more information, see Marc G. Jensen, "John Cage, change operations, and the chaos game: Cage and the *I ching*," *Musical Times* 150, no. 1907 (2008): 97-102 and David W. Patterson "Appraising the catchwords, c. 1942-1959: John Cage's Asian-derived rhetoric and the historical reference of Black Mountain College," (Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University, 1996).
[89] Peter Chang, "Chou Wen-Chung and His Music: A Musical and Biographical Profile of Cultural Synthesis," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1995), 2.

compositional practices and 'exotic' sounds, instruments, and melodies. Moreover, in an interview with Preston Wright, Chou asserts that the success of his compositional synthesis is due to his thorough investigation and understanding of China's artistic history and culture, "composing or being an artist has no meaning unless you are part of the cultural flow, the historic motion. You have to think of the future as well as the past."[90] According to Chou, this has provided him with a keen understanding of common traits that exist between the Western and Chinese music traditions. Chou's investigation of his Chinese heritage has allowed him to create an innovative compositional approach by combining aesthetics inherent in *qin* music and the *wenren* artistic tradition with the Varèsean concept of 'sound as living matter.' This has resulted in his groundbreaking compositional method that I have termed 'Each Tone is a Musical Entity,' as well as produced musical philosophies concerning the practice of compositional synthesis, which Chou has termed 're-merger' and musical 'confluence.'

According to Chou, the fact that his music does not sound like the musical traditions from which they are derived is irrelevant. On the contrary, it is the inner meaning of the music, the artistic aesthetics upon which the music is founded, that carries the sense of musical tradition, "Even though, without my name printed on them, people might not realize they were written by a Chinese. It doesn't matter! But without the Chinese tradition, I couldn't have written them and for me, that's the point."[91] Critics are strongly receptive to Chou's works, and his compositional approach has received

[90] Chou Wen-chung in Preston Wright, "An interview with Chou Wen Chung," in *American Mavericks.* American Public Media, with Philip Blackburn, American Composers Forum, July 2002, http://musicmavericks.publicradio.org/features/interview_chung.html, (Accessed July 13).
[91] Chou Wen-chung in Robert Kyr, Searching for the Essential and Between the Mind and the Ear: Finding the Perfect Balance: Interviews with Earl Kim and Chou Wen-chung (Boston: League-ISCM, April 1990), 18, 24.

widespread critical acclaim. Perhaps the primary factor behind this success is the fact that concise statements of musical aesthetics are rare, not only among Asian composers, but among Western composers as well. Chou has produced numerous papers, speeches, and other significant works that articulate his approach and philosophy concerning musical synthesis. This section will identify Chou's philosophies regarding intercultural composition and his unique approach to compositional synthesis.

Chou Wen-chung's journey towards compositional synthesis began in 1949, when Chou's teacher Nicholas Slonimsky encouraged him to make a serious study of classical Chinese music. With embarrassment Chou decided that he knew very little about Chinese music and began to search for a deeper understanding of his own culture, including the guiding principles behind the Chinese visual and poetic arts.[92] From 1955 to 1957, thanks to a research grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, Chou studied traditional Chinese *qin* music. The *qin* is a long, fretted zither that was historically the favourite instrument of Chinese scholars, artists, and musicians since the time of Confucius. In particular, the *qin*'s private mode of performance by the scholarly-elite played a critical role in shaping many of the instrument's aesthetic principles and musical characteristics. Joseph Lam describes the *qin* as "probably the most complex type of Chinese music in structure, and the most refined and subtle in aesthetics."[93] These aesthetics are embodied in the *qin*'s intricately detailed system of notation, which inspired Chou's own developing compositional aesthetic, "I realized that there is a

[92] Peter Chang, "Chou-Wen-chung's Cross-Cultural Experience and His Musical Synthesis: The Concept of Syncretism Revisited," *Asian Music* 32, no. 2 (2001): 100.
[93] Joseph Lam, "Analyses and Interpretations of Chinese Seven-String Zither Music: The Case of the *Lament of Empress Chen*," *Ethnomusicology* 37, no. 3 (1993): 353-85; quoted in Bell Yung, "Music of the *Qin*: From the Scholar's Study to the Concert Stage," in *Reading Chinese Music and Beyond*, ed. Joys H.Y. Cheung and King Chung-Wong (Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong, 2010), 14.

philosophy behind Chinese music. Things seem to be so spontaneous and yet are contained in one character in the notation—in a symbol…Its [*qin* tablature] details provide the basis for re-creating the composer's acoustic as well as emotional intent."[94] In *qin* tablature, over one hundred *jian zi* (varieties of finger notation) are used for the production and control of tones (See Figure 1).[95] For Chou's artistic aesthetic, the physical and psychological details involved in producing each tone are just as important as the tone itself. The *yijing*, or mood, of the piece is evoked upon the literary content of the composition.[96] An example of this is a type of broad vibrato that suggests the fading sound of a temple bell, which is executed with a relaxed vacillating movement of the finger that should evoke the image of "fallen blossoms floating down stream."[97] In order to create a sophisticated compositional synthesis, Chou avoided a direct translation of *qin* tablature into Western orchestration and harmonization practices, choosing instead to musically represent the *qin*'s artistic aesthetics.[98]

The *qin*'s artistic aesthetics are synonymous with the *wenren* (Chinese literati) artistic aesthetic, which is the amateur practice of being equally refined in all of the

[94] Chang, "Chou-Wen-chung's Cross-Cultural Experience and His Musical Synthesis," 101.
[95] "[*Jian zi*] indicate not only the articulation and timbre but also deviations in pitch and modifications in timbre. A combination symbol for both hands would usually specify how a certain right-hand finger is to pluck the string, inward or outward, with the flesh or the nail, or how two or more right-hand fingers are to be used simultaneously or in succession, how a left hand finger stops the string, or how a left-hand finger is to tap the string or to pluck it, upward or sideways, how the pitch is altered or inflected by means of glissando or portamento after the excitation of the string, and how the timbre is varied by the addition of a certain type of vibrato or by changing from one type of vibrato to another during the decay. Such a symbol implicitly would also regulate the duration and the intensity, since a subtle dynamic modulation goes with the left-hand movement and a proper rhythmic structure is clearly necessitated by the sequence of events to be accomplished within the limited time span of the decay." Quoted in Chou, "East and West, Old and New," 20.
[96] Yung, "Music of the *Qin*," 16.
[97] Chou, "East and West, Old and New," 20.
[98] Chang, "Chou-Wen-chung's Cross-Cultural Experience and His Musical Synthesis," 101.

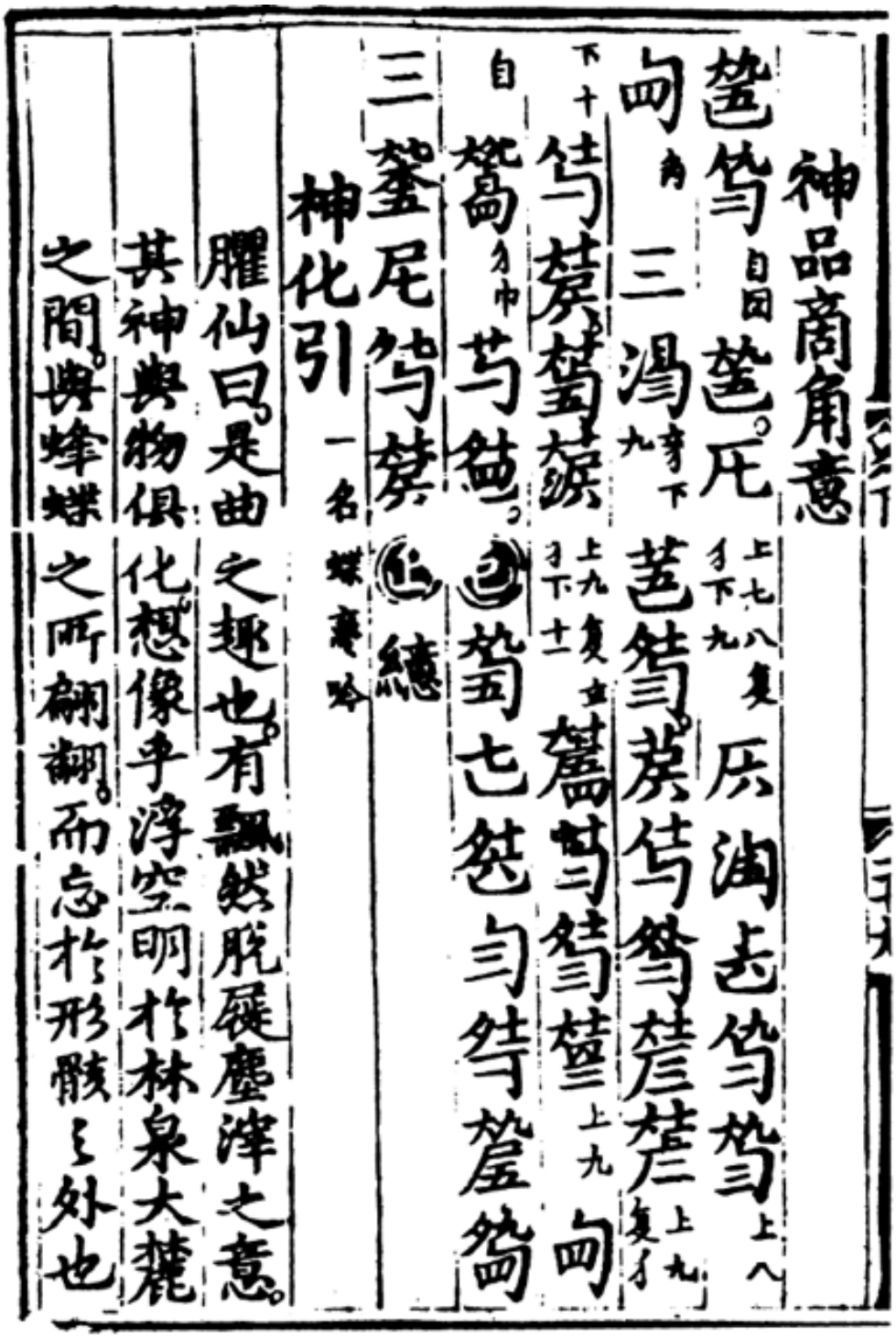

FIGURE 1: *Qin* Tablature

A page from *Shen Qi Bi Pu* (edited by Zhu Quan. Preface dates 1425 CE), a collection of music for *qin* in *jian zi* notation. This example was reproduced from Chou Wen-chung's "Asian Concepts and Twentieth Century Western Composers," *The Musical Quarterly,* 57, no. 2 (1971): 215.

Chinese classical art forms. Consequently, the *wenren* were accomplished in the *qin*, poetry, painting, calligraphy, and conversation.[99] Chou's investigation of the *qin* led him to adopt the *wenren* artistic aesthetic, which he endeavoured to evoke compositionally by incorporating the philosophy and the physical movements of Chinese painting and calligraphy, "I try to convey through sound the same emotional qualities of Chinese poetry and landscape painting and to achieve this end with the same economy of means: the maximum expressiveness of a minimum calligraphical brushwork in sound."[100] In Chou's compositions *All in the Spring Wind* (1953) and *And The Fallen Petals* (1954), both for orchestra, Chou illustrates musically this style of painting through his use of line, mass, articulation, duration, intensity, and timbre, which are organized into an integrated body of sound that ebbs and flows. Chou asserts that this ever-changing motion, tension, texture, and sonority reflect the concept of the Chinese painter.[101]

Calligraphy, more than any other classical Chinese art form, has inspired Chou's compositional direction and has provided him with a sophisticated method for unifying *wenren* artistic aesthetics with Western avant-garde composition. Beginning in the late 1950s, Chou viewed calligraphy and music as an analogous outlet, "calligraphy is music in ink, and music is calligraphy in sound."[102] As the "mother of all Chinese arts," calligraphy embodies many important artistic principles shared among other Chinese art forms, and it "serves as a foundation upon which Chou has integrated other Chinese influences, such as the repertoire and performance technique of the *qin*, poetry, painting,

[99] Kenneth Dewoskin in Peter Chang, *Chou Wen-chung: The Life and Work of a Contemporary Chinese-Born American Composer* (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2006), 3.
[100] David Ewen, *American Composers A Biographical Dictionary* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1982), 130.
[101] Chou Wen-chung, "Towards a Re-Merger in Music," in *Contemporary Composers on Contemporary Music*, ed. Elliot Schwartz and Barney Childs (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 1998), 310-11.
[102] Chou Wen-chung, "Whither Chinese Composers?" *Contemporary Music Review* 26, no. 5/6 (2007): 503.

and philosophy."[103] This compositional method is particularly noteworthy in Chou's pieces that evoke the *xingshu* (running) calligraphic style.[104] The action of calligraphy particularly attracted Chou, wherein the

> action is captured, even though what you see is flat on paper. When you know how to view it, you sense the calligrapher's motion…Above all, a calligrapher will look at a piece of paper. Immediately there has to be structure, balance, texture, density, everything has to be there.[105]

In order to evoke calligraphy's characteristics through music, Chou asserts that all aspects of the music, such as structure, texture, density, dynamic, and register, must be realized in the composer's mind before a single pitch is written. The suitability between calligraphy and composition is especially clear in calligraphy's controlled flow of ink and the relationship among the lines, which is remarkably similar to the Western art of counterpoint.[106] According to Chou, calligraphy brushes are very soft, and an artist can easily create more than one line with a single brushstroke: when two lines moving at the same time, it is called counterpoint in music.[107] Furthermore, Chou is able to correlate specific musical articulations with distinctive types of brushstrokes. Rhythmic contraction and expansion within a musical texture mirror the textural changes that result from the speeding or slowing down of a brush.[108] Examples of this can be seen in Chou's *And the Fallen Petals* (1954), *The Willows Are New* (1957), *Soliloquy of A Bhiksuni* (1958), and *Cursive* (1963).

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[103] Eric Lai, "Texture in the Music of Chou Wen-chung," in Eric Lai, *The Music of Chou Wen-chung* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2009), 120.
[104] Yayoi Uno Everett, "Calligraphy and Musical Gestures in the Late Works of Chou Wen-chung," *Contemporary Music Review* 26, 5/6 (2007): 570.
[105] Chou in Wright, "An interview with Chou Wen Chung."
[106] Chou, "Whither Chinese Composers?" 510.
[107] Chou Wen-chung in an interview with Thomas Crampton, "Chou Wen-Chung and the Meaning of Music," in *Social Media in China and Across Asia*, October 5, 2007. http://www.thomascrampton.com/uncategorized/composer-chou-wen-chung-and-the-meaning-of-music/. (Accessed July 16, 2011).
[108] Everett, "Calligraphy and Musical Gestures in the Late Works of Chou Wen-chung," 570.

The influence of Chinese artistic aesthetics has allowed Chou to produce innovative philosophies regarding compositional synthesis. Chou terms his first major philosophy 're-merger,' which was first articulated during the 1966 International Music Symposium in Manila, "By 're-merger I mean that I believe the traditions of Eastern and Western music once shared the same sources and that, after a thousand years of divergence, they are now merging to form the mainstream of a new musical tradition."[109] According to Chou, contemporary composition has reached the stage where a true 're-merger' between Oriental and Occidental musical concepts and practices, which at one time shared a common foundation, can and should take place. Chou cites proof of this 're-merger' in the family traits that are common among the music traditions of China, India, Balinese *gamelan*, Japanese *gagaku*, Korean *ah ahk*, Varèse, and the emergence of electronic music.[110] Although Chou is suggesting a 're-merger' in music, it is imperative to recognize that he is not implying that the world's musical traditions will create a sort of musical homogeneity, rather, internal cultural diversity in the world's music traditions are becoming more, not less, heterogeneous,

> I hope that we don't have just one language. I love French. I love German. I love the sound of it; I hope that the languages and the literatures will be retained. The same thing with music—you have a world spirit and we have a worldwide understanding of a worldwide ability to appreciate music or to exchange information…I hope that there will be a kind of universality in the music of the future, but nonetheless, that the beauties of individual cultural traditions will not be lost.[111]

[109] Chou, "East and West, Old and New," 19.
[110] Chou, "Towards a Re-Merger in Music," 314.
[111] Chou in Kyr, *Searching for the Essential and Between the Mind and the Ear,* 20.

Although the process of 're-merger' is progressing at a very slow and subtle pace, Chou encourages musicians not to be dissuaded, as this is to be expected.[112]

Building on his philosophy of 're-merger,' Chou has professed his philosophy that that the integration of Western and Chinese musical systems is due to 'confluence' rather than to influence. Chou's concept of 'confluence' indicates that in the relationship between Western and Eastern music systems mutual or reciprocal actions and influence are inevitable.[113] Rather than a single music culture influencing another, Chou contends that both Western and Eastern composers have taken an active part in contributing to the 'confluence' of both music cultures, "I am more concerned in watching how fundamental Asian concepts and practices in music are gradually and unobtrusively being integrated into the mainstream of Western contemporary music, and how they are revitalized and transformed by the Eastern composers in evolving their own contemporary styles."[114] Chou goes on to say that in order to fully grasp the concept of 'confluence,' it is essential to credit the Eastern musical tradition with the same weight of importance as the Western musical tradition. Contrary to the popular belief that Eastern music is an artistic achievement of the past, Chou contends that it is necessary to recognize both traditions as living traditions that continue to evolve to this day.

The influence of *qin* and *wenren* artistic aesthetics, as well as the subsequent development of Chou's philosophies concerning compositional synthesis, has resulted in Chou Wen-chung's groundbreaking compositional method and artistic philosophy 'Each Tone is a Musical Entity.' This philosophy was first articulated during his address

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[112] Chou Wen-Chung, "Asian Influence on Western Music, Influence or Confluence?" in *Traditional Korean Music,* ed. The Korean National Commission for UNESCO (Korea: Si-Sa-Yong Publishers, Inc., 1983), 216.
[113] Chou, "Asian Influence on Western Music, Influence or Confluence?" 217.
[114] Chou, "Asian Influence on Western Music, Influence or Confluence?" 217.

delivered to the 1966 International Music Symposium in Manila, which was subsequently adapted into his 1968 article "East and West, Old and New" in the journal *Asian Music.* Chou's philosophy was birthed when he drew parallels between the Varèsean concern over single tones and 'sound as living matter,' and concepts he learned through his studies of classical Chinese music.[115] Furthermore, Chou's interest in Anton Webern's (1883-1945) compositional brevity in the way he focused on the micro-aspects of musical activity, including the inflections of each isolated individual tone and his concept of pitch as a distinct unit, also played a critical role in the development of Chou's philosophy.[116] Chou describes this philosophy as, "each single tone is a musical entity in itself, that musical meaning lies intrinsically in the tones themselves, and that one must investigate sound to know tones and investigate tones to know music."[117] 'Each Tone as a Musical Entity' was pivotal to the development of compositional synthesis because it provided an alternative to Western-styled polyphony and supplied a conceptual framework for creating works that successfully fused both Eastern and Western musical cultures in an

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[115] I have based the term 'Each Tone is a Musical Entity' on Chou's article "East and West, Old and New" (1968), which is the first time Chou expresses his philosophy in print. Although Chou does not explicitly say "Each tone is a musical entity," his meaning is inferred through the parallels he draws between the Varèsean concept of sound as "living matter" and Chou's interpretation of the *Yue Ji.* On page 19-20 of the article, Chou outlines these two concepts:

> Varèse never was directly influenced by the East; but his concept of music as "organized sound" and of sound as "living matter" astonishingly echoed the spirit behind all Eastern music.
>
> Take Chinese music as an example. According to the Confucian classic, Yüeh Chi (Record of Music): Tones are the "image", or substance, of music; melody and rhythm are the "ornament", or appearance, of tones; therefore one must contemplate sound to know tones, and contemplate tones to know music. It is further stated that the greatness in music lies not in perfection of artistry but the attainment of te—a term which is often translated as "virtue" or "spiritual power" but should be understood as referring to "that by which things are what they are". In other words, the emphasis is on the single tones and their natural virtue or power by which these tones are what they are. Thus, music is sound, and sound is "living matter".

[116] Henri Pousseur, "Stravinsky by Way of Webern: the Consistency of a Syntax," *Perspectives of New Music* 2 (1972): 13-51, as quoted in Chang, "Chou-Wen-chung's Cross-Cultural Experience and His Musical Synthesis," 111.

[117] Chou, "Asian Concepts and Twentieth Century Western Composers," 214, 216.

innovative and sophisticated manner.[118] This philosophy, more than any other, has inspired the direction of Chou's compositions and academic writings, and continues to be met with widespread critical acclaim.

Echoes from the Gorge

Chou Wen-chung's innovative compositional synthesis has made a great contribution to the development of intercultural works. Culminating in his magnum opus *Echoes from the Gorge* for percussion quartet (1989), *Echoes from the Gorge* represents the summation of Chou's artistic aesthetics and philosophies that he has developed throughout his career. This work is unprecedented in the thoroughness with which Chou codifies certain Western percussion practices. Moreover, Chou's concept of calligraphy is hard at work, whereby, "the desired contour and texture of a character are achieved by the flow of ink through a coordination of pressure, direction, speed and viscosity."[119] Furthermore, the piece demonstrates a sophisticated synthesis between East and West by combining these extensive codifications with Chou's musical structure. On the one hand, the quartet conforms to the multi-movement Western model of musical structure, as well as to the structure of *qin* music, wherein the whole piece is based on a single idea that is elaborated and transformed, and to which Chou adds new ideas.[120] This philosophy of continual change and transformation is the result of Chou's fascination with the *Yijing.* Further influences of the Chinese musical tradition is seen in each of the twelve sections, which are subtitled with evocative imagery analogous to *qin* music, including: 'Echoes

[118] Chou, "Asian Concepts and Twentieth Century Western Composers," 214, 216.
[119] Chou Wen-chung, "Echoes from the Gorge" (1989), http://www.chouwenchung.org/works/1989_echoes_gorge.php, (Accessed July 5, 2011).
[120] Everett, "Calligraphy and Musical Gestures in the Late Works of Chou Wen-chung," 23.

from the Gorge,' 'Clear Moon,' and 'Falling Rocks and Flying Spray.'[121] In the section 'Raindrops on Bamboo Leave,' Chou evokes the sound of raindrops by allowing for changes in tempo and meter while maintaining a steady beat.[122] The artistic source of each section has originated from a philosophical consideration from an aspect of nature. *Echoes from the Gorge* is a resounding success and is critically acclaimed. Bernard Holland, critic of the New York Times, reports, "The newest piece was the most remarkable of all…*Echoes from the Gorge* offered a reassuring accommodation between two worlds—the admiring, wondering observations of Mr. Chou's original heritage and the subjective passions of his acquired one."[123]

Chou's Critical Acclaim

Beginning with Chou's first mature composition, *Landscapes* (1949) for orchestra, Chou's compositional aesthetic gained widespread approval in music circles. Music scholars and critics often describe Chou as having the unparalleled ability to fuse Chinese and Western musical traditions and heralding him an innovator and visionary for the future of avant-garde music. In regards to Chou's music, music critic James Ringo emphasized that, "there is no odor of the exotic about it, for no one can be exotic about things one has grown up with and with which one is thoroughly familiar."[124] In reviewing *Landscapes*, critic Alfred Frankenstein wrote in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, "*Landscapes* made adroit and imaginative use of ancient tunes, are colourful, nostalgic, allusive, and extremely brief. They bridge the gap between Oriental and Occidental music

[121] Chou, "Echoes from the Gorge (1989)."
[122] Chou in Kyr, *Searching for the Essential and Between the Mind and the Ear*, 23.
[123] Bernard Holland, "Between Asian and Western Influences," a review of Chou Wen-chung's *Echoes of the Gorge*, in the *New York Times*, April 29, 1989.
[124] James Ringo, *ACA Bulletin,* Vol. 7, No. 2, 1958; in the score of Chou Wen-chung's *Suite for Harp and Wind Quintet: Harp, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn,* New York: C.F. Peters Corporation, 1962.

with exceptional success."[125] *Landscapes* was followed by Chou's 1953 "rondolet" for orchestra, *All in the Spring Wind*, which also met with critical success. Nicholas Slonimsky comments in the *American Composers Bulletin*, "[*All in the Spring Wind*] is a tour de force of coloristic brushwork, entirely athematic in structure."[126] Critiques of Chou's compositions began mirroring Chou's presentations of his compositional approach, as outlined in his written work, with the reception of his first major success, *And the Fallen Petals*, a "triolet for orchestra" (1954). When the work was performed by the Berlin Philharmonic in June 1960, the distinguished German critic H.H. Stuckenschmidt described Chou in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* as, "a musical calligrapher, whose pen imitates the subtlest efforts of the painter…The power of atmosphere is irresistible."[127] Harold Rogers in the *Christian Science Monitor* described the piece as blending "the flutter of falling petals, delineated with the simplicity of Chinese scroll painting."[128] And Alfred Frankenstein's review of the same piece went even further:

> Chou is the first Chinese composer in history to make his mark in Western music…He calls his unusual technique "melodic brushwork," and it certainly does suggest the flecks, twists, darts, and slashes of a Chinese brushman's painting. "And the Fallen Petals" is an altogether fascinating piece, and one of more than individual significance since it suggests that in music, as in the arts of the brush, East and West are making a new and important synthesis.[129]

In describing Chou's works with descriptors such as "a musical calligrapher" and "melodic brushwork" without addressing the artistic significance in selecting these 'high brow' artistic mediums as a primary method for authenticating Chou's invented tradition

[125] Ewen, *American Composers A Biographical Dictionary*, 128.
[126] Ewen, *American Composers A Biographical Dictionary*, 128.
[127] Ewen, *American Composers A Biographical Dictionary*, 129.
[128] Harold Rogers in the score of Chou Wen-chung's *And the Fallen Petals: A Triolet for Orchestra,* New York: C.F. Peters Corporation, 1955.
[129] Alfred Frankenstein in the score of Chou Wen-chung's *And the Fallen Petals: A Triolet for Orchestra,* New York: C.F. Peters Corporation, 1955.

of compositional synthesis, music critics demonstrate a shallow understanding of Chou's writings and compositional philosophies. Alfred Frankenstein has emerged as the foremost proponent of this trend, and has produced numerous enthusiastic reviews that reflect only the surface meaning of Chou's self-presentations. One of the clearest instances can be seen in Frankenstein's review of a recording of both *Pien* (1966), a concerto for piano, winds and percussion, and *Yü Ko* (1965), for winds, brass and strings. Frankenstein noted in *High Fidelity* (*Musical America*) that *Pien,* in particular, exhibited evident similarities to the works of Webern and Varèse, but that the style, which

> …is very much Chou's own—but derived from Chinese tradition—is the composer's way of paying 'minute attention to each tone, providing for numerous ways to attack it; to vary its intensity, pitch and even timbre while the note is continuing, and to conclude it.' Put all these things together…and something most striking and exceptional results. The same variety of attacks, 'bending' of pitches and the rest are employed in…*Yü Ko*…It is full of the melancholy of Chinese poetry and mysticism that comes out so strongly in Sung Dynasty painting. It is one of the very few musical compositions, indeed, that seem thoroughly equivalent in East-West terms to the great master periods and styles of Chinese literature and visual art.[130]

Inconsistencies in Chou's Compositional Aesthetic

It is striking how closely the works of music critics mirror Chou's presentations, yet offer little interpretation or insight into the construction of Chou's compositional approach. Chou has been a prolific writer and an outspoken advocate for his approach to compositional synthesis and his understanding of Chinese artistic aesthetics, resulting in academic articles, keynote speeches, and first-hand interviews. The measures that Chou has taken in order to validate his musical synthesis have gone largely unnoticed and unquestioned by music critics and the academic community. Perhaps no other Chinese artist has had such an extensive influence over the interpretation and reception of his or

[130] Ewen, *American Composers A Biographical Dictionary*, 129.

her compositional legacy. One of the primary methods that Chou has employed to authenticate his compositional synthesis is by drawing attention to his unique position in history. Not only did he appear in the Western music scene just as it was looking for a means to reinvigorate their stagnating tradition, Chou has also claimed that his compositional aesthetic is a natural progression from both the Western and Chinese musical traditions. Western classical music is a continuous tradition of master-apprentice, which passes on the tradition to each subsequent generation of musical masters. Chou's most significant formative years as a composer were under the direction of Varèse, who was an apprentice to Debussy, thereby establishing Chou within the lineage of Western classical music's greatest composers. Although Chou's education in the West has been integral to the development of his compositional synthesis, Chou has indicated that an accurate and detailed knowledge of the Chinese musical tradition is much more rare among intercultural composers.[131] Chou has repeatedly presented his *wenren* compositional aesthetic as the ideal solution for creating works of intercultural synthesis, thereby suggesting his position as the only composer of his generation and of succeeding generations to possess a thorough enough knowledge of Chinese artistic aesthetics in order to create a successful and sophisticated compositional synthesis.[132] More specifically, Chou has drawn attention to his family lineage with the Confucian elite, his knowledge of the Chinese Classics, and his incorporation of *wenren* and *qin* artistic aesthetics in order to make evident the cultural authenticity of his works. However, a more detailed analysis reveals that Chou's compositional approach is highly selective, focusing on the adoption of 'high brow' elements from China's music tradition in order

[131] Chou Wen-chung, "*Wenren* and Culture," in *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, ed. Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 208.
[132] Chou, "Whither Chinese Composers?" 504.

to create the semblance of an unbroken music tradition, thereby authenticating his invented tradition. It is important to recognize that although Chou's tradition of musical synthesis is an invention of his own design, this fact does not undermine the remarkable value of Chou's compositional and philosophical innovations to the area of compositional synthesis. This section serves to fill a gap in existing music scholarship and criticism by outlining the 'high brow' factors Chou has utilized in order to authenticate his invented tradition and some of the inconsistencies inherent in Chou's self-presentations.

According to the Chou's own translation of the 1642 CE Chou family genealogical record, Changzhou branch (revised in 1879 CE), Chou's family line is linked without gap to Zhou Dunyi (1017-1073 CE), one the most important philosophers of the Song Dynasty (960-1279 CE).[133] Through this document, Chou goes on to trace his family ancestry to the Zhou Dynasty (1027-256/255 BCE) via Zhou Dunyi's lineage.[134] Chou's presentation of his family lineage not only emphasizes its continuity and historic roots, it also serves to underscore Chou's knowledge of the Confucian literati's classical arts. Chou bolsters these claims by also making reference to more immediate family participation in the Chinese civil service. Chou's grandfather, Chou Xue-Qiao (1870-1910 CE), was a member of China's last generation of the traditional scholar elite. However, there are some indiscrepancies concerning Chou Xue-Qiao's status. According to Chou, his grandfather did not have to take the local civil-service exam since he was recommended for his scholarly aptitude as a *bing gong sheng*, which Chou describes as the scholarly title for the highest degree candidate to study at the Imperial Academy in

[133] Chang, *Chou Wen-Chung,* 11.
[134] The details of Chou's asserted ancestry can be obtained from the second chapter of Peter Chang's *Chou Wen-Chung*, pages 11-15. Chang bases his information from personal correspondence with Chou, dated April 19, 2004.

Beijing.[135] Chou offers further accolades by declaring that Chou Xue-Qiao had the opportunity to take the *jinshi* exam at the time of graduation, but refused to take the exam or to become an official due to his resentment towards the Manchus.[136] Instead, he remained at the community level, performing various services for local residents. Although Chou Xue-Qiao was a *gong sheng*, a degree holder of prestigious standing, he was not as prestigious as Chou implies. A *gong sheng* is a holder of the first degree of the civil examinations at the county level, who were chosen for further studies at the Imperial Academy or for eventual minor official appointment.[137] Furthermore, Chou Xue-Qiao's status as a *gong sheng* would not have allowed him to pursue the *jinshi* degree immediately. A *gong sheng* would first have to pass the provincial level examinations in order to be awarded the *juren* degree. Only then would a student be permitted to participate in the metropolitan exams. Although Chou Xue-Qiao was a degree holder, he was not an active official, nor one of pre-eminent standing, such as the members of the prestigious Hanlin academy and *jinshi* degree holders. Chou Xue-Qiao was an average member of the Confucian literati. Although a closer examination of Chou Xue-Qiao's status in the Confucian bureaucracy contrasts with the picture Chou Wen-chung creates, it is clear that Chou's efforts to trace his ancestry to members of the Confucian elite, including the pre-eminent Zhou Dunyi and the rulers of the Zhou Dynasty, is an effective method for establishing historicity for his invented tradition.[138]

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[135] A letter to Chou from the Xun Yaping of the Municipal Library of Changzhou referencing to *Cultural and Historical documents of Changzhou*, book 9, edited by the Cultural and Historical Research Committee of the Commission for Changzhou, Jiangsu Province: People's Political Consultation Council of China, December 1989; in Chang, *Chou Wen-Chung*, 12.
[136] Chang, *Chou Wen-Chung*, 12.
[137] Ping-Ti Ho, *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China: Aspects of Social Mobility, 1368-1911* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 27.
[138] Chou asserts that his family history extends back to the youngest son of King Ping (eighth century BCE) of the Zhou dynasty. Chang, *Chou Wen-Chung*, 11.

Chou further supports his artistic connection with his grandfather and the Confucian elite by highlighting the similarities between his compositional synthesis and the cultural reforms that his grandfather supported. Chou Xue-Qiao supported reformers who desired to revitalize Qing culture and society through the incorporation of Western technology and synthesizing Chinese and Western cultures' strongest attributes. More specifically, Chou Xue-Qiao was among the very first to advocate the synthesis of Western and Chinese medical sciences. According to Chou, his grandfather used to say,

> For medical treatment, I would advocate the use of Western equipment. For prescriptions, I would advocate the use of Chinese traditional prescriptions. Whenever there is an emergency, where Chinese medicine does not serve the purpose, Western medicine should be used.[139]

By drawing connections between Chou Xue-Qiao's support of intercultural synthesis and Chou's own works, Chou Wen-chung implies that his intercultural synthesis has a familial basis, thus further authenticating his compositional tradition.

Besides Chou's grandfather, Chou refers to his father, Chou Miao (1891-1987 CE), as also having a tremendous influence on his compositional development. Too young to be a member of the Confucian literati, Chou Miao graduated the top of his class from *Longmen Shuyuan* in Suzhou (the equivalent of a college), which was a famous traditional Chinese academy.[140] Chou claims that his father was a master of many subjects, including Western business practices, Chinese classical literature and poetry, and most notably, the *Yijing* (The Book of Changes). Peter Chang asserts that Chou's interest in the *Yijing* owes much to his father.[141] Chang goes on to say that Chou's lineage with the Chinese intelligentsia resulted in his mastery of Chinese classical arts, including

[139] Letter to Chou Wen-chung from Xun Yaping of the Municipal Library of Changzhou (translated by Chou Wen-chung), in Chang, *Chou Wen-Chung,* 13.
[140] Chang, *Chou Wen-Chung*, 14-15.
[141] Chang, "Chou-Wen-chung's Cross-Cultural Experience and His Musical Synthesis," 96.

poetry and calligraphy, and a strong knowledge of the Chinese Classics while he was still a child.[142] It is difficult to ascertain Chou Miao's degree of understanding of the Chinese classical arts and the extent to which he influenced his son. What is clear is that during Chou Wen-chung's education in America, he deemed his understanding of Chinese traditional music and its underlying artistic aesthetics to be insufficient and requiring further study. Chou's investigation of Chinese artistic aesthetics and philosophies would serve as another opportunity for Chou to assert his invented tradition's legitimacy.

Chou Wen-chung has cited the Chinese Classics on several occasions in order to substantiate his compositional aesthetics and philosophies. His inclusion of the Chinese Classics works hand-in-hand with his efforts to draw attention to his family lineage to create a sense of continuity between his invented music tradition and the 'high brow' beliefs and practices of the Confucian elite. In particular, Chou references the *Yue Ji* (The Record of Music), chapter 19 of the Confucian Classic *Liji* (Classic of Rites), in order to support his pivotal philosophy 'Each Tone Is a Musical Entity.' Chou contends that each musical tone is recognized by the Chinese as being an acoustical phenomenon involving both pitch and timbre, which has its own inherent expressive qualities and is capable of evoking poetry or sonic beauty all by itself.[143] This concept is manifested in its great emphasis on the production and control of tones, which often involves a complex vocabulary of articulations, modifications in timbre, inflections in pitch, fluctuations in intensity, vibratos, and tremolos.[144] Chou asserts that the meaning of music lies intrinsically within the tones themselves, and that the maximum expressiveness of a piece

[142] Chang, "Chou-Wen-chung's Cross-Cultural Experience and His Musical Synthesis," 95-96.
[143] Chou Wen-chung, "Asian Esthetics and World Music," in *New Music in the Orient: Essays on Composition in Asian since World War II*, ed. Harrison Ryker (Buren, The Netherlands: Frits Knuf Publishers, 1991), 181.
[144] Chou, "Asian Concepts and Twentieth Century Western Composers," 214, 216.

can be derived from a succession of tones without resorting to extraneous procedures.[145] Furthermore, Chou references the *Yue Ji* in order to authenticate his central philosophy 'Each Tone is a Musical Entity,'

> According to the Confucian classic, Yüeh Chi (Record of Music): Tones are the "image", or substance, of music; melody and rhythm are the "ornament", or appearance, of tones; therefore one must contemplate sound to know tones, and contemplate tones to know music. It is further stated that the greatness of music lies not in perfection of artistry but in the attainment of *te*—a term which is often translated as "virtue" or "spiritual power" but should be understood as referring to "that by which things are what they are". In other words, the emphasis is on the single tones and their natural virtue or power by which these tones are what they are. Thus, music is sound, and sound is "living matter."[146]

Chou does not directly quote the *Yue Ji*, but he clearly bases his statements on Section 37 I, 8, which is the only section of the *Yue Ji* that expounds directly on the importance of tones in Chinese music. This section states,

> In order to understand this, one has to know the tones. This knowledge enables one to discern the melodies. One has to know the melodies in order to comprehend music, and music in order to discern and guide (the nature of) government. If we are aware of these things we approach correct order. Whoever does not understand the tones, cannot discuss melodies, and whoever is ignorant of melodies cannot know music. (Only) he who understands music will know the rules and secrets of ceremony. He who understands ceremony and music can be called virtuous. Virtue manifests the realization of the perfect in one's self.[147]

Although the *Yue Ji* points to the historical importance of single tones in Chinese music, the *Yue Ji* does not deal with technical matters, rather, it concentrates on the general significance of music in ancient China, which is to unify the minds of the people and to create proper order in the land.[148] Tones are significant in the *Yue Ji* because they allow individuals to understand the nature of government, which enables them to attain virtue.

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[145] Chou, "Towards a Re-Merger in Music," 310-11.
[146] Chou, "East and West, Old and New," 19-20.
[147] *Yue Ji* 37I, 8 in Walter Kaufmann, *Musical References in the Chinese Classics* (Detroit: information Coordinators, Inc., 1976), 33.
[148] *Yue Ji* 37I, 3 in Kaufmann, *Music References in the Chinese Classics*, 32.

It is apparent that the *Yue Ji*'s explanations of the importance of tones in Chinese music does not directly correspond to Chou's interpretation that individual tones are sonic events unto themselves, akin to the Varèsean concept of 'sound as living matter.' Therefore Chou's interpretations of the *Yue Ji* is inconsistent with the *Yue Ji*'s underlying meaning that music leads to the understanding of governance and to the ordering of the world. Inconsistencies in Chou's interpretation of the text are understandable considering that classical Chinese is notoriously allusive and elusive, making it difficult to translate. Despite these inconsistencies, Chou's endeavours to create continuity between his compositional philosophy and the inherent philosophies of the *Yue Ji* serve to authenticate his invented tradition of compositional synthesis.

Chou Wen-chung further attempts to establish the validity of his invented tradition by incorporating the Confucian elite's artistic aesthetics and philosophies, which is exemplified in Chou's assimilation of *wenren* artistic aesthetics. This is significant in several ways. The roots of the *wenren* tradition dates back to the 8th c. BCE, whereby study of the *qin* was one of the four compulsory courses taught in ancient China.[149] By aligning himself with this ancient musical tradition, Chou attempts to create historicity to his newly invented tradition. Confucian education focused on aesthetic exposition rather than on practical implementation. Confucius expounded in the *Yue Ji* that an understanding of music was essential to guiding the government.[150] Thus, holding imperial office was a symbol of high culture, thereby, aligning the highest cultural values with the highest social power.[151] This education focused on an amateur understanding of

[149] Shen Sin-yan, *Chinese Music in the 20th Century* (Chicago: Chinese Music Society of North America, 2001), 135.
[150] *Yue Ji* 37I, 8 in Walter Kaufmann, *Musical References in the Chinese Classics*, 33.
[151] Levenson, "The Amateur Ideal in Ming and Early Ch'ing Society: Evidence from Paintings," 322.

diverse subject matter, which was intended to prevent the *wenren*'s personality from becoming impoverished by specialization.[152] Consequently, the *wenren* were accomplished in *qin*, poetry, painting, calligraphy, and conversation.[153] Chou endeavours to create the semblance of a continuous tradition between his works and those of the Confucian past by incorporating the Chinese classical arts and their artistic aesthetics into his compositions. This is most clearly seen in his efforts to evoke Chinese painting and calligraphy in his compositions.

Although Chou has been selective in incorporating 'high brow' artistic philosophies and aesthetics typical of the Confucian elite, it is curious that Chou does not acknowledge the most apparent commonality underlying his compositional practices and the *wenren* artistic aesthetic in order to further authenticate his invented tradition: experiments with syncretism. *Wenren* experimentation with syncretism dates back to the late Ming to the early Qing Dynasties (1368-1644 CE; and 1644-1911 CE, respectively), when China's scholarly-elite viewed syncretism not as a source of artistic sterility, but as a fascinating source of new and innovative compositional techniques that were incorporated readily into their works.[154] This is seen especially in painting, where Ming and Qing syncretists employed this eclectic spirit to piece together a variety of techniques that had previously existed in isolation and combined them in order to transcend the subject of the painting itself. It became a virtue for *wenren* artists to avoid any style commitment, instead, all styles were available for expression:

[152] Levenson, "The Amateur Ideal in Ming and Early Ch'ing Society: Evidence from Paintings," 340; and Étienne Balázs, "Les aspects significatifs de la société chinoise," *Asiatische Studien*, VI (1952), 84; in Levenson's "The Amateur Ideal in Ming and Early Ch'ing Society: Evidence from Paintings," 321.
[153] Kenneth Dewoskin in Chang, *Chou Wen-Chung,* 3.
[154] Levenson, "The Amateur Ideal in Ming and Early Ch'ing Society: Evidence from Paintings," 337.

> When the painter's emphasis was on fidelity to models instead of fidelity to vision—which is what moved the men who created the models—there was no stylistic, aesthetic reason why various techniques developed in the past could not be mixed. And so the modern painter could throw everything into the pot, all the technical elements devised by men who had been aesthetically serious, committed to some end behind their technical means. By late Ming times, the end of the approved painter was the demonstration of his mastery of means. Style became a counter in an artist's game of self-display, while gentry-literati-officials and their set were the self-appreciative happy few who recognized the rules and knew the esoterica.[155]

In terms of the Ming court, music subcultures interacted with one another, including *wenren* music, religious music, and commoner music. From the vantage point of political, social, and artistic prestige, the Ming court was able to appropriate musics and musicians from the other music subcultures as often and much as needed.[156] It is possible that Chou overlooked these connections because of the *wenren*'s eclectic incorporation of artistic techniques and styles from 'low brow' subcultures, which is a practice foreign to Chou Wen-chung's decidedly 'high brow' and selective tradition of musical synthesis. Nonetheless, examples of musical borrowings and efforts towards syncretism are found not only in Chou's compositional approach, but are intrinsic to the *wenren* artistic aesthetic as well.

The final point Chou Wen-chung uses in order to substantiate his invented tradition is through his study and incorporation of *qin* tablature and artistic aesthetics. It is no surprise that Chou selected the *qin* as his source of inspiration and study, as the *qin* functions as a vehicle for providing historical authenticity to Chou's philosophy 'Each Tone is a Musical Entity.' No other Chinese instrument is as well established as the *qin.* The instrument has existed with construction similar to today since at least 200 BCE, and

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[155] Levenson, "The Amateur Ideal in Ming and Early Ch'ing Society: Evidence from Paintings," 338.
[156] Joseph S.C. Lam, "Imperial Agency in Ming Music Culture," in *Culture, Courtiers, and Competition: The Ming Court (1368-1644),* ed., David M. Robinson (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 275.

its predecessors exhibiting the same basic features date as far back as the Zhou Dynasty (1122-221 BCE). Musicologist Bell Yung asserts that while many instruments in the world are as old, few can claim the continuity of the *qin* tradition.[157] Furthermore, no other Chinese instrument has preserved such an extensive repertory in notational form as the *qin.* Employing *qin* tablature and performance techniques as the backbone of his compositional aesthetic, Chou strives to create continuity and historicity between his invented tradition with the supposed unbroken tradition of the Chinese *qin*. Moreover, Chou Wen-chung's interest in the *qin* is more than likely due to the *qin*'s intimate association with the Confucian literati, or *wenren*, "No other instrument and music are so closely identified with the refinement and sophistication of this social class."[158] According to Chou, the *qin*'s subtlety and variety of timbre remained a source of literary and spiritual inspiration, as well as an important measure of a *wenren*'s overall scholarly accomplishment, until the end of the Confucian era.[159] Chou's efforts to draw connections between his compositional approach and the *qin*'s artistic aesthetics serve to reinforce his self-presentations as a descendent of the Confucian literati and as a preserver of the *wenren*'s artistic philosophies.

In addition, Chou attempts to reinforce the significance of his connections with the Confucian elite by declaring *qin* music as "the most characteristic of Chinese music."[160] However, this statement is inconsistent with China's instrumental tradition, and instead points to Chou's 'high brow' selectiveness in order to further authenticate his invented tradition. The *qin* is not the only instrumental tradition that can inspire an

[157] Yung, "Music of the *Qin*," 11.
[158] Yung, "Music of the *Qin*," 11.
[159] Chang, "Chou-Wen-chung's Cross-Cultural Experience and His Musical Synthesis," 106.
[160] Chou, "Towards a Re-Merger in Music," 312.

effective compositional synthesis. Chou's selection of the *qin* as a source of compositional inspiration and study is inextricably linked to its position as a marker of the elite. According to Bell Yung, "no other music is further removed from the 'masses' than that of *qin.*"[161] Although *qin* music became an elitist genre among the Ming literati, including the creation of exquisite compositions and the production of academic anthologies of notated music, theories, histories, and performance instructions, *qin* music remains only a single example of court music.[162] The Ming court's musical culture was actually a complex of distinctive but closely interrelated subcultures, including the court (*gongting*), the literati (*wenren*), religious *(simiao*), and commoner (*minjian*), "Each subculture was distinctive insofar as it manifested itself through particular sets of patrons, musicians, institutions, repertories, musical instruments, aesthetics, transmission processes, performance practices, venues, and other historically, culturally, and physically defined elements."[163] No one subculture defined the court's musical culture, although there was great movement between the subcultures in terms of musical agents, thoughts, practices, and products. Each subculture shared a variety of elements with one another, thereby preventing any single element from defining a particular musical subculture.[164] By drawing inspiration from the terminology and artistic aesthetic of the *qin*, Chou is only referencing the music of a single subculture. Therefore, it would be contrary to China's instrumental tradition to consider the *qin* as the most characteristic of Chinese instruments. Moreover, it can also be suggested that there are other instrumental philosophies and aesthetics apart from the *qin* tradition that are suitable for compositional

[161] Yung, "Music of the *Qin*," 18.
[162] Lam, "Imperial Agency in Ming Music Culture," 313.
[163] Lam, "Imperial Agency in Ming Music Culture," 273-74.
[164] Lam, "Imperial Agency in Ming Music Culture," 274.

synthesis. The fact that Chou Wen-chung has selected the *qin* as his instrument of study from China's wide variety of instrumental traditions, Chou draws attention to his underlying desire to create a 'high brow' tradition of musical synthesis, as well as a means for authenticating his invented tradition.

Conclusion: Questions Implicit in Chou's Compositional Philosophy

It is clear that Chou Wen-chung has created a remarkably significant and innovative musical synthesis through the selection and incorporation of distinctly 'high brow' artistic aesthetics and philosophies typical of China's Confucian elite. However, music scholars and critics have largely overlooked the primary reasons behind Chou's critical success. Chou has been able to invent a tradition of musical synthesis by creating an artistic and historic continuity with the artistic principles inherent in China's music tradition extending back to the Zhou Dynasty. Although Chou's self-presentations have been strongly influential, some inconsistencies and peculiarities exist, including his focus on only a single subculture of Ming court music and his preoccupation with the artistic aesthetics and philosophies of the Confucian elite. These elements bring into focus Chou's distinctly 'high brow' and selective tradition of compositional synthesis. Although Chou began vocalizing his approach early on in academic articles, keynote speeches and interviews, which were further disseminated through the works of music critics and scholars, Chou made efforts to remodel his compositional method as an established music tradition with his return to China in 1978 and the subsequent creation of the New Wave movement. The inconsistencies present in Chou's invented tradition became problematic when Chou Wen-chung began disseminating his compositional method among New Wave composers and the greater international music community,

asserting that his compositional approach is the ideal process for creating works of intercultural synthesis. Chou's selective and 'high brow' traditional of musical synthesis became problematic when he used it to critique New Wave works, which tend to exhibit a more eclectic, less rigorous and 'low brow' compositional approach. Consequently, questions implicit in Chou's compositional method are also applicable to the works of New Wave composers: How closely does Chou Wen-chung's compositional approach, as well as the approach of his students, reflect his ideals concerning compositional synthesis? Do these intercultural composers possess an adequate understanding of China's musical tradition in order to create effective works of musical synthesis? Is a complete and accurate understanding of China's musical tradition necessary to create effective and innovative works of intercultural synthesis? What value do Chou Wen-chung's compositions and the ensuing works of New Wave composers have in the development of an intercultural music tradition? And must the compositions of Chou's student directly reflect Chou's compositional method in order to have cultural value? The following chapter will explore these questions and Chou Wen-chung's role as a disseminator of musical tradition.

CHAPTER 2: CHOU WEN-CHUNG'S RETURN TO CHINA AND THE CREATION OF THE NEW WAVE

"In today's commercially oriented 'world music' environment, there is an urgent need for Chinese composers to acquire an intimate knowledge of their own cultural heritage in order to contribute meaningfully and on equal terms with the West towards a true confluence of musical cultures."[165]

Although Chou Wen-chung's compositional philosophy and artistic aesthetic represents a unique and innovative means for compositional synthesis, his approach became problematic when he began disseminating his ideals. Chou returned to China in 1978 and initiated the New Wave movement by inspiring a new generation of Chinese composers who were in need of artistic direction with his innovative method of compositional synthesis. Many of the most prominent members of the New Wave would become Chou's graduate students at Columbia University, which allowed him to pass on his compositional philosophies and artistic aesthetics directly. Up until this point, Chou attempted to authenticate his method of compositional synthesis by creating an artificial continuity between his compositional methods and those inherent in traditional Chinese music. Furthermore, Chou has endeavoured to transform his compositional method into an established music tradition by inspiring a new generation of Chinese composers to adopt his compositional principles and philosophies.

As the previous chapter illustrated, Chou's tradition of compositional synthesis presents some inconsistencies and peculiarities while endeavoring to create historical authenticity by forging continuity with China's Confucian past. Despite Chou Wen-chung's influence on New Wave composers, which have resulted in innovative works of compositional synthesis, Chou asserts that these composers are succumbing to the lures

[165] Chou Wen-chung, "Whither Chinese Composers?" *Contemporary Music Review* 26, no. 5/6 (2007): 501.

of commodification and *chinoiserie*. Furthermore, Chou criticizes New Wave composers of failing to understand their native musical tradition, thereby inhibiting a genuine musical synthesis. Chou's collection of criteria from which to judge other works of compositional synthesis is problematic. On the one hand, Chou uses his method of compositional synthesis to inspire and revitalize Chinese music, and on the other hand, Chou uses his selective and 'high brow' approach to compositional synthesis as a means to analyze and critique New Wave composers when their methods of compositional synthesis do not directly reflect his own. This chapter will make clear how Chou Wen-chung's selection of 'high brow' Chinese artistic elements and philosophies can limit the creativity of other intercultural composers who utilize a more eclectic and 'low brow,' but no less valid, approach to compositional synthesis. Furthermore, this chapter will illustrate that despite inconsistencies within a compositional tradition and a partial understanding of the Chinese classical music tradition, effective and valid methods of compositional synthesis can still result. In conclusion, I will argue that both 'high brow' and 'low brow' approaches to compositional synthesis are valuable methods of intercultural composition, which have allowed both Chou Wen-chung and New Wave composers to produce significant works of intercultural synthesis that have stimulated the further development of both Western and Chinese music.

The Center for U.S.—China Arts Exchange

Chou Wen-chung began making a conscious effort to disseminate his compositional ideals when he discovered a lack of direction among Chinese composers. In 1966, Chou first applied to return to China, but failed to receive a visa due to the onset of the Cultural Revolution. In December 1972, Chou was finally able to make his first

trip back to China shortly after Richard Nixon's historic visit, making him the first composer from the United States to do so.[166] Chou determined that a dialogue was needed between Chinese and Western artists in order to rectify the inadequacies of their modern education, particularly as a result of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976),

> Since they have been unable to read or study, Chinese artists tend to be a bit superficial; there's no way for them to be selective. They are really copying other people and they think that they are being very genuine and original. We feel that it is important for them to be more intellectual about it.[167]

Consequently, Chou became a delegate of the Board of National Committee on US-China Relations to the People's Republic of China from 1977 to 1980 to negotiate future arts exchanges.[168]

In 1978 Chou made the historic visit to the Central Conservatory of Music (*Zhongyang yinyue xueyuan*) in Beijing and changed the course of contemporary Chinese music. With the support of Beijing's Central Conservatory of Music, Chou established the Center for U.S.-China Arts Exchange in October of 1978 to "support Chinese intellectuals and artists, so that they can regain their historical position as leader of the society. In order to do that, they must modernize themselves."[169] The Center's mission also encompassed educating Western artists on China's artistic mentality and cultural background, and how these aspects are significant in the development of contemporary Western music culture.[170] The Center stimulated arts exchanges between the Chinese Conservatory of Music and Columbia University, which at the time was the only

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[166] Peter Chang, *Chou Wen-chung: The Life and Work of a Contemporary Chinese-Born American Composer* (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2006): 39-40.
[167] Chou Wen-chung in Robert Kyr, *Searching for the Essential and Between the Mind and the Ear: Finding the Perfect Balance: Interviews with Earl Kim and Chou Wen-chung* (Boston: League-ISCM, April 1990), 26.
[168] Chou Wen-chung, "'Other Professional Activities,' in *Chou Wen-chung's curriculum vitae,"* http://www.chouwenchung.org/biography/cv_p3.php, (accessed June 30, 2011).
[169] Chou Wen-chung in Kyr, *Searching for the Essential and Between the Mind and the Ear*, 25.
[170] Chou Wen-chung in Kyr, *Searching for the Essential and Between the Mind and the Ear*, 25.

nationwide agency of its kind between the two nations.[171] The Center featured an exchange of musical materials, including a great number of Western scores and recordings, followed by the exchange of personnel, including artists, teachers, theorists, and performers. The Center tried to create a deeper and more lasting impact by supporting projects such the touring production of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* and producing the documentary, *From Mao to Mozart: Isaac Stern in China* (1981). Most importantly, the Center invited some of China's most talented artists to the West. Beginning in the 1980s, Chou invited some of China's most promising composers to study under him at Columbia University, "Especially someone like Tan Dun. I recognized their talents, so I brought them out one by one."[172] According to Chou, his desire to create musical exchange was so great that he obtained funding for each of these Chinese composers, sometimes even contributing his own personal funds.[173] Among the most famous of this new generation of Chinese composers were Chou's doctoral students, including Chen Yi, Zhou Long, Bright Sheng, and Tan Dun.[174] New Wave composers were inspired by Chou's innovative artistic aesthetic, and as a result, made great contributions to the area of intercultural synthesis in music.

The Receptivity of Chinese Composers: The Aftermath of the Cultural Revolution

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[171] David Ewen, *American Composers A Biographical Dictionary* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1982): 130; and Chou Wen-chung in Kyr, *Searching for the Essential and Between the Mind and the Ear*, 25.
[172] Chou Wen-chung in Preston Wright, "An interview with Chou Wen Chung," in *American Mavericks* (American Public Media, with Philip Blackburn, American Composers Forum, July 2002), http://musicmavericks.publicradio.org/features/interview_chung.html, (Accessed July 13).
[173] Chou Wen-chung in Wright, "An interview with Chou Wen Chung."
[174] It is significant that the innovative artistic exchange has been created through Columbia University, because Columbia has a history of unique and supportive relationships with Chinese intellectuals. Beginning as soon as the early 20th century, Columbia has had a significant hand in inspiring and educating a host of Chinese intellectuals, many of which would go on to become prominent and influential leaders in Republican China.

The success of Chou Wen-chung's invented tradition of musical synthesis and its astonishing impact in China was made possible from the unique political and social circumstances surrounding Chinese composers. Eric Hobsbawm contends that an invention of tradition can be expected to occur more frequently when the rapid transformation of a society weakens or destroys the social patterns from which the 'old' traditions had been designed, thereby producing new patterns in which these 'old' traditions are no longer applicable.[175] Mao's increasingly restrictive and destructive policies concerning art and music production culminated with an artistic void among Chinese composers, who lost the ability to compose *l'art pour l'art*. From the end of the Second World War to the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), Chinese composers' exposure to modern music was restricted to Soviet composers. Chinese composers were required to create ideological works limited to the use of folk and ethnic materials, and the styles and techniques of 19th century Europe.[176] Mao Zedong's 1943 "Talks at the Yan'an Conference on Literature and Art" crystallized the audience, methodology, and purpose for all artistic production throughout the Maoist period, "The audience for works of literature and art here consists of workers, peasants, and soldiers, together with their cadres in the Party, the government, and the army."[177] Furthermore, "Art for art's sake—art that stands above class and party, and fellow-travelling or politically independent art do not exist in reality."[178] The restrictiveness faced by Chinese artists became catastrophic during the Cultural Revolution, where musical creativity became

[175] Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition,* ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 4.
[176] Chou, "Whither Chinese Composers?" 506.
[177] Bonnie S. McDougall, *Mao Zedong's "Talks at the Yan'an Conference on Literature and Art": A Translation of the 1943 Text with Commentary* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1980), 59-60.
[178] McDougall, *Mao Zedong's "Talks at the Yan'an Conference on Literature and Art*," 75.

negligible.[179] All Chinese music was replaced by the *geming yangbanxi*, the eight "model works" of music and drama, which were created to represent Mao's proletarian ideals. Up until 1976, only the eight model works were permitted for performance or study, and permeated the nation's collective consciousness.[180]

Mao's death and the subsequent end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976 created an historic situation that necessitated a new musical tradition to inspire and revitalize Chinese music. However, due to Jiang Qing's stiff control over artistic and musical production up until 1976, post-Cultural Revolution composers were at a loss as to how to produce new works independent of state regulations. Therefore, Chou Wen-chung's timely arrival in Beijing in 1977 was ideal for providing these composers with much needed direction. Chou supplied Chinese composers with a toolkit of compositional techniques and aesthetic principles that would allow them to overcome the superficial mixing of Chinese melody with Western harmony that was commonplace throughout the course of the 20th century. Eric Hobsbawm further explains the success of Chou's invented tradition, "plenty of political institutions, ideological movements and groups—not least in nationalism—were so unprecedented that even historic continuity had to be invented, for example by creating an ancient past beyond effective historical continuity either by semi-fiction or by forgery."[181] Hobsbawm's assertions are exemplified in the situation faced by Chinese composers in post-Maoist China. Chou Wen-chung's invented tradition of compositional synthesis was so groundbreaking in the midst of this cultural vacuum that it necessitated authentication. Chou was initially able to do this through the

[179] Li Huanzhi, "People's Republic of China," in *New Music in the Orient: Essays on Composition in Asian since World War II*, ed. Harrison Ryker (Buren, The Netherlands: Frits Knuf Publishers, 1991), 198.
[180] Sheila Melvin and Jindong Cai, *Rhapsody in Red: How Western Classical Music Became Chinese* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2004), 255.
[181] Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," 7.

construction and articulation of his *wenren* artistic approach, however, in disseminating his invented tradition among a new generation of Chinese composers, Chou was able to further validate his invented tradition. The final point that Hobsbawm puts forth in the invention of tradition is that invented traditions would not come into significance if they were unable to acquire significant social and political functions.[182] Chou's tradition of compositional synthesis gained social and political functions in becoming the symbol for artistic freedom among this new generation of Chinese composers.[183] Although Chou Wen-chung invented his tradition of musical synthesis, it was necessitated by the political and social circumstances surrounding Chinese composers at the close of the Cultural Revolution.

New Wave Success and Critical Acclaim

As a result of Chou Wen-chung's historic visit to China, for the first time in modern Chinese history, music overcame the traditional convention of *gongxing chuangzuo*, or "composition in a similar style," and progressed towards freedom of expression and individuality.[184] New Wave composers have rapidly developed their compositional techniques and approaches, achieving compositional syntheses with unprecedented sophistication. The international critical acclaim that New Wave composers are garnering reflects not only the significant impact Chou Wen-chung has had among Chinese composers, but also the growing authentication that his invented musical tradition is achieving. In the critical reception of New Wave works, Chou's

[182] Hobsbawm, conclusion to *The Invention of Tradition,* ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 307.
[183] Peter Chang, "Chou-Wen-chung's Cross-Cultural Experience and His Musical Synthesis: The Concept of Syncretism Revisited," *Asian Music* 32, no. 2 (2001): 113.
[184] Li Xiwei in Liu Jingzhi, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, trans. Caroline Mason (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2010), 511.

students from Columbia have received the bulk of the attention. This section will focus on the critical reception of Chen Yi and Tan Dun, who have become two of the most prominent examples of the New Wave's success in compositional synthesis.

Chen Yi is one of the greatest successes among New Wave composers, and her works have been celebrated both on the mainland and abroad. She has been praised for her ability to smoothly and colourfully merge the Chinese and Western musical traditions. Her impressive *oeuvre* features over 30 orchestral and symphonic choral works, over 30 chamber and solo pieces, and over 20 vocal pieces. Chen Yi was formally appointed Chair Professor of the Changjiang Scholars Award at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing in May 2006. Chen Yi had received many other honours and in 2005, she was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. She has also received numerous commissions from foundations, performing arts centres, symphony orchestras, universities and colleges, music and arts festivals in the United States, Germany, Switzerland, Hong Kong and Mainland China.[185] At the panel of the Charles Ives Living Award (of the American Academy of Arts and Letters), she was commended for her ability to smoothly and colourfully merge the influence of Western instrumentation with Chinese music.[186] Since 2006, Chen Yi has been a professor of composition at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance.

Tan Dun has become the representative figure of not only the New Wave, but also of all contemporary Chinese composers, and a household name in the international music community after winning the Oscar for Best Music for the film *Crouching tiger, hidden*

[185] Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, 644.
[186] Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China,* 644.

dragon (2000).[187] His compositional synthesis greatly surpasses those of other Chinese composers of previous generations through his use of vertical and horizontal textures, as well as his effective instrumentation and orchestration.[188] Although Tan exhibited pentatonic romanticism in his early years, he has since developed a strong individual style with a taste for modernism. He challenges audiences to experience music in new ways by creating a kaleidoscope of every-day sounds. The sounds of water, tearing of paper, clacking of stones, and exhaling of breath become instruments in Tan's pieces.[189] *Paper Concerto* (2003), *Water Concerto* (2003)*, Water Passion after Saint Matthew* (2000) and *Water Rock and Roll* (2008) embody this compositional aesthetic. Tan Dun continues to be recognized internationally, including within China and by the leading institutions of Western classical music, thereby indicating his success in bridging musical cultures. His recognition within the Western classical music community includes: the Grawemeyer Award, today's most prestigious prize for classical music, for his 1995 opera *Marco Polo,* the Glenn Gould International Protégé Award in Canada in 1996, the youngest recipient of the prestigious Suntory Prize Commission in 1993 from Toru Takemitsu, and numerous performances by the world's leading orchestras and opera houses, international festivals, and radio and television programs, including a commission for *2000 Today: a World Symphony for the Millennium* that was aired by over 55 major television networks worldwide.[190] However, his recognition in China best

[187] Liu Jingzhi, "Copying, Imitating and Transplanting: Three Stages in the Development of New Music in China," *Lingnan Journal of Chinese Studies,* New Series no. 1 (October 1999): 612; and Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, 645.
[188] Liu, "Copying, Imitating and Transplanting: Three Stages in the Development of New Music in China," 612.
[189] Mary Lou Humphrey, Notes to "Like a Zen Master," *Tan Dun: Snow in June* The Arditti String Quartet and Nieuw Ensemble perf. (CRI, CD 655 1993): 4.
[190] Guzelimian, Notes to "Tan Dun: Water Passion after Saint Matthew," *Tan Dun: Water Passion after Saint Matthew,"* Rias-Kammerchor Belin Perf. (Sony Classical, CD S2K 80027 2002), 18; and Onyx,

demonstrates Tan's success and compositional accessibility. Tan's *Symphony 1997: Heaven Earth Mankind* was commissioned for the international broadcast for the reunification of Hong Kong with China and was performed by cellist Yo-Yo Ma.[191] Furthermore, Tan's *Paper Concerto* and his arrangement of the folk song *Molihua* was performed before, during, and after each of the 302 medal ceremonies at the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008.[192]

Scholarly criticism regarding New Wave compositions has been mixed from the beginning, however, there is growing acceptance and praise as New Music continues to develop. At the national symphonic symposium for the Theory and Composition Committee of the Chinese Musician's Association held in Beijing on May 5, 1985, over 50 composers, music theorists, and conductors participated and assessed the influence of the New Wave on the future development of Chinese symphonies. Music historian Liang Maozhuen asserted that New Wave artists and their experimentation with new aesthetic tastes will stimulate the development of Chinese music and enable China to enter the world music scene.[193] Although some of the musicians at the conference believed that New Wave composers should only employ social realism, such as conductor Bian Zushan, many others supported the New Wave for opening a new path for the future of Chinese musical development. Today, scholarly reception towards the New Wave is even more optimistic. In the issue of *Contemporary Music Review* 26, no. 5/6 (2007), a collected group of scholars submitted papers on the most prominent New Wave

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Notes to "Tan Dun and Toru Takemitsu," *Tan Dun Pipa Concerto,* Wu Man, pipa, and Moscow Soloists (Onyx, CD 4027 2008), 4.

[191] Guzelimian, Notes to "Tan Dun: Water Passion after Saint Matthew," 18.

[192] Reiner E. Moritz, Notes to "Tan Dun: a traveller between East and West," *Marco Polo: An Opera Within An Opera,* The Netherlands Chamber Orchestra and Capella Amsterdam, perf. (Opus Arte, DVD OA 1010 D 2009; originally recorded in 2008), 10.

[193] Peter Chang, "Tan Dun's Strong Quartet 'Feng-Ya-Song': Some Ideological Issues," *Asian Music* 22, no. 2 (1991): 129.

composers indicating the success of the New Music and its promising future. Editor Edward Green, in his introduction "China and the West—The Birth of a New Music," insisted that New Music is "an emerging style of music that, while arising from the meeting of China and the West, is far more than just a superficial mingling of the two. It is a new thing entirely: a child of both cultures."[194] Just as jazz was once the superficial mixture of African and Western classical musical elements that over time gained sophistication and became an established form of new music, Green suggests that China's New Wave will undergo a similar method of experimentation, synthesis, and success, and will become a tradition in its own right.[195] Whether or not this will occur remains to be seen, however, the critical acclaim and international success of New Wave works indicates their growing significance.

Chou's Criticisms Concerning the New Wave

Although the success of the New Wave is largely the result of Chou Wen-chung's influential patronage of young Chinese composers, Chou strongly criticizes the compositional aesthetic of New Wave composers and their contributions to intercultural synthesis in music. It is important to note that Chou has not specifically named his students among the composers he is critiquing, but rather addresses the developments of the New Wave movement as a whole. Chou's views are problematic because his criticisms concerning New Wave composers are based on the selection of 'high brow' Chinese elements that provide the foundation for his invented tradition, which are not necessarily as applicable in addressing the significance of New Wave works that tend to

[194] Edward Green, "China and the West—The Birth of a New Music," in *Contemporary Music Review* 26, no. 5/6 (2007): 493-94.
[195] Green, "China and the West—The Birth of a New Music," 495.

incorporate a more eclectic and even 'low brow' selection of musical elements. Furthermore, Chou's 'high brow' music tradition is susceptible to some of the criticisms he applies to 'low brow' New Wave works. This section will examine Chou's criticisms concerning the New Wave's incorporation of artistic individualism, exoticism, and commodification, as well as their incomplete understanding of the Chinese classical arts and their underlying aesthetics. Then this section will investigate how these criticisms can also be applied to Chou's 'high brow' compositional approach in order to illustrate the inconsistencies inherent in both methods of compositional synthesis, and will then utilize the works of Tan Dun to illustrate how eclectic and 'low brow' approaches to compositional synthesis are valid alternatives to Chou Wen-chung's invented tradition in the development of intercultural music.

While musical individualism is a defining characteristic of Western composition, personal style is a revolutionary concept for Chinese composers. As a result of Chou Wen-chung's influence, New Wave composers have been able to create *l'art pour l'art*. Although Chou has encouraged Chinese composers to break from the confines of socialist-style composition, he is critical of New Wave compositions that employ a strongly individualistic style without the composers' comprehensive knowledge of their native musical tradition.[196] According to Chou, it is essential for New Wave composers to have a firm understanding of China's musical heritage in order to develop their own unique styles of composition, to stand firm against outside influences, and ultimately, to create works that successfully transcend cultural boundaries.[197] Chou has even asserted that these New Wave compositions are meaningless unless they are a part of the cultural

[196] Chou Wen-chung, "*Wenren* and Culture," in *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, ed. Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 208, 209.
[197] Chou, "*Wenren* and Culture," 211, 212.

flow from which they derive.[198] The solution that Chou Wen-chung presents for the supposed deterioration of Chinese composition is for New Wave composers to adopt his specific approach to intercultural compositional, which is based on *wenren* and *qin* artistic aesthetics. In doing so, Chou maintains that Chinese composers can obtain equal status and "cultural capital" as Western composers.[199]

In order to repair the deterioration of Chinese music, Chou declares in his 2007 article "Whither Chinese Composers?" that his *wenren* method of compositional synthesis is the solution of choice, "Today, more than a half century later, having followed Western composers without making any true contribution to music on their own, should Asian, or at least Chinese, composers not think of a revival of the *wenren* spirit?"[200] Despite Chou Wen-chung's assertions, not one of his students has fully embraced his compositional approach or comprehensive artistic aesthetic. Chou's students have largely kept silent about the influence he has had on their compositional development. Only Chen Yi has been candid about Chou's influence on the development of her career. In an interview with John de Clef Piñeiro, Chen Yi attributed Chou's guidance at Columbia as one of the greatest decisive factors behind her success in the West and compositional development by expanding her views towards melody writing and sonority design as they relate to dissonance.[201] In spite of Chou's influence, Chen Yi has not adopted his comprehensive artistic aesthetic, "I…don't like to imitate other composer's writing, and don't want to repeat myself either…If the music is unique and fresh, its gripping and compelling qualities will provide an inspiring experience to share

[198] Chou in Wright, "An interview with Chou Wen Chung."
[199] Chou, "*Wenren* and Culture," 220.
[200] Chou, "Whither Chinese Composers?" 504.
[201] John de Clef Piñeiro, "An Interview with Chen Yi," *New Music Connoisseur* (July 26, 2011), http://www.newmusicon.org/v9n4/v94chen_yi.htm, (Accessed July 28, 2011).

with my audience."[202] Chen Yi is representative of other New Wave composers, who are striving to create their own compositional style independent of Chou's teachings.

In spite of the limited influence Chou Wen-chung's invented tradition of compositional synthesis enjoys among Chinese composers, there are inherent problems in his conviction that New Wave composers can only produce sophisticated works of intercultural synthesis by adopting his *wenren* compositional aesthetic. First and foremost, Chou Wen-chung began disseminating his invented tradition in order to inspire and revitalize Chinese composition, yet Chou's tradition is composed of a selection of 'high brow' elements, which he uses as a set of criteria to assess and critique the growing individualism that is prevailing among the New Wave. Secondly, although Chou instigated this movement in Chinese composition, development and progress must be allowed in order for the movement to continue to be viable. According to musicologist Liu Jingzhi,

> Individual style, the essential quality that characterizes the New Wave, is the very factor that prevents the New Wave from fully embracing Zhou Wenzhong's compositional techniques and artistic aesthetic. Composer Chen Qigang believes that, the most essential step we need to take, if we want to establish a genuine modern Chinese culture, is to establish individual styles. These should not be Xian Xinghai's style, or Tan Dun's—every composer should have a style of his/her own. This, as everyone knows, is actually very very hard to achieve.[203]

Moreover, composer James L. McHard asserts that the incorporation of borrowed materials that have long since been created is neither original nor responsible. It is an artist's responsibility to pursue innovation, to be a leader, teacher, and motivator in order to stimulate the public to explore uncharted areas of our experiential world.[204] Therefore,

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[202] Chen Yi in Piñeiro, "An Interview with Chen Yi."
[203] Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, 540, citing Chen Qigang, "Guanyu xiandai yinyue," 42.
[204] James L. McHard, *The Future of Modern Music: A Philosophical Exploration of Modernist Music in the 20th Century and Beyond* (Livonia, Michigan: Iconic Press, 2008), 290.

it is unrealistic to limit the creativity New Wave composers to Chou Wen-chung's 'high brow' selection of compositional methods and procedures, and it is to their credit that New Wave composers are being recognized and critically acclaimed for their successful and eclectic experimentations and innovations in compositional synthesis.

Despite the great strides this new generation of Chinese composers has made, Chou Wen-chung believes that New Wave artistic methods are developing in an unhealthy direction. Chou condemns the tendency among New Wave composers to succumb to the lures of commercial success, "We have lost the memory of our culture. Creativity in the East is now equated with imitation of the West. Worse yet, commercialized entertainment in the West is mistaken for creative expression in the East, compounding the effect of loss of cultural memory."[205] In an interview with Robert Kyr, Chou asserts that one of the greatest misfortunes of New Wave commercialization is that these composers are unaware of its occurrence, "They are really copying other people and they think that they are being very genuine and original."[206] Chou's final point of contention regarding New Wave commercialization is that it has provoked contempt for, and misunderstanding of, non-Western cultures, particularly those habitually regarded as inferior or exotic.[207]

According to the American composer James L. McHard, the unfortunate "response of far too many composers has been to seek refuge from the public's wrath in styles that pander to the public's desire for entertainment, and comfort."[208] For many New Wave composers and Asian composers in general, this has manifested itself in their

[205] Chou, "*Wenren* and Culture," 215-216.
[206] Chou in Kyr, *Searching for the Essential and Between the Mind and the Ear*, 26.
[207] Chou, "Whither Chinese Composers?" 505.
[208] McHard, *The Future of Modern Music*, 290.

voluntary or involuntary capitalization on "Orientalized discourse for personal gain, privileging the categories [of Asian vs. Western] that they seek to transcend."[209] In order to reach a wider community, many New Wave composers are incorporating aspects of *chinoiserie*, or local colour, into their works, as exemplified in the works of Mahler and Ravel.[210] Chou describes compositional *chinoiserie* as analogous to 18th century *chinoiserie* export wares, with their juxtaposition of quaint decorations borrowed from both East and West.[211] Barbara Mittler, the German sinologist, has observed the clear portrayal of Western musical techniques in the works of the New Wave's most prominent composers. By incorporating some of the more prevalent styles of commercial composing, such as neo-Romanticism, minimalism, and other styles relegated to the halls of the past, and combining them with Chinese melodies, instruments, or other instances of 'local colour,' New Wave composers are creating works that illustrate *chinoiserie.* According to Mittler, several of Chou's students exhibit this tendency, for instance, Zhou Long's *Dong Shi Xiaopin* (Dong Shi knits her brows) shows traces of the early modernists compositional styles, particularly Stravinsky; Chen Yi's *Strings and percussion* is very reminiscent of Stravinsky's *Patrouchka*, Guo Wenjing's *Chuan diao* (Sichuan tune) is reminiscent of Prokofiev's work; and Tan Dun's works display a pentatonic romanticist style, using both Western Renaissance music and Chinese folk music in his opera *Marco Polo.*[212]

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[209] Yu Siu Wah, "Two Practices Confused in One Composition: Tan Dun's Symphony 1997: Heaven, Earth, Man," in *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, ed. Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 59.
[210] Harrison Ryker, introduction to *New Music in the Orient: Essays on Composition in Asian since World War II*, ed. Harrison Ryker (Buren, The Netherlands: Frits Knuf Publishers, 1991), 16.
[211] Chou, "Whither Chinese Composers?" 508.
[212] Barbara Mittler, *Dangerous Tunes: The Politics of Chinese Music in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China since 1949* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997), 138-39, 146-47, 150.

Chou Wen-chung's comments towards commodification in New Wave music are contradictory. On the one hand, Chou's anti-commercial sentiments are steeped in his preference for *wenren* culture, whereby Chinese scholar-officials, as amateurs, held great scorn against professional musicians and maintained that the proper artist is financially disinterested.[213] Mi Fu (1051-1107 CE), the famous Song artist who is the classical hero of the Ming amateur school, wrote, "In matters of calligraphy and painting, one is not to discuss price. The gentleman is hard to capture by money."[214] And on the other hand, Chou asserts, "there is no such thing as art alone, pure art. Therefore, art inevitably brings about pleasure, and that's entertainment."[215] In fact, in his interview with Bruce Duffie, Chou acknowledges that a lot of his work is commissioned based, which seems inconsistent with his anti-commercial sentiments towards the New Wave.[216] This conflict in musical reception is common among music practitioners and scholars from both East and West. According to composer James L. McHard, no matter how grounded a composer is in theoretical concepts, their works still need to be interesting and accessible.[217] The gravity of the situation that has characterized 20th century Western avant-garde music has been expounded on by composer Milton Babbitt, who maintained that avant-garde composition should withdraw from the public stage to the safety of academic institutions in order to continue its development and to re-emerge later when the public has progressed to the state where it is ready to receive and appreciate this

[213] Joseph R. Levenson, "The Amateur Ideal in Ming and Early Ch'ing Society: Evidence from Paintings," in *Chinese Thoughts and Institutions*, ed. John K. Fairbank (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 324.
[214] Levenson, "The Amateur Ideal in Ming and Early Ch'ing Society," 324.
[215] Chou Wen-chung in Bruce Duffie, *Composer Chou Wen-Chung: A Conversation with Bruce Duffie,* May 8, 1995, http://www.bruceduffie.com/chou2.html, (Accessed July 16, 2011).
[216] Chou Wen-chung in Duffie, *Composer Chou Wen-Chung: A Conversation with Bruce Duffie.*
[217] McHard, *The Future of Modern Music*, 301-2.

music.[218] In contrast, scholars such as Wei Tingge, in "Wuhan 'Qingnian zuoqujia xinzuo jiaoliuhui' zongshu" (Summary of the Wuhan 'Exchange meeting for young composers' new works), assert the importance of achieving a balance between *qugaohegua* (being too high brow to be popular) and *gufangzishang* (a lone soul enjoying his own purity).[219] The responsibility of the composer is to educate the public on the value of their contributions and to encourage the listener to embrace new compositional developments. It is in this manner that New Wave contributions are as significant as the contributions of Chou Wen-chung. By virtue of the media that they choose to compose for, New Wave composers have even greater opportunity for public exposure and appreciation than Chou's works. This is exemplified in the works of Tan Dun, who has composed works for a variety of media, including the film soundtracks for *Crouching tiger, hidden dragon* (2000) and *Hero* (2002), his revolutionary YouTube Symphony Orchestra Project titled, *Internet Symphony No. 1 "Eroica"* (2008), and the official music for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. Although New Wave composers' artistic philosophies may at times knowingly or unknowingly incorporate aspects of *chinoiserie* into their works and may not be as selectively 'high brow' or as well-articulated as Chou Wen-chung's compositional approach, New Wave methods of intercultural synthesis are being widely disseminated and critically appraised by a much greater and more diverse audience than ever before. For the first time in the history of intercultural music, New Wave compositions are gaining acceptance and dissemination outside of the realm of music specialists and are gaining popularity in more mainstream music cultures. This is integral

[218] Milton Babbitt, "Who Cares if You Listen?" (1958), quoted in Gilbert Chase, *The American Composer Speaks: A Historical Anthology, 1770-1965* (Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1966), 242.
[219] Wei Tingge in Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, 537.

to the propagation and prolongation of musical hybridity as an accepted tradition of musical composition.

Chou Wen-chung's final criticism concerning New Wave composers is that individual style, *chinoiserie*, and commodification that are characteristic of their works are all indicative of a greater problem: New Wave composers' lack of knowledge and understanding of traditional Chinese music and its underlying aesthetics. In Chou's paper "*Wenren* and Culture," Chou insists that successful works of intercultural synthesis can only be achieved if composers gain a sufficiently comprehensive understanding of their native music tradition, "The sharing of modern culture requires honest and genuine contribution, which can come only from roots that have been nurtured by cultural evolution and creative input over the centuries."[220] Furthermore, "Asian artists, who blindly emulate their Western colleagues, lose their own heritage, and throw away their own legacy. Are they not programmed to self-destruction?"[221] Thus, according to Chou, New Wave composers must be able to fully understand their own tradition before they can truly experiment with their compositional approach.[222] Moreover, the superficial mixing of musical traditions that is clearly prevalent in New Wave works can be avoided if these composers increase their knowledge of traditional Chinese music. According to music scholar Liu Jingzhi, a failure to do so not only hinders Chinese music's ability to modernise and sinicise new music, but the preservation of China's musical past and the further development of Chinese music will be impeded.[223] The works of New Wave composer Zhao Xiaosheng, as put forth by musicologist Harrison Ryker, exemplifies

[220] Chou, "*Wenren* and Culture," 213.
[221] Chou, "*Wenren* and Culture," 212.
[222] Chou Wen-chung in Duffie, *Composer Chou Wen-Chung: A Conversation with Bruce Duffie*.
[223] Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, 634-35.

Chou's criticisms. Zhao graduated from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music as a pianist, and has since become a successful composer. Zhao Xiaosheng's use of the *Yijing* as a method for compositional synthesis exemplifies Chou's assertions that New Wave composers' inadequate understanding of traditional Chinese music. Zhao has developed an intricate system of serialism based on the Chinese *Yijing,* culminating in his highly acclaimed piece *Taiji* (1998) for solo piano.[224] Although Chou has not directly commented on Zhao*,* Chou has been quite vocal about the works of American experimentalist composer John Cage, whose use of the *Yijing* 30 years prior strikingly parallels Zhao's method. In Chou's paper, "Asian Concepts and Twentieth Century Western Composers," Chou critiqued Cage's failure to take the *Yijing*'s text into consideration. According to Chou, Cage translated each hexagram into a pre-assigned musical value in order to create a "mystic aura of Orientalism," while ignoring the *Yijing's* underlying aesthetics.[225] According to Ryker, Zhao's *Taiji* is also guilty of superficially combining Chinese and Western compositional techniques, which has resulted in an orientalized reception of this work.

In addition, Chou asserts that the insufficiencies inherent in New Wave compositions not only includes a superficial understanding of Chinese musical aesthetics and philosophies, but also, there remains a significant lack of knowledge of China's own artistic heritage among the majority of Chinese composers in general, "Unfortunately their creations are individualistic in nature and made without the backing of a strong cultural foundation and knowledge, because their societies have been suspended in a void

[224] Ryker, introduction to *New Music in the Orient*, 25-26.
[225] Chou, "Asian Concepts and Twentieth Century Western Composers," *The Musical Quarterly* 57, no. 2 (1971): 224, 225.

for centuries."[226] With the end of China's imperial system, the Confucian education system was criticized for being insufficient in equipping the scholarly-elite with the specialized knowledge necessary for China's national defence. This meant "the end to 'aesthetic value' and the self-sufficiency of the bureaucratic Confucian 'princely man.'"[227] According to Chou, the Chinese Classics and histories have been removed from Chinese curricula at all levels of education, and only trained specialists are able to read these texts. He goes on to say that hardly anyone under the age of 70 can read publications in the original language.[228] Chou contends that this situation is detrimental to the development of New Wave composition,

> How can we expect creativity when Chinese arts, literature, philosophy, and even history are forsaken at the university and precollege levels? Without a fundamental curricular restructure, creativity will remain at the level of borrowing from others, in which aspiration, inspiration, and realization are either Western or westernized.[229]

Similarly, in an interview with Robert Kyr, Chou describes the tendency among New Wave artists to create rather superficial compositional syntheses. Without opportunities to read or study China's native music tradition, there is no way for these composers to be selective in their compositional choices.[230] Chou maintains that the only method for salvaging and preserving China's musical heritage is for Chinese composers to truly immerse and educate themselves in their literary and artistic traditions in order to create a more authentic musical synthesis between China and the West. Chou's opinions are supported by the work of scholar Liu Jingzhi, who contends that music should be learned in the same manner as language. Only after an individual learns their mother tongue do

[226] Chou, "*Wenren* and Culture," 208.
[227] Levenson, "The Amateur Ideal in Ming and Early Ch'ing Society," 340.
[228] Chou, "Whither Chinese Composers?" 508.
[229] Chou, "*Wenren* and Culture," 217.
[230] Chou in Kyr, *Searching for the Essential and Between the Mind and the Ear*, 26.

they then move on to learn a foreign language.[231] Nevertheless, as Chou offers a solution to this predicament, it becomes clear that Chou's 'high brow' preferences underlie his criticisms. It is with great hope and expectation that Chou believes his *wenren* method of compositional synthesis will provide New Wave composers with the means necessary to overcome their ignorance towards their native music tradition.[232] Chou justifies this belief by highlighting the responsibility all Chinese artists to be the conscience of Chinese society and culture, as well as the conveyers of their tradition's legacy.[233] However, in recommending his *wenren* method of compositional synthesis as the ideal solution for educating New Wave composers with an understanding of Chinese traditional music, Chou is only offering a 'high brow' approach to creating works of intercultural synthesis.

Despite Chou Wen-chung's criticisms towards the quality of New Wave compositions and their knowledge of China's music tradition, other composers and music scholars are far more optimistic, asserting that New Wave composers are assimilating a variety of artistic aesthetics in their compositions, resulting in innovative works of compositional synthesis. Although these composers have not whole-heartedly adopted Chou's compositional methods, many of these composers are taking an active role in preserving China's musical traditions and have utilized eclectic and 'low brow' approaches to compositional synthesis that have produced significant and sophisticated works that deserve further attention and discussion. Music scholar Ju Qihong remarks, "[these] representative figures in New Wave music are engaged in constant exploration and self-regulation, are starting to develop an approach of rational assimilation or

[231] Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, 634.
[232] Chou, "Whither Chinese Composers?" 504.
[233] Chou in Wright, "An interview with Chou Wen Chung;" and Chou, "*Wenren* and Culture," 214.

refection of the legacy of traditional aesthetics, so that their work is gradually maturing in aesthetic connotation."[234]

The works of Tan Dun and other New Wave composers may be more eclectic, commercial, and 'low brow' approach to composition that Chou Wen-chung's methods, but they are no less valid. The effectiveness of New Wave approaches in preserving China's musical tradition and utilizing extremely effective and significant compositional syntheses are exemplified in the efforts of Tan Dun. Tradition is the most powerful engine of creativity for Tan, and as a result, saving traditions and the environment has become Tan's most urgent and inventive work.[235] Tan is aware that traditional music worldwide is in the process of decay and is in danger of dying out. According to Tan, it would be shameful for these traditions to die out with our present generation, and as a result, he has made great effort to ensure the preservation and continuation of traditional Chinese music.[236] In Tan's interview with *Asian Society*, he outlines efforts to preserve traditional Chinese music through the creation of his 'Water Town Project.'[237] Tan has been able to collect over one hundred old and salvaged Shanghai homes, each of which is intended to be refurbished as an 'ancient music house.' Tan intends to place each music house in a different city with the intention of promoting, performing, researching, and lecturing on disappearing Chinese music traditions.[238] Moreover, Tan hopes this revolutionary project will disseminate in a similar fashion as the Starbucks and McDonald's franchises in hopes of preserving music traditions worldwide.

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[234] Ju Qihong's speech, "Jiaqiang dui 'xinchao' yinyue de meixue yanjiu" (Intensifying the aesthetic study of New Wave music) in Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China*, 513.
[235] An Interview with Tan Dun in "Tan Dun and Wenda Gu on China's Art Today (Complete)," In *Asia Society*, http://asiasociety.org/video/arts-culture/tan-dun-and-wenda-gu-chinas-art-today-complete, (Accessed Dec. 5, 2009).
[236] An interview with Tan Dun in "Tan Dun and Wenda Gu on China's Art Today."
[237] An interview with Tan Dun in "Tan Dun and Wenda Gu on China's Art Today."
[238] An interview with Tan Dun in "Tan Dun and Wenda Gu on China's Art Today."

In addition, Tan Dun also aims to create compositions that embody his preservationist ideals. Although Tan is not formally trained in the Chinese classical arts and does not incorporate the same selection of 'high brow' Chinese music aesthetics and philosophies as Chou, he is quite eclectic in incorporating numerous aspects of 'low brow' Chinese culture into his works, including aspects of nature, superstition, religion, and their underlying musical aesthetics, which have all derived from his formative years in China. Born in Simao, Hunan, Tan Dun was seduced by the sounds of ghost stories, operas, shamanistic music rituals, and other local traditions. However, the greatest of all these influences were water and nature. As his career matures, his pieces have become increasingly inspired by water. Hunanese monks told Tan the importance of water in his life, each time he returns to Hunan: "Just remember no more East, no more West. Just stay in the middle, with the water, always. Water is something permanent for you."[239] Tan is concerned with finding never-been-used-before sounds and blending them with the western orchestra. Tan also draws from the traditional Chinese belief of animism—the notion that material objects have spirits residing in them. Paper can talk to the violin, water can communicate with trees, and trees with the moon, and so on. The entire universe has a life and soul.[240] It is clear in Tan's works that a great diversity in inspiration is drawn from Chinese music, religion, and culture, and though he has not used Chou Wen-chung's distinctly 'high brow' and highly selective collection of Chinese music materials, aesthetics and philosophies, Tan Dun's compositional approach is equally as authentic and as significant in the development of intercultural synthesis.

[239] An interview with Tan Dun in "Tan Dun and Wenda Gu on China's Art Today."
[240] Keiko Manabe, Notes to "Tan Dun on *Tea* In Conversation with Keiko Manabe," *Tea: A Mirror of the Soul*, Bass–baritone Chorus of the Netherlands Opera and NHK Symphony Orchestra perf. (Deutsche Grammophon, DVD B0003851-09 2004): 11.

Although Chou Wen-chung has been highly critical of New Wave composers' supposedly insufficient knowledge China's musical tradition and its underlying artistic aesthetics, Chou's self-presentations concerning his knowledge of China's music tradition and underlying artistic aesthetics reveal some inconsistencies. In an interview with Bruce Duffie, Chou asserts that since he fled China in 1946 and arrived in America before the Communists gained power in China, Chou's incorporation of thoughts and ideas based on traditional Chinese artistic aesthetics remains untarnished since the centuries-long establishment of these philosophies.[241] Furthermore, Chou also asserts that, "my music is completely based on my studies of the Chinese tradition."[242] However, some questions arise concerning Chou's knowledge of Chinese traditional music. Chou's study of Chinese artistic aesthetics did not begin until 1955, when he, with the assistance of his professor Otto Luening, received a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation for the study of classical Chinese music,

> While most of my work was pursued through personal research, it also consisted of a two-year research program at Columbia University on a Rockefeller Foundation grant, 1955-1957, and a year as research associate and composer in the residence at the University of Illinois, 1958-1959. I benefited greatly from the excellent holdings of primary sources in Chinese at some libraries in this country, particularly that at Columbia. Subsequently, my research and fieldwork continued in tandem when I began to compose.[243]

Chou did not begin to study classical Chinese music until he was already a composer in America, and up until this point, Chou's musical education was heavily based on Western classical music.[244] Furthermore, in his paper *"Wenren* and Culture," Chou describes his

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[241] Chou Wen-chung in Duffie, *Composer Chou Wen-Chung: A Conversation with Bruce Duffie.*
[242] Chou in Kyr, *Searching for the Essential and Between the Mind and the Ear*, 19.
[243] Chou in Everett and Lau, *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, 259.
[244] According to Peter Chang's *Chou Wen-chung*, pp. 16-19, although Chou briefly studied the *erhu* while in Nanjing between 1932 and 1937, as well as dabbled in the *xiao* (vertical Chinese flute), Chou predominantly concentrated on his private violin lessons during his formative years in China. Chou began studying violin privately in 1931 at Jinling Junior Middle School. When the Chou family moved to

study of Asian music as a "lengthy period."[245] Chou's intense study of classical Chinese music with Rockefeller Foundation Grant and his residency at the University of Illinois are admirable, it occurred during a three-year period during 1955-1957 and 1958-1959. Although Chou continued his study after this period, his intense three-year study of classical Chinese music suggests some inconsistencies with his self-presentations concerning his education and understanding of traditional Chinese music. Furthermore, Chou was only able to access sources housed within the United States since contact between the United States and China was suspended at this time. Therefore, Chou's understanding of classical Chinese music has largely been gained through archival study, rather than from first-hand instrumental study through the traditional master-pupil relationship. This leads to questions concerning the depth of Chou's understanding of traditional Chinese music and how different Chou's depth of understanding is from that of New Wave composers. Perhaps the only factor that really differentiates Chou's and New Wave composers' understanding of traditional Chinese music is that Chou has focused on a more 'high brow' approach to studying Chinese compositional methods and artistic aesthetics, whereas New Wave composers have employed a more diverse approach that includes the study of 'low brow' Chinese compositional methods and aesthetics. One aspect that is clear is that Chou Wen-chung's self-presentations concerning his knowledge and study of Chinese traditional music and aesthetics are more clearly and frequently articulated than those of New Wave composers. These numerous self-presentations could be influenced by Chou's faculty position with Columbia

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Shanghai in 1937, Chou began taking violin lessons from Chen You-Xin and from Xu Wei-Ling, and later enrolled in the *Shanghai Yinyue Guan* ('Shanghai Music School') during his high school years. It is clear that his study of traditional Chinese music was minimal while on the mainland and that his study of Western classical music was his primary focus.

[245] Chou, "*Wenren* and Culture," 209.

University from 1964 until 1991, which would have necessitated frequent contributions to music scholarship.

Although Chou Wen-chung and New Wave composers have selected different aspects of the Chinese music tradition as foundation of the musical syntheses, both Chou's efforts and the efforts of New Wave composers are imperative to the growth of Chinese and Western musical cultures. As Chou said, "[the] time has arrived for an urgent coming together of all cultures, to evolve into the next cycle of human history."[246] The history of Chinese civilization has shown a pattern of continuity interspersed with short-term periods of discontinuity. For over two millennia Chinese culture was able to persist in the midst of numerous upheavals by incurring cultures, while rejuvenating its own legacy.[247]

The Exoticized Reception of Intercultural Works

One of the greatest difficulties that Chinese-born composers face is the reception of their works. Chou Wen-chung and New Wave composers' efforts to create a genuine musical synthesis is complicated by their incorporation of Chinese elements and artistic aesthetics that can be misinterpreted by Western and Chinese audiences as aspects of exoticism or even *chinoiserie*, "The very factor—exotic associations—that composers in recent decades have been so intent on disavowing can resurface the moment the work leaves his or her worktable and enters the push-and-pull of musical life."[248] A composer can only do so much to direct and constrain the reception of their works. However, in some instances, composers unknowingly encourage an exoticist reading of their works.

[246] Chou, "Whither Chinese Composers?" 506.
[247] Chou, "Whither Chinese Composers?" 503.
[248] Ralph P. Locke, *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 278.

While Chou Wen-chung acknowledges this occurrence in the works of New Wave composers, aspects of exoticism can also be seen in Chou's compositions as a result of his curious instrumentation. Despite Chou's passionate application and dissemination of Chinese artistic aesthetics and compositional practices, it is interesting that Chou chooses to limit his instrumentation to Western instruments and the Western symphony orchestra, having never once written a piece for a Chinese instrument,

> I believe culture is something continuous. You would not be here without your ancestors. Music is the same way…the orchestra is like the zither, Chinese *Qu-cheng* [sic]…It represents a major slice of the European heritage. That should not be denied, but there is no reason to put it in a museum…It should be kept alive."[249]

Although Chou is challenging himself to use Western instruments and the Western orchestra in novel ways, it is odd that he does not challenge himself to write for the *qin* or any other Chinese instrument, "I have learned from those instruments to find ways for structure in my music, but I really do not feel the need of using Chinese instruments. Decades ago, I did think of using Chinese instruments, but that would obviously limit the potentials of my pieces."[250] Chou has not elaborated on the limiting factor of Chinese instruments, but it is clear that he is concerned with the exotic connotations associated with incorporating Chinese instrumentation. Chou indicates that he is a multicultural composer and he does not want to limit himself to a particular audience, "Instead, I use the principles involved rather than the instrument itself."[251] In contradiction, Chou has in recent years chosen to compose for Korean instruments. Chou's *Eternal Pine* (2008) was commissioned by the Contemporary Music Ensemble Korea (CMEK) for the *gayageum* (a Korean zither-like instrument) master Yi Jiyoung and an ensemble of traditional

[249] Chou Wen-chung in Wright, "An interview with Chou Wen Chung."
[250] Chou Wen-chung in Duffie, *Composer Chou Wen-Chung: A Conversation with Bruce Duffie.*
[251] Chou Wen-chung in Wright, "An interview with Chou Wen Chung."

Korean instruments. The piece was intended to evoke the spirit of *chong ak* (ancient Korean chamber music).[252] Chou has not commented on this inconsistent choice of instrumentation in light of his self-presentations.

Despite Chou's avoidance of Chinese instruments, overt readings of Orientalism are clear in Chou's early works, such as *Three Folk Songs* for flute and harp (1950), *Landscapes* for orchestra (1949), and *Seven Poems of T'ang Dynasty* (1952). In the West, orientalist interpretations of these works, as well as his other works of the 1950s are likely due to his focus on pentatonicism in different guises, including transcriptions of ancient Chinese compositions for Western instruments and newly composed pentatonic themes.[253] These pieces incorporate pre-existing Chinese material, including the quotation of Chinese pentatonic melodies that convey a clearly "oriental flavour."[254] This compositional direction is the result of Nicholas Slonimsky's influence, who encouraged Chou to explore his Chinese roots. Slonimsky recognized that Mahler's legacy of Orientalism left no heir apparent among Western composers, yet Western audiences continued to express interest in orientalist works. Slonimsky believed that a continuation of Mahler's Orientalism would be the ideal way for Chou to succeed as a late-start composer.[255] Furthermore, many scholars agree that Chou's early critical success in the West is largely due to his *oeuvre*'s inherent Orientalism. In Zhao Qin's article, "Chou Wen-Chung: A Composer in Traditional Chinese Style" (1981), which comments on Chou's *All in the Spring Wind* (1952-1953) and *Soliloquy of a Bhiksuni* (1958), Zhao contends that Chou's ability to successfully synthesize Chinese and Western music

[252] Chou, *Chou Wen-chung*, http://www.chouwenchung.org/works/2008_eternal_pine.php, (Accessed October 24, 2011).
[253] Eric Lai, *The Music of Chou Wen-chung* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2009), 23.
[254] Lai, *The Music of Chou Wen-chung*, 23.
[255] Chang, *Chou Wen-chung*, 161.

traditions was due to the West's increasing fascination with oriental philosophy, music, and arts, as well as Chou's in-depth study of Chinese traditional arts and mastery of contemporary composition techniques.[256] For Western audiences, Chou's serene moods and vivid shimmering colours, in stark contrast with the Western avant-garde's powerfully dissonant works, offered an exotic escape.[257] Not only are Western audiences concerned with orientalizing Chou Wen-chung's works, but Chinese audiences as well. Chinese audiences orientalize Chou's works in order to place them within the Chinese musical tradition, "Chinese listeners are more concerned with degrees in which Chou's works resemble the sound tradition of Chinese instruments, particularly the *qin*, and the degree in which a traditional Chinese melody is recognizable."[258] Therefore, the Western appeal of Chou's works is in their exotic quality, which is also attractive to Chinese audiences for reviving and progressing their music tradition.

Although snatches of exotic colour are clear in Chou Wen-chung's early works, this is not the case with his later works. By the 1960s, Chou had completely abandoned his experiments with Chinese sounds and instead incorporated a philosophical approach in combining Chinese artistic aesthetics with Varèsean concepts of sound. Without the aid of program notes, it is difficult to determine that these works were composed by a Chinese composer. Despite Chou's efforts to avoid an orientalist or exoticist reading of his pieces through his choice of instruments, musical materials, and incorporation of Chinese artistic aesthetics, the very aesthetic principles that Chou employs evoke an oriental mood that audiences find attractive,

[256] Zhao Qin, "Chou Wen-chung: A Composer in Traditional Chinese Style," *Xin Xiang Yixun* [*New Trends in the Arts*] (December 20-26, 1981): 6-7; in Chang, *Chou Wen-chung,* 164.
[257] Chang, *Chou Wen-chung,* 206.
[258] Chang, *Chou Wen-chung*, 158.

> In concert and record reviews of Chou's works, it is evident that most Western audiences thought that the attractiveness of Chou's works was partly due to the composer's ability to evoke oriental mysticism and mood by employing traditional Chinese aesthetic principles, such as the emphasis on timbre from the *qin* music, the emphasis on control of the flow of ink from calligraphy, and the emphasis on characterization by simplest means from painting, and a Western fascination with oriental painting, poetry, and Debussyan orientalism.[259]

Music critic Alfred Frankenstein orientalizes Chou's incorporation of Chinese artistic aesthetics with phrases such as "melodic brushwork" and "full of the melancholy of Chinese poetry and mysticism that comes out so strongly in Sung Dynasty painting."[260] Other critics have included phrases such as "a tour de force of coloristic brushwork" and "the simplicity of Chinese scroll painting."[261]

Regardless of Chou's efforts to create works free of orientalist undertones, he is not able to completely control the reception of his works. The dissemination of Chou's work often result in their unintended exoticization by audiences and music critics, which is a common situation in the dissemination of intercultural works in general. The experiences of Toru Takemitsu (1930-1996), the pre-eminent avant-garde Japanese composer, are analogous to exoticized reception of Chou's works. Takemitsu has written considerable works of compositional synthesis. Although only a few of Takemitsu's pieces from his comprehensive *oeuvre* incorporate Japanese instruments, these are the works that have been most performed and acclaimed around the world.[262] In fact, "Takemitsu was almost systematically exoticized by the international musical

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[259] Chang, *Chou Wen-chung*, 157.
[260] Alfred Frankenstein in the score of Chou Wen-chung's *And the Fallen Petals: A Triolet for Orchestra,* New York: C.F. Peters Corporation, 1955; and H.H. Stuckenschmidt description of Chou's *All the Spring Wind* in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,* in Ewen, *American Composers A Biographical Dictionary*, 129.
[261] Nicholas Slonimsky's comments regarding *All the Spring Wind* in the *American Composers Bulletin, in* Ewen, *American Composers A Biographical Dictionary*, 128; and Harold Rogers in the score of Chou Wen-chung's *And the Fallen Petals: A Triolet for Orchestra,* New York: C.F. Peters Corporation, 1955.
[262] Peter Burt, *The Music of Toru Takemitsu* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 234; in Locke, *Musical Exoticism*, 294.

community."[263] However, Takemitsu appears to be more conscious of his exoticized reception than Chou, and has ruefully remarked, "I would rather be Beethoven's pupil than a pupil of a famous 19th c. Japanese composer like Mitsuzaki Kengyo."[264]

Despite the frequent exoticized reception faced by intercultural composers and Chou Wen-chung's criticisms concerning the New Wave's incorporating of exotic elements into their works, not all instances exoticism should be seen in a negative light. Chou's students are utilizing exoticism in order to create innovative compositional syntheses. In Tan Dun's *Marco Polo* (1996), Ralph P. Locke remarks, "No savvier commentary has been written on the possibilities and problems of 'doing' exoticism in a postmodern, globalized era than this opera, especially its Himalayan and Chinese scenes."[265] Throughout Tan Dun's career, he has avoided specifying the cultural implications that his musical materials imbue. Tan is not concerned with common-held dichotomies, such as East vs. West, traditional vs. modern, popular taste vs. artistic taste, and so on. Instead, Tan is concerned with creating his own unique blend of musical traditions, instruments, literature, language, history, and nature, and combining these elements with his own artistry, "My purpose is to be flexible and freely flying around among all kinds of experience. Not to be driven by the wave of culture—fashion, trends, isms, schools—but to create my own unity."[266] According to Ralph P. Locke, Tan Dun is "using exoticism to kill off exoticism."[267] The critical reception surrounding Tan Dun's works illustrates the artistic significance inherent in many exoticized works and works

[263] Locke, *Musical Exoticism*, 294.
[264] Toru Takemitsu, "On Sawari" (1957), trans. Hugh de Ferranti and Yayoi Uno Everett, in *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, ed. Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 204.
[265] Locke, *Musical Exoticism*, 296.
[266] Carol J. Oja, "New Music Notes," *Institute for Studies of American Music Newsletter* 27, no. 1 (Fall 1997), 6; in Locke, *Musical Exoticism*, 298.
[267] Locke, *Musical Exoticism*, 298.

that consciously incorporate exoticism. Exoticizing music has the power to reflect and even shape the attitudes and behaviour of Western audiences towards the non-Western world, and vice versa.[268] This phenomenon can result in an increased receptivity among global audiences towards developments in intercultural composition and musical synthesis, which can help to fundamentally re-shape popular music tastes and the development of global music.

Concluding Remarks: Questions Implicit in Chou Wen-chung's Compositional Philosophy, Revisited

Chou Wen-chung is unique among composers past and present in creating a sophisticated and comprehensive compositional aesthetic and methodology for creating successful works of intercultural synthesis. He has been passionate about educating and inspiring a new generation of Chinese composers in order to reshape the world's musical landscape, and in the process, Chou has redefined the role of the Chinese composer. Chou has attempted to establish his invented tradition of musical synthesis as a legitimate music tradition worthy of dissemination among New Wave composers and other composers of intercultural synthesis. Although Chou's musical tradition is of his invention, this is not to suggest that it is invalid. Chou asserts the authenticity of his compositional practice by creating a highly selective and 'high brow' compositional aesthetic and philosophy that is used to assert a narrative continuity with the Chinese music tradition. This study has utilized Eric Hobsbawm's concept 'inventor of tradition,' as outlined in his monograph, *Invention of Tradition,* to illustrate how Chou has attempted to establish an invented tradition of intercultural synthesis. Chou strives to create historical authenticity between his compositional method and the Chinese music

[268] Locke, *Musical Exoticism*, 326.

tradition by repeatedly referring to his incorporation of various aspects of Chinese artistic culture into his works, including his Confucian heritage, his knowledge of the Chinese Classics, and his incorporation of *wenren* and *qin* artistic aesthetics. Chou repeatedly refers to these Chinese elements in his scholarly writings, speeches, and personal interviews in order to create historical authenticity. However, these aspects have been selected for their 'high brow' associations with the Confucian elite, which serve to authenticate Chou's tradition.

Chou's self-presentations are remarkably effective and significant, and yet, music scholars and critics have tended to exhibit a shallow understanding of Chou's carefully constructed and selective compositional process. As a result, many music scholars and critics have disseminated Chou's self-presentations at face value with limited critical insight. The authentication of Chou's invented tradition was further enabled by the dire situation faced by Chinese composers at the close of the Cultural Revolution. According to Hobsbawm, an invention of tradition is expected to occur more frequently when the rapid transformation of society weakens or eliminates old social patterns, making an 'old' tradition inapplicable. Chou's return to China in 1977 was ideal for influencing a directionless generation of Chinese composers, resulting in the development of the New Wave. Despite the great developments to intercultural composition these composers have produced, Chou has criticized New Wave composers of capitulating to the lures of commodification and compositional *chinoiserie*, as well as adopting strongly individualistic compositional styles without a sufficient knowledge of their native musical tradition. An investigation of Chou's criticisms highlight the differences between his 'high brow' approach to compositional synthesis with the less selective, 'low brow'

approach of New Wave composers. This is especially evident in Chou's assertions that a strong education in the Chinese classical arts and their underlying aesthetics are imperative for creating effective and sophisticated works of compositional synthesis. This investigation also brings attention to questions and inconsistencies concerning Chou's knowledge and study of the Chinese classical arts, which has been largely academic and archival based, occurring apart from the traditional master-student relationship and focusing predominantly on print sources available in the West. In addition, Chou's works, as have New Wave works, have incorporated aspects of exoticisms and *chinoiserie*, which has contributed to their exoticized reception. These inconsistencies illustrate that Chou has been selective in constructing his invented tradition of musical synthesis on 'high brow' aesthetics and philosophies from China's music tradition in order to create historical and artistic authenticity.

Although Chou Wen-chung's tradition of compositional synthesis is invented and contains some inconsistencies, this does not mean it is an inauthentic or insignificant method of intercultural synthesis. Chou Wen-chung's innovative method of compositional synthesis has been able to fill a great void in China's artistic development and has provided Chinese composers with a set of techniques that they have utilized to create innovative works of compositional synthesis. In terms of the future of New Wave music, Chou believes it will resemble a kind of 'tossed salad,' where future composers will have the true luxury of freely selecting the ingredients they believe will develop their own artistic expression.[269] This vision is occurring today within New Wave composition. Despite the New Wave's arguably incomplete understanding of China's artistic aesthetics and philosophies, these composers are now partaking in a smorgasbord of musical styles,

[269] Chou Wen-chung in Duffie, *Composer Chou Wen-Chung: A Conversation with Bruce Duffie.*

instruments, techniques, and philosophies, and as a result, this generation of composers have produced amazingly vibrant, diverse, sophisticated, and groundbreaking works that are integral to the further development of musical synthesis. This demonstrates that a complete knowledge of Chinese traditional music is not a necessary prerequisite for creating new and significant compositional syntheses. Although Chou Wen-chung's compositional aesthetic has not been persuasive among New Wave composers, this does not diminish the pivotal role Chou Wen-chung has played in the development of 20th century intercultural synthesis.

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APPENDIX A: LIST OF CHOU WEN-CHUNG'S WORKS

Major Works

Date of Composition	Title	Instrumentation
1949	*Landscapes*	Orchestra
1950	*Three Folk Songs*	Harp and Flute
1950	*Two Chinese Folk Songs*	Harp Solo
1951	*Suite for Harp and Wind Quintet*	Suite for Harp and Wind Quintet
1951/52	*Seven Poems of Tang Dynasty*	High Voice and Instrumental Ensemble
1952/53	*All in the Spring Wind*	Orchestra
1954	*And the Fallen Petals*	Orchestra
1957	*Two Miniatures from T'ang Dynasty*	Chamber Ensemble
1957	*The Willows Are New*	Piano
1958	*Soliloquy of a Bhiksuni*	Trumpet with Brass and Percussion
1960/61	*Metaphors*	Wind Orchestra
1963	*Cursive*	Flute and Piano
1964	*Riding the Wind*	Wind Orchestra
1965	*Yü ko*	9 Players
1966	*Pien*	Chamber Concerto for Winds, Percussion, and Piano
1969	*Yun*	Winds, 2 Pianos, and Percussion
1986	*Beijing in the Mist*	Winds, Percussion, Electric Guitar, Bass, and Piano
1989	*Echoes from the Gorge*	Percussion Quartet

1989/1990	*Windswept Peaks*	Double Duet (Violin, Cello, B-flat Clarinet, and Piano)
1992	*Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra*	Cello and Orchestra
1996	*String Quartet (Clouds)*	String Quartet
2003	*String Quartet No. 2 (Stream)*	String Quartet
2007	*Twilight Colors*	Double Trio (Flute/Alto Flute, Oboe/English Horn, Clarinet/Bass Clarinet, Violin, Viola, and Cello)
2008	*Eternal Pine*	Korean Ensemble (Gayageum and Ensemble of Daegeum, Piri, Shaengwhang, and Changgu)
2009	*Ode to Eternal Pine*	Ensemble of Traditional Korean Instruments

Incidental Works

Date of Composition	Title	Instrumentation
1957	*Valediction*	Piano
1960	*Hong Kong*	Music for TV Program
1961	*Tomorrow*	Music for Documentary Film
1962	*White Paper of Red China*	Music for Documentary Film
1964	*A Day at the Fair Chamber ensemble*	Music for Documentary Film
1966	*Red China: Year of the Gun?*	Music for Documentary Film

Unpublished Works

Date of Composition	Title	Instrumentation

1956	*In the Mode of Shang*	Chamber Orchestra
1957	*The Miniatures from T'and*	Chamber Orchestra
1958	*To a Wayfarer*	Clarinet, Strings, Harp, and Percussion
1958/59	*Poems of White Stone*	Mixed Chorus and Chamber Orchestra
1964	*The Dark and the Light*	Piano, Percussion, and Strings
1968	*Ceremonial*	3 Trumpets and 3 Trombones