

THE *YELLOW RIVER PIANO CONCERTO*:
POLITICS, CULTURE, AND STYLE

by

SHING-LIH CHEN

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School
Department of Music

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

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ABSTRACT

The world's most famous Chinese piano concerto, the *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, plays an important role in Chinese piano history. So far, however, very few studies have been made of it, and reference sources are scarce. This *Concerto*, written in 1969, is a synthesis of Western and Chinese styles; even so, it is a strong statement of the historical, political, and cultural values that are peculiar to China. It is also a product of the times in which it was written — during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). To understand the musical essence of the *Concerto*, therefore, one needs to understand how strong a role Chinese cultural development, aesthetics, philosophy, history, art, and politics played in its composition. These will be explored in Chapter One.

For a full understanding of this *Concerto*, it is crucial to understand also the traditional values of Chinese music, as well as the social milieu of musicians and composers at the time the *Concerto* was written. The *Concerto* was written not by a single composer, but by a committee of six, using themes appropriated from Xian Xinghai's *Yellow River Great Chorus*, a massive work of patriotism, written during the Sino-Japanese War in 1939. These factors are examined in Chapter Two.

Chapter Three begins by examining the nature and aesthetic of titles and their importance in traditional Chinese music. I analyze the *Concerto* music itself, in terms of its modality, rhythmic and motivic ideas, thematic and melodic principles, and harmonization. I define its relationship with traditional Chinese instrumental idioms, and suggest performance practices that can elicit the traditional flavour of Chinese music. I explore its possible

association with Chinese folk song, and examine its connection with the *Yellow River Great Chorus* lyrics and the Cultural Revolution — along with the programmatic implications inherent in this connection.

In the Conclusion, I evaluate the *Concerto* in light of the foregoing explorations. I outline its strengths and weaknesses, and I encourage performers to look at this composition, 20 years after the end of the Cultural Revolution, in a new light.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The *Yellow River Piano Concerto* is a powerful evocation of the Yellow River (*Huanghe*) itself, the Sino-Japanese war (1937-1945), and the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). Despite the fact that the work was implanted in the Chinese psyche during the Cultural Revolution, and fell out of favour after Mao Zedong's death, it has re-emerged in the 1990s as one of the most popular of all Chinese piano concertos. This document explores the reasons for the revival of this work in 1989, as well as its popularity with Chinese-speaking peoples.

The Yellow River itself is an emblem of the Chinese spirit. Chinese civilization originated along this river valley — a valley whose periodic flooding caused much agony and suffering for its inhabitants. It evokes strong emotions of tragedy and memories of desperate perseverance in the face of adversity. Yet it also represents home, for the Chinese people have lived with the Yellow River for thousands of years. Chinese history shows how they love and embrace this river, both in their daily lives and in their literature and art. The river is “in their blood.”

The *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, through its musical devices that are partly rooted in folk music style, evokes the elevated spirit of perseverance needed in overcoming these harsh elements. It is also a strong historical, political, and cultural statement. These factors, more than anything else, make the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* a powerful work.

Cultural and Literary Developments

The Yellow River begins in the northern foothills of the Baian Kela Mountains and flows 5,464 kilometres throughout nine northern provinces before finally emptying into the Bohai Sea. It is named after the colour of its muddy water, caused by the yellow silt washed down from the mountain plateaus above the river valley. After the Yangzi River of central China, it is the largest river in China and its basin displays a magnificent panorama of lofty mountains, vast grasslands, boundless deserts, and fertile plains.

The Yellow River, then, is like the “Mother” of China, and its landscape has nourished the Chinese people and their culture for centuries. Prehistoric Beijing man, the legendary ancestor of the Chinese people, is believed to have lived in the Yellow River valley as early as 500,000 years ago. This tribal society lived by hunting, produced their utensils from stone, and, it is believed, even knew the use of fire. Long after this, Chinese culture flourished in the Yellow River basin with the Yangshao culture (c. 4000-2205 B.C.), Xia dynasty (c. 2205-1766 B.C.), Shang dynasty (c. 1766-1122 B.C.), and Zhou dynasty (c. 1122-221 B.C.).

In spite of the fact that the Chinese have made this valley their home, there is much fear and ambivalence towards the Yellow River, given its tendency to flood and cause much damage and suffering. The Yellow River is highly temperamental and has been the source of some of the world’s worst catastrophes since time immemorial. Indeed, it seems strange that the ancient Chinese civilization spread through the valley of the calamitous Yellow River, rather than that of the gentler and plentiful Yangzi River in central China. But the Chinese people seem to be tragically drawn to adversity, believing it will strengthen their character.

As the Chinese philosopher Mencius said, "Thus, when Heaven is about to confer a great office on any man, it first exercises his mind with suffering, and his sinews and bones with toil. It exposes his body to hunger, and subjects him to extreme poverty. It confounds his undertakings. By all these methods it stimulates his mind, hardens his nature"¹

It is also important to note what a pivotal and powerful role the colour yellow has played in Chinese life and culture. During the Yangshao period, the legendary leaders Fu Xi, Shen Neng, and the "Yellow Emperor" (Huang Di) were cultural heroes.² The Chinese people believe the Yellow Emperor to be their original ancestor, and he is believed to have governed the entire Yellow River valley and directed the cultivation and invention of agriculture, commerce, clothing, housing, transportation, writing, music, arithmetic, the calendar, and pottery. The Chinese people feel proud to be descended from the Yellow Emperor.

There are many suggestions throughout Chinese history to indicate that the colour yellow was essential to Chinese vitality. It is thought to be a colour from heaven. Indeed, during the imperial period (until 1912), only the emperor and the imperial family were allowed to wear yellow clothing, symbolic of high social strata. It was during the ancient period of the Yellow Emperor, that the fundamental pitch in the *lülü* system of twelve fixed pitches was "discovered."³ This fundamental pitch was named the "yellow bell" (*huangzhong*), the colour yellow being symbolic of its uprightness and perfection. It was consistently believed that the Emperor's survival, and thus the whole nation's survival,

¹James Legge, *The Four Books*, (Shanghai: The Chinese Book Company, 1930), pp.929-930.

²Mo Tzu, *Mo Tzu: Basic Writings*, trans. Burton Watson, (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1963), p.viii.

³Kenneth J. Dewoskin, *A Song for One or Two. Music and the Concept of Art in Early China*, (Ann Arbor: Michigan Papers in Chinese Studies no. 42. Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1982), p. 60.

depended upon the accurate pitch of this “yellow bell.” Yellow too is the colour most used to decorate the dragon — that most auspicious of all Chinese mythic animals, associated with blessing and high success. The Yellow River, then, is like a golden dragon standing majestically in the centre of China.

Burton Watson has commented that “Poetry and history, it is generally agreed, are the two glories of Chinese literature. . . . Poetry and history (in the broadest sense) appear among the earliest extant writings in Chinese and continue almost without break to occupy a major position in Chinese literature up to our own day.”⁴ A great quantity of Yellow River poetry has been produced. Poets, inspired by the river, wrote to express their emotions and to convey ideas. They immortalized the spirit of the Yellow River in their work. Inspired by the scenery of the Yellow River, the famous poet Li Po in the Tang dynasty (618-906 A.D.) wrote the following in “Bring the Wine”:

Have you not seen
the Yellow River waters descending from the sky,
racing restless toward the ocean, never to return?
Have you not seen
bright mirrors in high halls, the white-haired ones lamenting,
their black silk of morning by evening turned to snow?
If life is to have meaning, seize every joy you can;
do not let the golden cask sit idle in the moonlight!
Heaven gave me talents and meant them to be used;
gold scattered by the thousand comes home to me again.⁵

The poem can be interpreted as follows:

Both the Yellow River and the talents of human beings are divine gifts. We should cherish our heaven-sent talents and value our accomplishments. Life is short, and the poet urges us

⁴ Burton Watson, *Early Chinese Literature*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), p.19.

⁵ Burton Watson, *Chinese Lyricism*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), p.144.

not to wait until our hair turns snow white, but to enjoy life and bring the wine now!

However much money we spend, we can always earn more!

Another poet, Wang Zhihuan, wrote the popular four-line poem, "Ascending the Guan Que Tower." It also depicts the greatness of the Yellow River, and I have translated it as follows:

The setting sun disappears behind the mountains,
The Yellow River pours into the sea;
To see for a thousand miles,
One has to ascend.

The Yellow River symbolizes the greatness of life. Once you attain a higher position, then the entire magnificent view of the Yellow River is at your feet. By inference, one can uncover the mystery of life by pursuing truth and accomplishing much. Most Chinese people know this poem very well (I remember reciting it as a child in school). The philosophy hidden in this poem profoundly reinforces such traditional thinking as: "To reach a high position, one must start from a low position." In other words, in spite of reaching the summit of achievement, one should continue to be humble because the more one has seen of the cosmos, the smaller one will feel.

The sixty-first poem from the "Air of Wei," (*Weifeng*) collected in the seventh century B.C. "Book of Odes" (*Shijing*), also refers to the Yellow River — a deadly river, as wide as a sea and extremely dangerous to cross. Says the unknown author, who was grieving because of separation from her husband on the other side of the river:

Who says the River is wide?
On a reed one can cross it.
Who says Sung is far?
On tiptoe one can see it.
Who says the River is wide?
It won't hold a sliver of a boat.

Who says Sung is far?
One can get there before the morning is out.⁶

Here we see denial of the harsh facts of life on the Yellow River, and the poet's ambivalent state of mind — despair mingled with hope — reflects the tragic but persevering spirit of the Chinese people. This sampling of Yellow River literature gives some understanding of how strongly the spirit of the Yellow River runs in the blood of the Chinese; how deeply it is embedded in their psyche.

Political and Social Background

The *Yellow River Piano Concerto* was composed during the Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976. To understand its meaning and power, however, one needs to have an understanding of the events leading up to the Cultural Revolution. At the turn of the 20th century, China was exhausted from generations of incessant invasion from several countries. Indeed, the Sino-Japanese war, which began in July 1937, can be seen not so much as a beginning of hostilities as a continuation of an ongoing series of Japanese invasions since the late 19th century.

Simultaneously, during the early decades of the 20th century, the avant-garde literati became organized into an anti-feudal, anti-imperialist movement. The May Fourth Movement of 1919 opposed the use of classical Chinese, which was associated with the examination system, imperial bureaucracy and the Qing dynasty. The new literati believed the Qing dynasty had become corrupt during the latter years of its reign. They advocated

⁶ *ibid.*, p.214. The state of Wei, to which this song is assigned, was situated north of the Yellow River, that of Sung immediately south of it.

instead a more straightforward and modern style of language, and this affected both the written and spoken word. They also opposed all the old imperial dogmas, and advocated scientific thinking and a democratic society.

With the collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911, and the founding of the Republic, China was no longer in a mood to be bullied by Japan. The leader of the Republic, Chiang Kai-Shek, said: "Only a determination to sacrifice ourselves to the uttermost can bring us ultimate victory."⁷ Disinclined to war, China made many attempts at reaching a settlement with Japan, all to no avail. Prolonged resistance being intolerable, the Sino-Japanese war finally broke out in 1937. Japan's swift advance and China's stubborn defense resulted in the loss of many major cities.⁸ The fierce Nanjing Massacre was the most savage rape of any city in history: over 300,000 Chinese people were killed in this battle.⁹ Despite this savagery, Japan did not succeed in breaking China's will, but for the next eight years the Chinese people lived under severe adversity and with seldom a moment's peace.

During these desperate times, in 1939, the *Yellow River Great Chorus* was composed by Xian Xinghai. It was upon this work that the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* was modeled 30 years later, also during a turbulent period, that of the Cultural Revolution. In 1940, in *The Culture Of New Democracy*, Mao Zedong said:

China also has a semi-feudal culture which reflects her semi-feudal politics and economy, and whose exponents include all those who advocate the worship of Confucius, the study of the Confucian canon, the old ethical code and the old ideas in opposition to the new culture and new ideas. Imperialist culture and semi-feudal culture are devoted brothers and have formed a reactionary cultural alliance against China's new culture. This kind of reactionary culture serves the imperialists and the feudal class and must be

⁷ Ch'en Jerome, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p.237

⁸ *ibid.*, p.238.

⁹ Li Shoukong, *Banian Dui Ri Kangzhan Zhenxiang*, (Taipei: Zhengzhong Shuju, 1977), p.23.

swept away.¹⁰

Thus the seeds of the Cultural Revolution were sown. China's new culture, according to Mao, was an anti-imperialist, anti-feudal culture, under the leadership of the proletariat.¹¹ Talks at the Yenan Forum on literature and art by Mao Zedong in 1942 indicated the strong dictates of his political, social, and cultural ideology:

Therefore, our literature and art are first for the workers, the class that leads the revolution. Secondly, they are for the peasants, the most numerous and most steadfast of our allies in the revolution. Thirdly, they are for the armed workers and peasants, namely, the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies and the other armed units of the people, which are the main forces of the revolutionary war. Fourthly, they are for the laboring masses of the urban petty bourgeoisie and for the petty-bourgeois intellectuals, both of whom are also our allies in the revolution and capable of long-term co-operation with us.¹²

Whereas the literati had previously held the highest rank in society, followed by farmers, then workers, and lastly businessmen, the consequence of these social upheavals was a total reversal of China's traditional order of social ranking. Intellectuals and artists, now lowest on the social scale, found their creativity severely censored, as they were coerced into producing popular works that would appeal to peasants and soldiers, or which would support the Maoist cause. As Mao said: "Raising standards means to advance from their level."¹³ In other words, artistic standards, to be relevant, had to address the needs of the "common people" (*laobaixing*).

Of all the art forms affected by this new ethos of appealing to the masses, music was perhaps most affected. So Maoist marches, revolutionary choruses, patriotic songs for

¹⁰ Mao Zedong, *On Literature and Art*, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), p.58.

¹¹ *ibid.*, p.11.

¹² *ibid.*, p.12.

¹³ *ibid.*, p.17.

schoolchildren, and many such compositions were encouraged in the communist cause. Mao called such works “the products of the reflection of the life of the people in the minds of revolutionary writers and artists.”¹⁴ Individuality and personal creation were not valued. Rather, Mao demanded popular works that were simple, plain, and easily understood by the masses. One such work was the *Yellow River Great Chorus*, which earned its composer, Xian Xinghai, the title of “People’s Musician”; his work was honoured as “the Nation’s Music” (*Minzu Yinyue*). In 1959, Taiwanese composer Hsu Tsang-Houei was critical of the changing values in music in an article titled “The Trend in Chinese National Music,” commenting:

What on earth is this music called People’s Music or the Nation’s Music? Does this music use the old Chinese scales, folk melody, or the folk-tune formula worthy of being named “National”? Or do these compositions merely pay homage to the People’s Government and the proletariat? Does stressing the significance of hard-work, reform, and going to the rural communities to work, really constitute national music? Can music be defined as “National” merely by giving an instrumental composition mass appeal and a grand title? Or by composing songs about the oppression of people who succeeded in fighting capitalism?¹⁵

As the dictatorship became increasingly severe, artists became political pawns in service of Mao’s ideology — but this was nothing compared with what was still to come. In August 1966, Mao announced “the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution,” and he and his wife Jiang Qing assumed absolute political and cultural control of the nation. As Historian Frederic Wakeman wrote in *History and Will*: “Like most foreign students in China, I was astounded when the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution erupted in 1966.”¹⁶ Mao’s

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p.18.

¹⁵ Hsu Tsang-Houei, *Jindai Zhongguo Yinyue Shihua*, (Taipei: Chenzhong Chubanshe, 1970), p.58.

¹⁶ Frederic Wakeman, *History and Will*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), p. ix.

announcement came during the Eleventh Plenum, convened in Beijing August 1-12, and it was here too that Mao first introduced the Red Guard. Formed mainly by youths and students, the Red Guard was given absolute power to enforce Mao's new measures. The Sixteen Points, in laying out and strengthening the goals of advancing the proletariat through state education and enforced rural labour for intellectuals, academics, and artists, stated that "Mao Zedong's thought was the ultimate guide to action." By the end of 1966, China was in the grip of a fierce dictatorship.¹⁷

The ideologies of the Cultural Revolution reigned absolute in mainland China for a decade, and the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* had appropriate political subtitles added to each section.¹⁸ The song "The East Is Red" (*Dongfang Hong*), which praised Mao as a great chairman and saviour of the people, was interpolated into the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* in its final piece,¹⁹ "Defense of the Yellow River." Indeed, "The East Is Red" was played daily, in every conceivable way. "Practically every time you picked up a phone, you heard "The East Is Red" being sung," recalls one person who lived through the Cultural Revolution, but wishes to remain anonymous. "Many works written during the Cultural Revolution incorporated this song — it lent these works legitimacy as the "Nation's Music" (*Minzu Yinyue*), and often they gained immediate popularity. People sang "The East Is Red" as a sacred hymn of worship to Mao and his dictatorship. In this way, Mao not only represented the whole nation; he also became the symbol of national music!"

¹⁷ *ibid.*, p.311.

¹⁸ Liang Maochun, *Zhongguo Dangdai Yinyue*, (Beijing: Guangbo Xueyuan Chubanshe, 1993), p.177.

¹⁹ One of my informants who lived through the Cultural Revolution, pianist Chen Wei, told me that Jiang Qing had decreed the word "piece" should be used instead of the Western term "movement" because each of the four pieces was musically independent of the other three, unlike the three related movements of a Western piano concerto.

While this so-called "Nation's Music" (*Minzu Yinyue*) was being championed on the one hand, world-famous classics written by such master composers as Beethoven, Bach, Mozart and Schubert on the other hand were forbidden by gangs of the Red Guard. During the Cultural Revolution, Beethoven's and Schubert's music was interpreted within the framework of a proletarian and communist ideology. This seeming dichotomy contributed to the confusing attitude during this time. Following is a typical communist interpretation of Beethoven's Symphony No.5 and Schubert's B minor Symphony No.8:

Beethoven's Symphony No.5 was considered to be a work of propaganda. The first thematic idea, according to Beethoven's own explanation, was to describe the knocking sound of fate. The conflict and fight between human will and fate was expressed through the contrast and variety of two thematic statements. In fact, it reflected the political reality and wish of the German bourgeoisie. The aggressive revolutionary party wanted to break through the boundaries of feudalism. The emotional diversity and contrast was apparently embodied in a political statement. . . . Although there was no program in Schubert's B minor symphony, it was full of social content and bourgeois emotional feeling. Schubert, a typical petty bourgeois intellect, felt no way out of politics and economics. But he was without courage to rebel, and thus expressed a mopish, wondering, passive feeling of despair; he escaped from the reality of life, and fantasized about freedom.²⁰

In this way, Western music was distorted, its aesthetics reinterpreted from a programmatic perspective to suit political purposes. At the same time, as Frederic Wakeman points out in *History and Will*, the Red Guard cried its slogan with impunity: "To rebel (*zao-fan*) is justified." They had, quite literally, license to kill, and they created turmoil and terror throughout the cities and provinces.²¹ One appalling example of Red Guard brutality was the beating of the famous pianist Liu Shikun, winner of the third prize at the Liszt Festival in

²⁰ Han Kuo-Huang, *From the West to the East, Book 2.*, (Taipei: Shibao Wenhua Chubanshe, 1985), p.147.

²¹ Wakeman, *History and Will*, pp.15 and 309.

1956 and second prize at the Tschaikovsky Festival in 1958.²² Because of his argument with and opposition to the Red Guard, both his hands were broken and crippled for life. Never again was he able to play the piano. Many artists, poets, and musicians were forced to live in rural communities and to work on farms or in factories. It was during this period of turmoil that the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* was written.

²² Han Kuo-Huang and Lindy Li Mark, "Evolution and Revolution in Chinese Music." ed. Elizabeth May, *Musics of Many Cultures*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p.25.

CHAPTER TWO

COMPOSERS AND THEIR SOCIAL MILIEU

Composers' Musical Background

The first introduction of Western music into China can be traced back to the Ming dynasty (1368-1644 A.D.), when missionaries first set foot in that country. Documentation shows that the missionary Matteo Ricci introduced Western astronomy, geography, art, and music to the court in Beijing around 1600.²³ This appears to be the first time the Chinese heard either Western choral singing or such instruments as the harmonium, organ, and harpsichord. Of course, this music was heard mainly in the imperial court or in Western churches (which were just beginning to be built); so, for the most part, it was not heard by the general public. Consequently, traditional music continued in China without profound Western influence.²⁴

Traditional Chinese music was a social function of Confucianism. "Scholar-officials and theorists since the Zhou dynasty (1122-221 B.C.) have considered music to be a complement of government and ritual."²⁵ Ideally, scholars and humble farmers alike were to perform music in conformity with the social function of Confucianism, and thus the structure of the universe, in order to cultivate their human nature. Music, therefore, played a vital role in spiritual elevation, and in cultivating moderation and the avoidance of extremes. The ancient "Record of Music" (*Yueji*), the legendary classic of musical philosophy states:

Music is the highest expression of virtue.

²³ Hsu, *Jindai Zhongguo Yinyue Shihua*, p.3.

²⁴ *ibid.*, p.6.

²⁵ Alan Thrasher, "The Sociology of Chinese Music: An Introduction." *Asian Music*, 12(2), 1981, pp.24-26.

The achievement of virtue is the superior goal;
the achievement of art, inferior.

When moderate and easy-going music prevails,
People tend to become healthy and contented.²⁶

This exemplifies *Dan-Xie-Man-Yi* — an expression that comprises the four characteristics of music known to imperial musician-scholars: long and broad in rhythm, harmonious, slow and simple.²⁷ Simplicity was a key point: these imperial musician-scholars were not professionals, as were the court composers in Baroque Europe, for example. In Confucian theory, great music was simple music — and it was played by musicians, literati, painters, and rustics alike, to elevate the soul and cultivate virtue. Music was valued more in terms of ethics than aesthetics. For thousands of years, people in China have played music for both self-cultivation and self-amusement. Until the early 20th century, music was an introspective art, not a demonstrative one.

Many of the students who had studied abroad since the late Qing dynasty returned to their motherland and devoted their knowledge to pioneering music education in China. Composer and theorist Xiao Youmei (1884-1940), who graduated from the Leipzig Music Academy, for example, returned to China in 1920, and became instrumental in founding a faculty of music in Beijing University in 1923.²⁸ As director of music there, he was a major force in shaping what was a revolutionary new idea for China: an institution for teaching music. Western harmony and music history, as well as traditional Chinese music were taught. Xiao Youmei in 1927 also went on to establish the first “National Conservatory of

²⁶ *ibid.*, p.25.

²⁷ *ibid.*, p.24 and pp.31-32.

²⁸ Hsu, *Jindai Zhongguo Yinyue Shihua*, p.14.

Music” (*Guoli Yinyue Yuan*) in Shanghai ²⁹ where Western musicians as well as Western-trained Chinese musicians were appointed as teachers. This opened the way for what was to develop into an increasing emphasis on European and Russian teaching, composing, and performance techniques. These techniques were taught without the contextual framework of Western culture and thought. Therefore Chinese compositions never became fully Westernized — and, indeed, this was not a desired goal. The problem that preoccupied Chinese composers was that of integrating Western music techniques with those of the Chinese tradition.

In the piano repertoire, Chinese composers in the 1920s and 1930s had to build virtually from the ground up. Traditional Chinese instruments were not meant to produce harmony or counterpoint. Western musical harmony and counterpoint was, therefore, most unfamiliar to Chinese musicians, and they had no history of or foundation for piano composition. Piano genres, such as the sonata and concerto, were also foreign to Chinese composers, who were more familiar with programmatic genres.³⁰ Furthermore, the temperament of the piano could not be reconciled with Chinese tuning practices. All in all, the piano embodied qualities quite different from China’s traditional music, and its potential for virtuoso display was antithetical to the amateur ideal of Confucian ethics. On a practical

²⁹ *ibid.*, p.15.

³⁰ Han Kuo-Huang, “The Chinese Concept of Program Music.” *Asian Music*, 10(1), 1978, pp.17-38. Han categorizes traditional Chinese instrumental music into three genres: (1) psychological, (2) descriptive, and (3) imitative. Regarding the psychological genre, Han writes, “The general mood of a piece is suggested in the title, but there is no concrete story to follow nor any attempt to imitate natural sounds.” Examples of this include *Autumn Moonlight Over the Serene Lake* and *Song of Happiness*. Han writes, “A descriptive type of piece usually illustrates a story. The best example is the celebrated *pipa* piece, *Ambush from Ten Sides*, which depicts the decisive battle between the armies of Ch’u and Han in 202 B.C. Imitative pieces have one common feature: the inclusion of passages in imitation of natural sounds: for example, *Birds Returning to Nests* for *yueh-hu* fiddle, the galloping of horses in *Galloping Across the Vast Grassland* for *erh-hu*.”

level too, the piano was an expensive instrument, and well beyond the means of most Chinese families of the 1930s.

China did not see its first successful piano work until 1934, when He Luding's (1903-) *Buffalo Boy's Flute* won him first prize in the *Chinese Style Piano Works Competition*.³¹ At that time, He Luding was a student at the National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai, and this competition provided him with a daunting challenge: to create Chinese-style music on a Western-style instrument. The *Buffalo Boy's Flute* was written in a simple ABA form, the A section (Appendix A, Example 1) being in a European contrapuntal style that embodied traditional Chinese melodic principles. In the B section (Appendix A, Example 2), melodies were written in the "bamboo flute" (*dizi*) idiom, and enriched by an accompanying figuration similar to that found in Schubert's "Red Roses." He Luding used Chinese pentatonic scales, without the sense of Western tonality. *Buffalo Boy's Flute*, which reveals a delightful, simple, rustic, and spontaneous flavour, is not only a landmark in launching a new piano tradition in China; it is also the first successful attempt at combining Eastern and Western styles.

A wave of nationalism sweeping China in the mid-30s brought with it the popularization of another 20th century form of Chinese music called *guoyue*, "national music," which emerged at the end of the 1920s. This nationalism grew stronger and was especially prevalent at the time the People's Republic of China was formed in 1949. Consequent upon the social and political ideologies advocated by Mao, four trends in music

³¹ Shi Zhong-Xing, *He Luding Chuan*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Wenyi Chubanshe, 1989), p.v.

and performance developed.³² To a great extent, these are still apparent today:

1. **a return to the folk tradition:** supporting this, government-run institutions and organizations were founded to collect folk art, and masses of folk songs were collected in archival documents — much as Bartók and Kodály collected Hungarian and Romanian folk songs for use in their own works. This tradition had some impact on the *Yellow River Piano Concerto*.
2. **an emphasis on rigorous performance training:** this was influenced by the rigid Russian teaching style, which became common in China in the 1940's and resulted in high standards of excellence and international awards for Chinese pianists. Fu Ts'ung, for example, won third place at *The International Chopin Piano Competition* in 1955; Yin Chengzong took second prize at *The Tchaikovsky Competition* in 1962. Virtuosity, professionalism, and patriotism became apparent in the new Chinese music — in stark contrast to the introspective nature of traditional music. This contrast, between the humility and introspection in traditional Chinese music practice on the one hand, and the highly flamboyant quality of the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* on the other, is striking. The *Concerto* may be seen as the apotheosis of a new style, and indeed, it exemplifies the changes that had been taking place for several decades, not only in music, but in all the arts and sciences.
3. **the infusion of political content into program music:** The Central Philharmonic Orchestra in Beijing was government-run; "People's" music journals were established, as

³² Han and Mark, "Evolution and Revolution in Chinese Music." ed. Elizabeth May, *Musics of Many Cultures*. p. 23.

well as “People’s” newspapers, which at that time ran articles and critiques on music; and musicians often joined “People’s” musical committees dedicated to furthering the Maoist cause through music. The *Yellow River Piano Concerto* is a good example of music that was actually written by a government-influenced committee. Its members, who belonged to the Central Philharmonic Orchestra, incorporated Maoist political ideas into this programmatic concerto.

4. **the combination of Western and Chinese elements:** starting in the 1930s, the search for a synthesis between Chinese and Western musical expression became a major concern of composers. They adopted existing Chinese folk melodies and folk motifs, incorporating them into their works, or they wrote new music in the Chinese folk style: it was intrinsic to their belief system that folk art directly evokes the national spirit and speaks to the national soul. At the same time, however, composers used such Western compositional styles as harmony and counterpoint, and such structures as the sonata, rondo, and concerto. It was challenging for these composers to integrate Western harmonic and contrapuntal thinking with the traditional Chinese flavour and style of composition. The *Yellow River Piano Concerto* exemplifies this synthesis of Western and Chinese elements.

Xian Xinghai and the *Yellow River Great Chorus*

Inspiration for the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* originated with a contemporary of He Luding, the composer Xian Xinghai (1905-1945).³³ His 1939 composition, the *Yellow*

³³ Han Kuo-Huang, “Because Her Name is the Yellow River.” *Performing Arts Review*, No. 5, (March, 1993), p.100.

River Great Chorus, provides the thematic foundation upon which the concerto was based.

The first Asian to be admitted to the Paris Conservatory's composition class, Xian was a student of Vincent d'Indy and Paul Dukas. This was a notable achievement considering that he had been born in extreme poverty among the fishermen of Guangdong province.

Fishermen were one of the lowest classes of people in China — a class that was actually excluded from the nation's educational institutions. Xian's mother, having relatives in Singapore, took him there to be educated in 1912 after his father died. In 1918, Xian returned to China, where he studied at Lingnan and Beijing Universities between 1925 and 1927, working at many different jobs to support his musical education.³⁴ In 1930, with help of friends and relatives, he managed to purchase a steamer ticket for France. Still desperately poor during his stay in Paris, Xian worked in restaurants to eke out his living while composing music. After five years in France, lonely and homesick for his motherland, he returned home — but without having graduated, and having no secure future in China. Within three years of his return, however, Xian had found his niche.³⁵

In 1938, the communist party established the Lu Xun Arts Academy in Yan'an, a city that served as a revolutionary base for the communist party. The purpose of the academy was to train cultural cadres to go out into the countryside and stir up the revolutionary spirit through music, drama, and film. Xian, with his lowly background, but still having studied music in Paris and at Chinese Universities, had been able to synthesize in his music the sentiments of both the intellectuals and the masses of workers and peasants. This made him an ideal teacher for the academy, where he taught the young cadres how to compose songs

³⁴ Ma Ke, *Xian Xinghai Zhuàn*, (Beijing: Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe, 1980), pp.12-13, 25, and 42.

³⁵ Qin Qiming, *Xian Xinghai*, (Hubei: Changjiang Wenyi, 1980), p.112.

and organize and conduct choral groups. Even though he was the academy's leading composer, Xian lived an austere life, because it was wartime, living in a cave and working in the fields as well.³⁶ He composed his first symphony, *The National Symphony*, between 1935 and 1938. Prior to composing the *Yellow River Great Chorus*, he wrote many patriotic choral works and songs to arouse a strong national spirit, such as "Soldier's March," "Save Your Country March," "Youth March," and the "New Year Chorus." Many works had such descriptively proletarian titles, as "Mass Production Chorus," and "Worker's Song."³⁷

The *Yellow River Great Chorus* is a massive choral composition, the Eastern equivalent of Beethoven's *Ninth (Choral) Symphony*. This huge work is a magnificent invocation of patriotic emotion. Even today, this *Chorus* continues to evoke powerful memories for the Chinese of their past pain and glory. It is the power of Xian's *Yellow River Great Chorus* that helped make its "foster-child," the *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, such a powerful "political vehicle" during the Cultural Revolution some 30 years later.³⁸ In the *Chorus*, which carried the slogan "In defense of the Yellow River," Xian reportedly composed all the melodic and thematic ideas himself in folk style, without using any existing folk tunes.³⁹ The *Chorus* comprises eight movements, with lyrics written by Guan Weiran: (1) "Yellow River Boatmen's Song," (2) "Yellow River Ode," (3) "The Yellow River Descends from Heaven," (4) "Yellow River Ballad," (5) "Conversational Song Along the River," (6) "Yellow River Hatred," (7) "Defense of the Yellow River," and (8) "Rave!

³⁶ Ma, *Xian Xinghai Zhuan*, pp.265-267.

³⁷ Mao Zilian, *Renmin Geshou Xian Xinghai*, (Beijing: Sanlian Shudian, 1950), pp. 53, 64, 79, 133, and 142.

³⁸ Pu Fang, "Zhongguo Gangqin Xiezouqu Chuangzuo zhong de Minzuhua Chuiqiu." *Zhongyang Yinyue Xueyuan Xuebao*, 1991: 4, p.62.

³⁹ This is based on personal communication (March and November, 1995) with scholar Huang Jinpei, who knew Xian Xinghai well.

Yellow River.” In these titles, which are exemplary of the descriptive and poetic nature of traditional Chinese music, the Yellow River stands symbolically for the Chinese people and “Mother” China. The folk singing style of Shanxi province, “dialogue singing” (*dueikou chang*), was used in “Conversational Song Along the River”;⁴⁰ in the “Yellow River Boatmen’s Song,” the style of the “work songs” (*haozi*) was used. The “Yellow River Ode” and “Yellow River Hatred” are both written for solo voice in Chinese arioso and lyrical style. In “The Yellow River Descends from Heaven,” the Chinese “text-reciting style” (*lang seng*) was used, and Hugo Wolf’s declamatory style was adapted for the Chinese language.⁴¹ This piece, written for a choral tutti, was accompanied by a *sanxian*, a three-stringed lute. In the *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, the committee-composers adopted some of the compositional styles Xian used in the *Chorus*, combining Western writing with the use of Chinese instruments. These factors will be examined in Chapter Three.

In 1939, the city of Yan’an was so impoverished that it didn’t even have a piano to accompany the chorus — to say nothing of a Western-style orchestra, which Xian, with his training, would surely have chosen to use had it been available. Xian improvised, and worked instead with available Chinese instruments such as the two-stringed fiddle (*erhu*), a bamboo flute (*dizi*), a three-stringed lute (*sanxian*), a bass two-stringed fiddle (*dahu*), and a native drum (*dagu*). The only Western instruments at hand were a bugle and a guitar. Xian not only improvised, he turned this lack into an advantage. He wrote: “I am just now researching the characteristics of Chinese musical instruments, and am thinking of using their

⁴⁰ Xian, *Huanghe Dahechang*, p.62.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, p.62.

strong points to make up for the current lack of Western instruments.”⁴² Written in the traditional Western contrapuntal technique of choral writing, but integrating Chinese musical idioms, the *Chorus* became instantly popular. It premiered on April 13, 1939, with Mao Zedong in attendance, and was performed many times after that, especially on such ceremonial occasions as the May 11, 1939 concert commemorating the first birthday of the Lu Xun Arts Academy.⁴³ Xian was hailed as “People’s Musician” for having pioneered so much proletarian music. He was the perfect musician for translating Mao’s thought into music. His *Chorus* was banned, however, during the Cultural Revolution,⁴⁴ while the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* was commissioned at that time by Jiang Qing.

Committee-Composers and the *Yellow River Piano Concerto*

Richard Kraus in *Pianos and Politics in China* suggests that in borrowing themes from Xian Xinghai, the committee-composers of the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* were paying Xian “an act of homage, not plagiarism . . .” Further, he says that “using the music of Xian Xinghai signalled to the Western music community that Xian was still held in high esteem . . .”⁴⁵ This is a seeming lapse of logic, for Xian was, in fact, held in total ignominy during the Cultural Revolution.⁴⁶ If he had been held in high esteem at that time, why was his work banned? This seeming paradox and enigma is an example of the prevailing attitude of the times: one day a hero, the next a prisoner. Despite Xian Xinghai’s having been held in

⁴² Richard Curt Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China: Middle-Class Ambitions and the Struggle over Western Music*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 57.

⁴³ Qin Ziming, *Xian Xinghai*, (Hubei: Changjiang Wenyi, 1980), p. 140-141.

⁴⁴ Xian, *Huanghe Dahechang*, p. 71.

⁴⁵ Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China: Middle-Class Ambitions and the Struggle over Western Music*, p. 148.

⁴⁶ Xian, *Huanghe Dahechang*, p. 71.

such high esteem, despite his status as People's Musician, his music was banned during the Cultural Revolution. Further, the *Concerto* was a wholesale expropriation of five movements from the *Chorus*: (1) "Yellow River Boatmen's Song," (2) "Yellow River Ode," (3) "Yellow River Ballad," (4) "Yellow River Hatred," (5) "Defense of the Yellow River." The committee-composers used Xian's music to serve political ideologies rather than to pay homage to the original composer.

"Remove the lyrics; keep the music," said the leader of the notorious Gang of Four, Jiang Qing. This policy followed the Maoist dogma of "letting the old serve the new" by keeping the old music with its useful patriotic evocations, and replacing the old lyrics with new propagandist sub-titles.⁴⁷ As the lyrics of the *Chorus* were removed, new slogans were imposed on every section of the *Concerto*, which comprised four pieces: "Prelude: Yellow River Boatmen's Song," "Yellow River Ode," "Yellow River Resentment," and "Defense of the Yellow River." The following table shows the relationship between the *Chorus* and the *Concerto* and how some of the original titles were modified:

<i>Yellow River Great Chorus</i>	<i>Yellow River Piano Concerto</i>
Yellow River Boatman's Song	Prelude: Yellow River Boatman's Song
Yellow River Ode	Yellow River Ode (plus the addition of the national anthem of the People's Republic of China)
Yellow River Descends from Heaven	(not used in the <i>Concerto</i>)
Yellow River Ballad and Yellow River Hatred	Yellow River Resentment
Conversational Song Along the River	(not used in the <i>Concerto</i>)
Defense of the Yellow River	Defense of the Yellow River (plus the addition of two songs: "The East Is Red" and "The Internationale" ⁴⁸)
Rave! Yellow River	(not used in the <i>Concerto</i>)

⁴⁷ Liang, *Zhongguo Dangdai Yinyue*, pp.176-177.

⁴⁸ "Internationale" is a song praising communism. It was not used in Xian's *Chorus*, and was added to the *Concerto* by the committee-composers.

At the peak of the Cultural Revolution (1966 to 1969), all music except eight “model works” (*yang ban*) were banned, because it was feared anything else might carry dangerous feudal and bourgeois ideas.⁴⁹ Everything had to be approved by Jiang Qing, and only these eight “model works,” which included the *Concerto*, were officially permitted for performance or study. The *Concerto* was arranged and composed by a committee.⁵⁰ Its members, Yin Chengzong, Liu Zhuang, Chu Wanghua, Sheng Lihong, Shi Shucheng, and Xu Feixing were members of the government-run Central Philharmonic Orchestra. At this time, committee-composers were quite common. Joint responsibility mitigated the likelihood of individual creativity infecting the music; it also lessened the danger of individual censure by the authorities. This committee’s assignment included the composition of a piano concerto with interpolated political messages approved by the Gang of Four and Jiang Qing in particular.⁵¹

Following the then-current Chinese tradition of artists going into the countryside, the committee-composers left Beijing in 1969 and spent several weeks living on the banks of the Yellow River. They immersed themselves in the lives of the people; they interviewed old peasants; they learned how people felt about the war against Japan; they worked alongside the boatmen, rowing and towing vessels upstream; and they steeped themselves in the local Shaanxi folk music played on bamboo flutes. And, of course, they studied the writings of

⁴⁹ Han and Mark, “Evolution and Revolution in Chinese Music.” ed. Elizabeth May, *Musics of Many Cultures*. p.23.

⁵⁰ Committee composers worked as a team, rather than individually. The personal influence of individual members was not encouraged or valued at that time. In the case of the *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, the committee composers did not compose original music, but followed Jiang Qing’s guidelines and simply reproduced Xian’s melodies into pianistic idioms.

⁵¹ Liang, *Zhongguo Dangdai Yinyue*, p.177.

Marx, Lenin, and Mao Zedong.⁵²

The *Concerto* committee's leading composer was Yin Chengzong (1941-). He especially was credited with the achievement of applying the idioms of Chinese instruments to the piano. Yin studied at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, and later graduated from the Leningrad Conservatory in Russia. He won the Gold Medal in the piano competition at the *World's Youth Peace and Friendship Festival* in Vienna in 1959, and second prize in the *Tchaikovsky Competition* in 1962. Significantly too, he won favour with Jiang Qing for a major innovation: combining the piano with traditional Chinese opera in his 1968 work *The Red Lantern*.⁵³ Never before had anyone tried to use piano to accompany the Beijing Opera! Traditional Chinese opera consists of singers, accompanied by native percussion and string instruments. *The Red Lantern* heralded a whole new genre of Chinese opera by incorporating high-pitched nasal vocal melodies and articulated drum rhythms (the main characteristic of the Beijing opera) with the piano's foreign qualities of equal temperament, rich sonority, and harmonization. Yin's *The Red Lantern* was held up as one of the eight "model works" that synthesized the best of Chinese and Western artistic techniques, while still incorporating Mao's proletarian and revolutionary ideas. This achievement led, one year later, to his being named the leading composer on the committee commissioned to arrange the *Yellow River Piano Concerto*.

The *China News Analysis* in 1968 declared:

In the past we thought that the piano could not serve workers, peasants, and soldiers, that they would not stand it and could not enjoy it, that the piano could only perform foreign, bourgeois music. Now we know that if the piano is employed by a person armed with the thoughts of Mao Zedong, then it is

⁵² Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China: Middle-Class Ambitions and the Struggle over Western Music*. p.148.

⁵³ *ibid.*, p144-147.

welcomed by the masses and can serve workers, peasants, soldiers, and proletarian politics.⁵⁴

The *Yellow River Piano Concerto* was composed in this new climate of acceptance — of “bourgeois” western instruments. As Mao said: “Let the past serve the present and foreign things serve China.” The pianistic idioms of the patriotic Chopin and Liszt were implemented in the *Concerto*, and its orchestration was a mix of Western and Chinese instruments. Millions of peasants, soldiers, and workers — most of whom had never heard or even seen a piano before — watched the film of Yin’s “model performance” of the *Concerto*. This *Concerto* became immediately and widely known, partly because it was a “model work” bearing the imprint of Maoist thought.⁵⁵

When the broadcast of Yin’s “model performance” was heard on the radio, students jotted down the music and started practicing. Pianists were eager to play and perform the *Concerto*, not only because it served to “legitimize” their performance careers, it also gave them something they could perform in public and in front of Mao. The *Concerto* was performed hundreds of times, on and on, with only a single stylistic and ideological interpretation, for a period of ten years.⁵⁶ Political slogans were written into the score and projected onto the stage during performances. For example, during the “Prelude: Yellow River Boatmen’s Song,” the audience would read, “Boatmen fight with the raging river,” and “Boatmen see the shine of victory,” and “Continue to fight and go forward bravely.” During the “Yellow River Ode”, the slogans read, “Pay homage to the revolutionary tradition of the

⁵⁴ Han and Mark, “Evolution and Revolution in Chinese Music.” ed. Elizabeth May, *Musics of Many Cultures*. p.24.

⁵⁵ Liang, *Zhongguo Dangdai Yinyue*, p.177.

⁵⁶ I have interviewed pianists from China who lived through the Cultural Revolution, but who wish to remain anonymous.

Chinese people,” and “China has stood up among the world in the East.” As the “Yellow River Resentment” was being played, people read: “National hatred for social inequality is burning like a fire,” and “Prosecute!” and “The Yellow River [meaning the Chinese people] raves with anger; people’s breasts are full of resentment.” Finally, in the “Defense of the Yellow River,” the slogans read, “Chairman Mao calls on you to fight,” and “Anti-Japanese soldiers and people, run to the war fields!” and “The revolutionary armed forces are developing greatly,” and “Long live Chairman Mao! Long live the people’s victory of war,” and “Lift up the great red flag of Mao’s thought and go forward bravely,” and “Join the world revolution!”

An anonymous informant, who played the *Concerto* during the Cultural Revolution, told me, “These slogans were *the* interpretation of the *Concerto*! For ten years, during the Cultural Revolution, the people in mainland China were brainwashed.” Pianists at that time mainly played or made their debut with the *Concerto*. Yin, as China’s premier pianist for this *Concerto*, played with such outstanding visiting orchestras as the London Philharmonic and the Vienna Philharmonic under Claudio Abbado, and the Philharmonic Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy. Visiting orchestras were obliged to perform this *Concerto* in order to honour their host country. Privately, many Western orchestra members called it “The Yellow Fever Concerto.”⁵⁷

The Central Philharmonic Orchestra in Beijing played the *Concerto* hundreds of times — and the Chinese eventually tired of it. When the Cultural Revolution had been over for some years, the famous writer Ba Jin recalled that he had not heard a “model work” for

⁵⁷ Kraus, *Pianos and Politics in China: Middle-Class Ambitions and the Struggle over Western Music*. pp.151-152

some time and wrote the following:

I thought I had forgotten about “model works.” But then, accidentally during the spring festival, I heard someone singing tunes from a “model work.” They gave me such a creepy feeling that I began having nightmares. These nightmares were so familiar to me, and they were associated with those “model works.” Now I realize those “model works” had been forged indelibly on my heart.⁵⁸

Another informant stated:

Terrible privations were imposed during the Cultural Revolution upon artists, who, of all people, most needed freedom and space for artistic expression. During those ten years, professors, students, artists, and the literati, were all sent to the countryside to perform farm labour. All of them had to study Mao’s “little red book” to “rectify” their minds. If musicians wanted to practice, they had to do so in secret.⁵⁹

One musician, who wishes to remain anonymous, recalled how a pianist was caught practicing Rachmaninoff’s music, and “was beaten up by the Red Guard and sent to jail because Rachmaninoff was considered unpatriotic for having abandoned his own country.” But there was no consistency in the persecution. This same musician further observed: “Chopin’s music was categorized as good, for Chopin was patriotic. But the next day, a pianist playing Chopin’s works could be accused of playing Western abstract music because it lacked social function and was steeped in bourgeois ideas. Musicians were scared to death.” Censorship and compulsion extended even to performance practices, styles, and interpretations. As one pianist who lived through the Cultural Revolution, and who also wished to remain anonymous, recalled: “They even controlled how I sat, and looked during my performance of the *Yellow River Piano Concerto*.”

⁵⁸ Liu Jingzhi, ed., *History of New Music in China 1946-1976: Collected Essays*, (Hong Kong: the University of Hong Kong, 1990), p.159.

⁵⁹ This is based on interviews I had with pianist Chen Wei, who lived through the Cultural Revolution. (January, 1995).

Historian and musicologist Arnold Perris reminds us that Western music has also served social and political functions:

Beethoven's choice of the Ode to Joy for the Ninth Symphony was to spread ideas. Surely no one will disagree that the singing commercials of radio and television are an art of persuasion, if not rumor. Many songs of protest, satire, praise or hate from all times fall into the category of propaganda as seductive or militant tools for mind control.⁶⁰

While music can be used as propaganda and to spread messages, slogans and subtitles were manipulated in music to absolutely control people's minds in China during the Cultural Revolution. The political ideologies about program music in China during those times resulted in "a dark and chaotic music period for that country."⁶¹

In Taiwan, on the other hand, where the government of the Republic of China relocated in 1949, musicians followed more cosmopolitan trends. Diverse and international trends in music have prevailed there since 1949. The *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, however, because of its communist political content, was not welcomed and was never performed in Taiwan until the 1990s. So too in Mainland China, this concerto fell out of favour after Mao's death in 1976 — until 1989, when Shi Shucheng revised it. He removed the tune "The East Is Red" in the fourth piece, "Defense of the Yellow River," and revised the brass section by adding a French horn, a trumpet, and two trombones — instruments that Jiang Qing had not favoured because of their brightness and loudness. The third piece entitled "Yellow River Resentment" reverted back to its original *Chorus* title "Yellow River Ballad," which had been denounced by Jiang Qing for its lack of rebellious and revolutionary spirit.⁶²

⁶⁰ Arnold Perris, "Music as Propaganda: Art at the Command of Doctrine in the People's Republic of China." *Ethnomusicology*, (January, 1983), p.1.

⁶¹ Bi Xizhou, "Dalu Yinyuejia Dui Huanghe Gangqin Xiezouqu De Pingjia." *Jingbao*, (Hongkong, May, 1981), p.65.

⁶² Liang, *Zhongguo Dangdai Yinyue*, p.177.

The title word “Prelude” (just the word, not any of the music), which Jiang Qing had ordered to be inserted before the original title, “Yellow River Boatmen’s Song,” was also removed because it did not relate to the actual content of the music. The *Yellow River Piano Concerto*, then, gained a new lease on life at the beginning of the 1990s, which was in accordance with its genuine musical aesthetic and style.

CHAPTER THREE

THE MUSIC

The *Yellow River Piano Concerto* is a synthesis of Chinese and Western aesthetics and styles. The piece combines pianistic idioms of Liszt and Chopin,⁶³ with the instrumental idioms of such traditional Chinese instruments as *zheng*, *pipa*, and *yangqin*. The music itself is partly rooted in a Chinese folk style, and the titles of its four pieces are programmatic, evoking scenes from nature and historical events, in keeping with the traditional Chinese aesthetic of using poetic titles. To understand the value of this music, therefore, it is first crucial to understand the traditional thinking in China regarding programmatic titles and musical interpretation. I will utilize an analytical approach to look at the music itself in terms of its modality, rhythm, motivic ideas, thematic and melodic principles, and harmonization. I will explore its relationship with traditional Chinese instruments in terms of characteristic idioms, colour, and performance practice. Finally, I will define its association with the original text from the *Yellow River Great Chorus*, and search for possible associations with certain Chinese folk styles.

The Nature and Aesthetic of Titles

There is a legend, commonly known to most Chinese people, about a venerable musician-scholar named Po Ya who lived during the Spring-Autumn period (722-481 B.C.).

⁶³ According to the pianists I interviewed, all of whom lived through and played the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* during the Cultural Revolution, Liszt and Chopin were then viewed as good, patriotic musicians, and their idioms were implemented in this *Concerto*.

One day Po Ya was playing the *qin* zither. Zhong Ziqi, another musician-scholar passed by and stopped to tell Po Ya that he heard high mountains and flowing water in his music. Po Ya was deeply impressed by his understanding appreciation of the meaning in his music, and the two became “bosom friends” (*zhi yin*).⁶⁴ This legend illustrates how ancient musician-scholars conceived of music via allusions to artistic depiction of the natural world. Indeed, the natural world permeated much of their music. Relative to this point, it is important to note that the Chinese pictogram for the word “music” (*yue*) is the same as that for the word “appreciation,” (*yao*). The same word is differentiated only by pronunciation and intonation. So the same character has a double meaning, which illustrates a fundamental point in Chinese philosophy.

There is also a famous Chinese proverb, which I have translated thus: “Even though you are positioned in the court of a monarch, your will and ambition should dwell among forests and springs.” Another famous proverb states: “A benevolent person appreciates [makes music of] mountains; a wise person appreciates [makes music of] water.” These philosophies also illustrate the way traditional musicians infused their works with images of the natural world. The titles and the musical content of the *Concerto* follow this orthodox thinking and tradition, and in listening to it, one can envision a traditional Chinese “Mountain-Water” painting or scene, and feel the emotions evoked by such natural scenes.

The titles themselves, in traditional Chinese music, are often miniature works of poetic art. Burton Watson reminds us that the Chinese people have a long and strong tradition of poetry and history — indeed, these have been described as “the two glories of

⁶⁴ *Zhi yin* is literally translated as “understanding music.” Only your bosom friend can read your heart and divine the meaning in your music.”

Chinese literature.”⁶⁵ Because the Chinese truly love poetry, and because poetry and music are viewed as related disciplines, traditional Chinese music is frequently explained using poetic titles. Music and poetry are companions then, and carry a common aesthetic: to express scenes from the natural world, together with the emotional states they evoke. The moon is a good example of this evocation, and many musical works carry such descriptive and poetic titles as “Spring Night On a Moonlight River” (*Chunjiang Hua Yueye*), or “Clouds Chasing the Moon” (*Caiyun Zhuiyue*). Even though these poetic titles allude to idyllic scenes in nature, it is important to stress that in the Chinese aesthetic, the emotions these scenes elicit are of overriding significance — these are what capture the spirit of the music (*quyi*). In such Western music as Liszt’s and Debussy’s programmatic works, poetic titles also invoke emotional states via their descriptions of the natural world. So too, in the *Concerto*, the Yellow River itself is used in a poetic way to symbolize China, Chinese people, and the Chinese spirit. In the “Yellow River Boatmen’s Song,” for example, the opening cadenza-like piano solo reminds me of this poetic line by Li Po:

Have you not seen
the Yellow River waters descending from the sky,
racing restless toward the ocean, never to return?⁶⁶

It was not only the natural world that inspired Chinese musicians. China’s historical legacy also attracted them. *Ambush From Ten Sides* (*Shimian Maifu*), for example, written for the *pipa*, is the original title of an historical event that took place during the period of Three Kingdoms (220-265 A.D.). The programmatic content of the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* reflects this traditional interest. It recounts the history of the Yellow River

⁶⁵ Watson, *Early Chinese Literature*, p.19.

⁶⁶ Watson, *Chinese Lyricism*, p.144.

(symbolizing China), the Sino-Japanese war, and the Cultural Revolution. Thus, the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* shares the tradition of Chinese music in its titles, the social climate, the scenery, politics, history, and philosophy.

Musicologist Han Kuo-Huang writes:

It is uncommon to find Chinese instrumental pieces without some sort of descriptive or suggestive title. In a printed concert program or a book containing instrumental compositions, nine out of ten pieces are fully annotated, some even accompanied with poems. When the *dizi* flute master Lai Siu-hang gave a recital at Northern Illinois University in 1977, he repeatedly asked me to explain the meaning of each piece to the audience. His concern is not an unusual case. The famous *chin* performer-scholar Ch'a Fu-hsi once wrote: Every time when an old *chin* player is about to play a piece that is not familiar to his audience, he would tell them grumblingly about the title and what it is supposed to express.⁶⁷

In developing Chinese piano music, composers in mainland China have adhered to this traditional practice of scholarly interpretation with extra-musical ideas. Titles or programs have played a significant role — one example being in *A Hundred Birds Pay Homage to the Phoenix* (*Bainiao Chaofeng*), arranged for piano by Wang Jianzhong. The *Concerto*, in keeping with this tradition, has an annotated program on the first page, and its assigned titles and subtitles are designed to strengthen the audience's understanding of the piece as a whole.

"A traditional Chinese intellectual is sensitive but restrained," writes Han again. "To prove his points in discussing an issue, he quotes history and proverbs rather than using the deductive method, and depends on concrete examples rather than abstract ideas."⁶⁸ This explains both the Chinese fondness for titles in traditional music, and why Chinese musicians never really developed an abstract theoretical approach towards understanding music.

⁶⁷ Han, "The Chinese Concept of Program Music." *Asian Music*, p.18.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p.18.

Prelude: Yellow River Boatmen's Song

The music of the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* is modeled on the spirit of the lyrics from the *Yellow River Great Chorus*. "Friends! Have you been to the Yellow River? Have you ever crossed the Yellow River? Do you remember the scene of the boatmen struggling for their lives, fighting against the frightful, raging waves? If you have forgotten, then listen!" These words are recited before the "Yellow River Boatmen's Song" in the *Chorus*. Written by the lyricist Guan Weiran, the text suggests a picture of the harsh life lived by those on the Yellow River. These are not the sacred waters of Liszt's "Les Jeux d'Eaux à la Villa d'Este." This is not a painterly description of the effects of water and light, the reflections of clouds and trees; neither is it the ripples of raindrops in Debussy's "Reflet dans l'eau." It is the realistic life of the Chinese during the Sino-Japanese war. The spirit of the boatmen is symbolic of the Chinese cultural spirit, the tragic spirit, and the persevering spirit — which are indeed reflected in the *Concerto*.

The orchestra opens the *Concerto* with a descending whole tone (F# grace note descending to E), which is associated with the call of the boatmen;⁶⁹ and a series of Lisztian chromatic scales, accompanied by turbulent tremolos in the string section, which suggest the meaning of the subtitle: "the raging waves of the river." The piano enters with an arpeggio like upward sweeping figuration (Example 1) after the short orchestral introduction.

⁶⁹ Shaanxi Minzu Minjian Yinyue Bianji Weiyuanhui, Bian, *Zhuengguo Minjian Gequ Jichen (Shaanxi Jun-Yi)*, (Shaanxi, 1984), p.9. This characteristic pattern, of a descending whole tone as the orchestra enters, is the same as that found in the opening segment of the "Yellow River Boatmen's Call" (*Huanghe Chuangeng Haozi*). Boatmen sing this type of song while they drag the heavy rafts (*pifa*) into and out of the Yellow River.

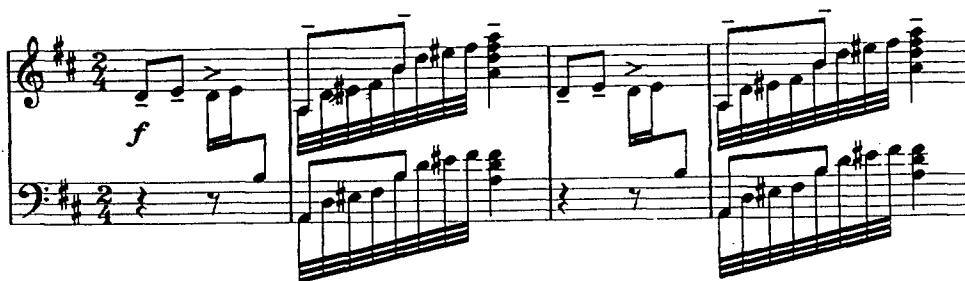
Example 1. Yellow River Boatmen's Song, m.16

The harmonic elements of this figuration are a dominant ninth chord (A-C#-E-G-B flat) with

a passing tone F# added. The rhythmic idea between the right and left-hand parts is a combination of regular rhythms and cross-rhythms, featuring patterns of five against four, or four against three. “Unexpected accents and high dynamic levels render images of aggressive waves dashing upon unexpected rocks. Mixed moods are stirred up: a combination of terror and courage with sacrifice. The music feels as overwhelming as the waters of the Yellow River. While boatmen gamble their lives upon the river, soldiers sacrifice their flesh in battle and never return.”⁷⁰

This cadenza-like opening is followed by the main thematic idea (Example 2). It is reminiscent of the solo opening in the first movement of Chopin’s Piano Concerto No. 2, where the main theme’s entrance is also delayed by a descending cadenza-like figuration. In other words, the main thematic idea of the “Yellow River Boatmen’s Song” does not enter until measure 17.

Example 2. Yellow River Boatmen’s Song, mm.17-28



⁷⁰ This interpretation was standard during the Cultural Revolution, according to pianist Lin Min. This *Concerto* was played to conform with the model performance of Yin Chengzong, and there was only one fixed interpretation allowed in its performance.



The formal structure is different, however, from Chopin's. It is based on an original song, so instead of following the Western sonata form, it is structured as follows:

- A: mm. 1-24 (see score, from the opening to No.2)
with the eight-measure main theme
- A': mm. 25-50 (see score, No.2 to four measures after No.4)
- B: mm. 51-66 (see score, four measures after No.4 to No.6)
transformation of the main theme
- Transition: mm. 67-74 (see score, No.6 to No.7)
- A'': mm. 75-83 (see score, No.7 to No.8)
transformation of the thematic material in the A section
- C: mm. 84-92 (see score, No.8 to No.10)
transformation of the main theme
- Coda: mm. 92-113 (see score, No.10 to the end)

The melodic line of the main theme echoes the opening segment of the song "The

East Is Red” (Example 3). Both similarly emphasize the three scale degrees *Gong* (the first), *Shang* (the second), and *Yu* (the sixth) of their pentatonic scales.⁷¹ Their voice-leading is similar too, characterized by a melodic shape ascending a second and descending a fifth. “The East Is Red” is, in fact, an old folk tune (which Xian Xinghai might have known⁷²) from the northern part of Shaanxi province, through which the Yellow River flows. During the Sino-Japanese War, a farmer, Li Youyuan, wrote lyrics for this tune, praising Mao as a great Chairman.⁷³ Subsequently, “The East Is Red” became a “sacred song” during the Cultural Revolution.

Example 3. “The East Is Red”



The main thematic ideas are structured in a folk style that is similar to “work songs” (*haozi*). Here is a typical example of *haozi* (Example 4) from Sichuan province.

⁷¹ The Chinese *Gong-Shang* system is equivalent to the Western movable-do-sol-fêge system. Pitch names, such as *Gong-do*, *Shang-re*, *Jiao-mi*, *Zhi-sol*, and *Yu-la*, are used to denote relative rather than absolute pitches.

⁷² An interesting insight provided by Dr. Thrasher during our discussion, December 5, 1995.

⁷³ Wenhuaabu Wenxue Yishu Yanjiuyuan, Yinyue Yanjiusuo, Bian, *Zhongguo Minge*, Diyi Juan, (Shanghai: Shanghai Wenyi Chubanshe, 1980), pp.7 and 31.

Example 4. *Ping Shui Haozi*⁷⁴



Haozi literally means “calling,” or “shouting,” signifying the cries of workers as they work.

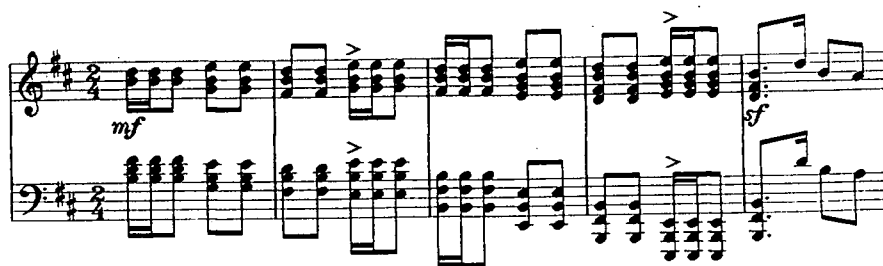
“The function of this type of song is to accompany work or to relieve hardship during work.”⁷⁵ The main theme in the “Yellow River Boatmen’s Song” is structured like a dialogue between the piano solo and a grand tutti. This stylistic organization features solo calls and unison responses, imitating the style of a typical “work song” — the *Ping Shui Haozi*, for example. A strong and repetitive rhythmic pattern in the main theme is modeled on a typical ostinato that is also often found in “work songs.” The lyrics originally sung in the main theme of the *Chorus*, are: “Black clouds, na! cover the sky. Boiling waves, na! high as a mountain. Cold wind, na! whips the face. Raging breakers, na! pound the boat.” A sound-grasp of the intonation in the lyrics and of the full meaning of the words is crucial for interpreting and performing the main theme, which features four repetitive patterns. The main theme should be voiced in a steadfast and rustic tone, with appropriately spaced timing on the calling tone “na!” to suggest the actual cry of the boatmen. A fine perception of the folk style in *haozi*, and the actual *Chorus* lyrics, are required if those four repetitive patterns are not to sound boring and meaningless.

⁷⁴ Du Yaxiong, *Zhongguo Mingde Jingxuan*, (Chengdu: Sichuan Renmin Chubanshe, 1984), p.28.

⁷⁵ Han Kuo-Huang, “Folk Songs of the Han Chinese: Characteristics and Classifications.” *Asian Music*, (Spring/Summer, 1989), p.113.

As in the typical melodic style of the “work songs,” melodic material is limited in the main thematic idea. The main theme illustrates an economy of motivic content, which is based on four pitches: D, E, A, and B. The motivic content is treated as a fixed idea and transformed in each of the sections. In the B section (Example 5), it is transformed into a series of bouncing chords with emphasis on pitches D and E. These bouncing chords are organized to reflect the subtitle assigned to this section, “Decisive and optimistic spirit.” The rhythmic ideas are characterized by alternations between 16th and 8th notes, which resemble the characteristic dancing rhythms found in “Mongolian Tune” (Example 6). These characteristic Mongolian dancing rhythms illustrate the primitive vigour of the Mongolian people and are used here (Example 5) to strengthen the meaning of the subtitle. The dialogues between the solo piano and orchestra (see score, four measures before No.5) are characterized by a typical Chinese melodic pattern that stresses a weaving back and forth between minor third and major second. These dialogues, which are also characterized by a dotted rhythm, represent the rustic, energetic voices of boatmen.

Example 5. Yellow River Boatmen’s Song, mm.51-64



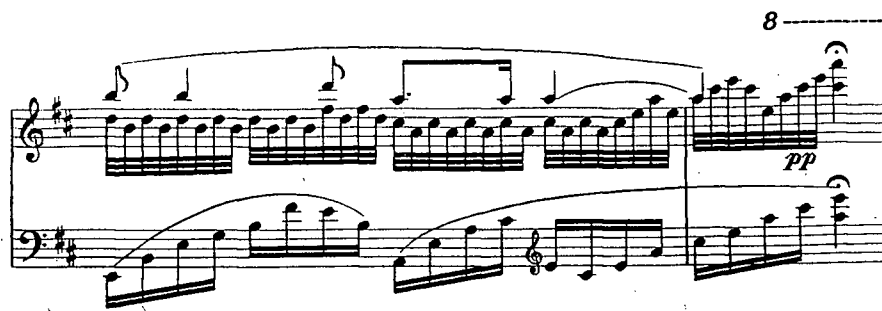
The image shows two systems of musical notation. The first system consists of a piano (p) part in the lower staff and a violin part in the upper staff. The piano part features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the violin part provides harmonic support with chords and sustained notes. The second system continues the piece, with the piano part showing more complex rhythmic patterns and the violin part featuring a melodic line with slurs and accents. Both systems include dynamic markings such as *mf* and *f*, and a tempo or mood marking of 8.

Example 6. "Mongolian Tune"

The image shows four systems of musical notation, each consisting of a piano (p) part in the lower staff and a violin part in the upper staff. The piano part features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the violin part provides harmonic support with chords and sustained notes. The systems are arranged in a vertical sequence, with each system containing four measures of music. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, slurs, and dynamic markings like *mf* and *f*.

In the C section (Example 7), the thematic idea is transformed into a Chinese ditty, or “little tune” (*xiaodiao*), accompanied by a harp. According to the lyrics in the *Chorus*, the C section represents the boatmen finally arriving at the shore with great relief. According to the subtitle, added by the committee-composers, the thematic idea in this section symbolizes soldiers seeing the dawn of victory. This theme expresses a happy, delightful, and gentle mood. It is structurally similar to the famous Chinese tune, “Jasmine Flowers” (Example 8).

Example 7. Yellow River Boatmen’s Song, mm.88-92



Example 8. "Jasmine Flowers"



Using a Western analytical approach to Examples 7 and 8, it can be seen that the antecedent phrase, which features two repetitive and parallel segments, is followed by a consequent phrase. In the traditional Chinese approach to phrasing structure, however, the four-phrase-structure melodies follow the typical old sequence of *qi* (opening), *cheng* (inheriting), *zhuan* (turning), and *he* (closing). This is an organizational concept borrowed from Chinese literature.⁷⁶ This fixed and clear four-phrase structure is typically used in the Chinese *xiaodiao*. The lyrical, melodic character of "Jasmine Flowers" and its static rhythmic gestures are adopted in the C section. I have attempted to use the accompanying figurations in the solo part of the C section to accompany "Jasmine Flowers," and they actually fit well together. This strengthens a hypothesis I have that Xian Xinghai had the style of this *xiaodiao* in mind when composing the C section theme.

⁷⁶ Wu Die, *Zhongguo Mingde Xüanlü Jiegou Yu Diaoshi*, (Taipei: Quanyin Yuepu Chubanshe, 1988), p.18.

Modal melodic lines throughout the entire piece are accompanied mainly by triadic harmonization. They are in a D-Gong mode, which means that a D, E, F#, A, B pentatonic scale, centering on D, is used. The emphasis is on major second, perfect fourth, and minor third intervals. This D-Gong mode is closely associated with the local C-Shang mode (a D, E, F#, G, A, B, C seven-tone scale centering in D) of Northern Shaanxi province. The D-Gong mode and C-Shang mode share five common pitches, and both emphasize the significance of the F# pitch. Xian put particular emphasis on the falling whole tone (F# descending to E) throughout the entire piece to evoke the folk flavour of Northern Shaanxi province and to reinforce the “calling” and “crying” of boatmen.

The characteristic rhythm in this piece is mainly in duple mensuration, and is often accented on the second beat. In Example 1, the accent switches to the second beat, the upbeat: this is a clever musical device, the upbeat echoing the heavy exhalation of the hard-rowing boatmen as they lift their oars out of the water. This is in stark contrast to the gentle rowing movement of a Mendelssohn or Chopin Barcarolle. Western Barcarolles, mainly in 6/8 time, were derived from the Sicilienne dance rhythms, and are often associated with romance. Traditional Chinese music, however, is rarely associated with dance in triple rhythm. So, a duple rhythm is often found in traditional Chinese music as well as in boat songs. A good example of this is the “Boat Song” (Example 9), written in 1952, by Lu Huabuo (1914-1994). This piano work arouses the spirit of boatmen and their families, and is also related to their daily life along the river.

Example 9. "Boat Song"



From mm. 29-32 (Example 10), a combination of triple and duple rhythm describes the feeling of seasick boatmen in peril on the choppy waters of the Yellow River; unexpected accents suggest boats tossing about on the waves and bumping into rocks. The melodic material is derived from the opening three notes of the main thematic idea. It is characterized by many repetitions, and shows a limited number of fixed melodic and rhythmic modules. The committee-composers used a sequential technique to expand the music and carry it to the conclusion of the A section. The main theme is then restated in a texture richer than it had at the beginning, and is energized further with an accelerating tempo.

Example 10. Yellow River Boatmen's Song, mm.29-32



The climax is reached in the A" section (Example 11), where the boatmen sail through the most dangerous spot on the river and finally arrive at the shore with hope in their breasts. The opening calls, in a descending whole tone (F# descending to E), echo those of the orchestral introduction. The descending whole tone is repeated four times, accompanied by a descending bass line (C-B-Bflat-A) and upward broken-chord figurations that feature irregular rhythms. A series of Lisztian fast octaves and big chords follows the climactic statement, which features a strong dissonant clash made by the simultaneous sounding of two pitches: B and B flat.

Example 11. Yellow River Boatmen's Song, mm.75-83

The musical score for Example 11, "Yellow River Boatmen's Song," measures 75-83. It is written in 3/4 time and the key of D major. The score consists of five systems of staves. The first system (mm. 75-76) features a melody in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef, with a forte (f) dynamic. The second system (mm. 77-78) continues the melody and bass line, with a mezzo-forte (mp) dynamic. The third system (mm. 79-80) shows a more complex texture with multiple voices in the treble and a bass line in the bass clef, with a mezzo-forte (mp) dynamic. The fourth system (mm. 81-82) features a dense texture with multiple voices in the treble and a bass line in the bass clef, with a mezzo-forte (mp) dynamic. The fifth system (mm. 83) is a grand finale with a very loud fortissimo (fff) dynamic, featuring a dense texture of multiple voices in the treble and a bass line in the bass clef.

In the final section (Example 12), the main theme shows a combination of big, repetitive chords and fast jumps in the left-hand part. Its vigorous, even aggressive, style represents “a brave spirit, and the will to continue fighting,” as designated by the subtitle. This virtuoso style succeeds in stirring up emotions; but I do not think this heavy passage is as powerful as the original single vocal line in the *Chorus*, where the original text “Row! Row! Row!” is sung, the music permeates the meaning, and the text speaks directly to the heart.

Example 12. Yellow River Boatmen’s Song, mm.104-113

The musical score for Example 12, "Yellow River Boatmen's Song," measures 104-113, is presented in three systems. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The score begins with a forte (ff) dynamic marking. The first system (measures 104-108) features a repetitive, aggressive theme in the right hand, characterized by big, repetitive chords and fast jumps in the left hand. The second system (measures 109-112) continues this theme, with the right hand playing a series of chords and the left hand playing a fast, ascending scale. The third system (measures 113-114) concludes the passage with a final chord in the right hand and a descending scale in the left hand, marked with a double bar line.

The cadenza-like passage in the final four measures (Example 12) adopts the motif of a descending whole tone (F# grace note to E). This passage is reminiscent of the opening cadenza-like solo passage, and recalls the main theme in the final two measures. This cyclic technique of bringing back the main thematic ideas at the conclusion is characteristic of some Chinese instrumental music.

The “Yellow River Boatmen’s Song” could be categorized as a Fantasia. The sonata form, often used in the first movement of a Western concerto, was not used in this piece. The overall texture is homophonic, and characterized by many unisons in a grand chordal style. This is understandable, given the original purpose of this piece: a song for workers, farmers, and soldiers. The combining of the Chinese spirit with a virtuoso style has encouraged pianists in mainland China to practice and perform this piece with enthusiasm. Above all, as Xian Xinghai writes, “If you listen to this piece with a calm heart, then you may discover a painting of boatmen rowing and fighting adversity.”⁷⁷ The legacy of Xian’s excellent use of musical imagery and his lively, pictorial melodies provided the committee-composers with rich keyboard colours that almost make painters out of pianists.

Yellow River Ode

“Ah! Friends! The Yellow River, appearing with heroic vigour in Asia, represents our national spirit: great, resolute, and strong. Here, we face the Yellow River and sing our homage to the Yellow River.” This text was recited before the opening of the “Yellow River Ode,” written for tenor or baritone voice, in the *Chorus*. Similar to a Chinese “art song” (*yishu gequ*), the formal structure of this song was retained in the *Concerto*, along with its

⁷⁷ Xian, *Huanghe Dahechang*, p.61.

original expressive, unrestrained, and moving solo voice, which evokes a passionate mood.

The ternary form frequently found in the slow movements of Western piano concertos was not used in this piece. The “Yellow River Ode” is structured as follows:

- A: mm. 1-16 (see score, to No.1)
the main theme introduced by the orchestra
- A: mm. 16-35 (see score, No.1 to No.2)
the main theme restated by the piano solo
- B: mm. 36-49 (see score, No.2 to No.3)
transformation of the thematic material in the A section
- C: mm. 50-59 (see score, No.3 to No.5)
transformation of the thematic material in the A section
- Coda: mm. 60-66 (see score, No.5)
- The orchestral postlude: mm. 67-73

The orchestral A section begins with a cello part, accompanied by tremolos in the string section and a solo bassoon line. The choice of this orchestration shows a deep, dark, and narrative quality that evokes an ancient and historical atmosphere. This atmosphere is also suggested by the subtitle, “Go back in your mind and remember your nation’s long, ancient history.”

The main thematic idea is stated in the cello part. Its pentatonic melodies often centre on *Yu* (G) and *Shang* (C), which suggests the B flat-*Shang* mode. Its irregular phrasing is coupled with duple and triple mensurations. The opening motif (B flat-C ascending to G) is restated or transformed throughout the piece, and it is reminiscent of the opening segment (D-E descending to B) of the main theme in the “Yellow River Boatmen’s Song”; they share a similar melodic shape and intervals.

The main thematic idea is restated by the solo piano (Example 13), which enters in a gesture resembling the solo entrance in the second movement of Chopin’s Second Piano Concerto (Example 14).

Example 13. Yellow River Ode, mm.16-20

Example 13 shows a musical score for the Yellow River Ode, measures 16-20. The score is written for piano in 4/4 time, featuring a treble and bass staff. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The music is marked *mf* (mezzo-forte). The melody in the treble staff begins with a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) and continues with a series of chords and single notes. The bass staff features a continuous triplet of eighth notes (F3, G3, A3) that runs throughout the passage. The notation includes various musical symbols such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

Example 14. Chopin Second Piano Concerto (the second movement)

Example 14 shows a musical score for the second movement of Chopin's Second Piano Concerto. The score is written for piano in 3/4 time, featuring a treble and bass staff. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The music is marked *molto con delicatezza* (very much with delicacy). The melody in the treble staff begins with a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) and continues with a series of chords and single notes. The bass staff features a continuous triplet of eighth notes (F3, G3, A3) that runs throughout the passage. The notation includes various musical symbols such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

In the Chopin example, the main theme starts with an ascending broken chord in A flat major; Chopin's characteristic ornamented melody follows. In the "Yellow River Ode," the main theme also starts with an ascending broken chord, but it is rooted in a Chinese pentatonic B flat-*Shang* mode. An emphasis on major second, minor third, perfect fourth, and fifth intervals occurs throughout in the main thematic idea. Thus, C-D-G chord, C-F-G chord, and D-F-G chord, which capture the native Chinese musical flavour with their pentatonic sonority, are conspicuous in the accompaniment. The figuration in the accompaniment, which resembles Chopin's typical accompanying figuration with its wide compass and sustained basses, suggests the gentle movement of the Yellow River.

The main theme is the same as that used for the *Chorus* lyrics: "I stand on the top of a high mountain and look down at the boiling Yellow River racing towards the south-east with golden waves and roaring billows." The melodic contour in an arch-like form, rising to a high pitch D and moving down to a low pitch C, reflects the movement of the singer, who "stands on high ground, looking down." As Xian said: "The "Yellow River Ode" is composed in a Chinese reciting or intoning style (*ge seng*), racing and unrestrained; it is a strong and passionate homage sung to the greatness of the Yellow River. The voice is grand, with pathos, and in the accompaniment you can hear the strength of the torrent of the Yellow River."⁷⁸ An example of this reciting or intoning style is shown in the main thematic idea, where the melody ascends to a high *tessitura* before gradually descending. This style is characteristically used in songs of homage, and was used, for example, by Liu Xuean in his well-known Chinese "art song" (*yishu gequ*), the "Great Wall Ode" (*Chang Cheng Yao*)

⁷⁸ *ibid.*, p.61.

(Example 15). The melody here shares the same features of the thematic ideas as the “Yellow River Ode,” the grand voice ascending also to a high *tessitura* before descending.

Example 15. “Great Wall Ode”



Examples 16 and 17 also suggest the movement of the Yellow River through various figurations in the accompaniment. In Example 16, crossing-hand figurations allude to a moving picture of water slowly swirling down the mountainside. As the original *Chorus* lyrics state, “Nine tributaries, one by one, break away from the river’s main flow, spiraling down the mountain as they go.” A tempo slower than that at the beginning of the piece is indicated in this passage. Pianists may wish to emulate the free and natural rubato (which is often heard in slow sections of the Beijing Opera) to express this “mountain-water” atmosphere. The beginning of the melody in this passage (Example 16) is based on the opening segment of the main theme, and is only slightly developed for four measures. After this, the concluding phrase of the main theme is recalled. Because of the frequent emphasis on the *Zhi* (F) in the cadences of phrases, the modality centres on the B flat-*Zhi* mode.

Example 16. Yellow River Ode, mm.27-34

Example 16 is a musical score for the Yellow River Ode, measures 27-34. It is written for piano in 3/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The score consists of three systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The first system (measures 27-29) features a melodic line in the treble and a bass line with triplets. The second system (measures 30-32) continues the melodic and bass lines, with the bass line featuring more triplets. The third system (measures 33-34) concludes the passage with a final melodic phrase and a bass line ending on a low note.

Example 17. Yellow River Ode, mm.35-43

Example 17 is a musical score for the Yellow River Ode, measures 35-43. It is written for piano in 3/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The score consists of two systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The first system (measures 35-37) features a melodic line in the treble and a bass line with triplets and a quintuplet. The second system (measures 38-43) continues the melodic and bass lines, with the bass line featuring more triplets and a quintuplet. The score concludes with a final melodic phrase and a bass line ending on a low note.



The sixteenth-note figurations in the accompaniment of Example 17 are written in regular and quintuple rhythm to suggest the pouring movement of the Yellow River as it “races down from the mountain to the sea.” Example 17 is written in the *ge seng* style, and it reminds the audience of the Yellow River valley’s historical development. According to the lyrics of the *Chorus*, “Ah! Yellow River! You are the cradle of the Chinese nation. Five thousand years of national culture have been created here. Countless heroic acts have taken place at your side. Ah! Yellow River! You are a great, determined, and powerful giant. Our national heroes, sons, and daughters will model themselves after you.” The melody enters with the stress on the two pitch classes (B flat and G) of the opening motif; it returns with slight rhythmic alterations to the opening segments of the main theme. The melody centres in the B flat-*Zhi* mode at the beginning of Example 17, and moves to the B flat-*Shang* mode.

In the C section (see music score No.3), stereotypical unisons and massive chords

represent the meaning of the section's subtitle, "Pay homage to the revolutionary tradition of the Chinese people." The melodic line is derived from the opening motif of the main theme and reminds one of the main theme from the "Yellow River Boatmen's Song." This section centres in the B flat-*Shang* mode and shifts to the B flat *Zhi* mode. The national anthem (Example 18) of the People's Republic of China is woven into the final part (Example 19) to express the meaning of the subtitle's slogan: "China has stood up among the world in the East." Those parts of the anthem, where majestic dotted rhythms are featured (see score No.5), are introduced by the brass section and are characterized by a triadic melodic line centering in B flat major. The melodic line in the solo piano is similar to those melodic segments of the national anthem that start at measure five. Even without knowing this national anthem, one may infer a sense of the heroic spirit through the grand and majestic chordal unisons.

Example 18. The National Anthem





Example 19. Yellow River Ode, mm. 60-66



The melodic idea in the orchestral postlude is based on the second part of the first phrase of the main theme. It is organized simply in a sequential passage, and it gradually descends to a low register. This piece may be seen as a song without words — conveying the

image of a poet reciting a magnificent ode to the nation's spirit.

Yellow River Resentment

This piece is based on the three thematic ideas in two movements from the *Chorus*, “Yellow River Ballad” and “Yellow River Hatred.” The “Yellow River Resentment” is organized into the following formal structure:

Prelude: mm.1-3

A: mm.4-55 (see score, No.1 up to one measure before No.5)

B: mm.56-93 (see score, one measure before No.5 up to three measures after No.9)

C: mm.94-137 (see score, three measures after No.9 up to No.13)

A': mm.138-157 (see score, No.13 to the end)

This type of sectional structure is organized to correspond with the sectional structure of the *Chorus* lyrics. It is also important here to note that the committee-composers focused their attention more on musical content than formal structure. Music was used to stir up patriotic and political emotions.

The Prelude begins with a *bangdi*⁷⁹ solo (Example 20) accompanied by the tremolos in the strings, which conveys the idea of the subtitle: “the revolutionaries’ military base [in Yan’an] is bathed in sunlight and the people are full of hope.” This *bangdi* melody is structurally and stylistically similar to the famous Shaanxi *xintianyou*⁸⁰ “Lan Huahua”⁸¹

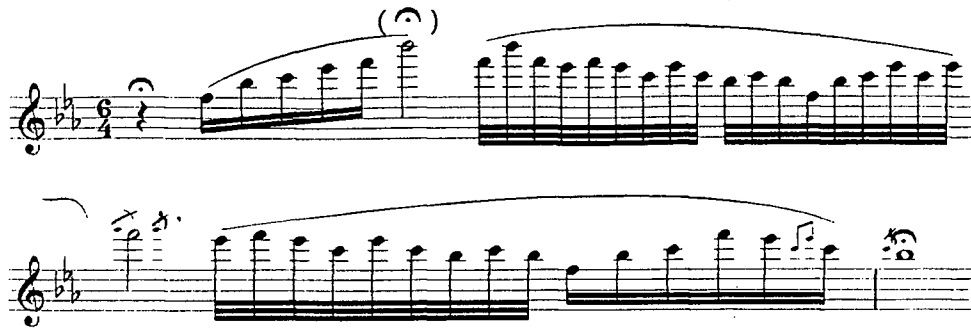
⁷⁹ A *Bangdi* is a type of Chinese bamboo flute with a mouth hole, six finger holes, and another hole covered by a membrane, which gives the instrument its characteristic vibrating sound. It has a high voice range giving it a bright quality.

⁸⁰ *Xintianyou* is a common generic name for *shange* (mountain songs), popular in the northern part of Shaanxi and Shanxi provinces.

⁸¹ Committee-composers steeped themselves in the local Shaanxi folk music played on bamboo flutes. It is possible they knew this famous Shaanxi *xintianyou* well and adopted its style. Besides, the revolutionary spirit of the *bangdi* solo part reflects the spirit of this brave woman, Lan Huahua. (The lyrics of “Lan Huahua” mention the peasant girl of this name. Lan Huahua is described as intelligent and beautiful, but forced into an

(Example 21).

Example 20. Yellow River Resentment, mm.1-2



Example 21. "Lan Huahua"



"Lan Huahua"⁸² is lyrical in nature and often sung with a freer rhythm than that notated. Its melody is often embellished, with the singers adding their own ornamented notes. This *bangdi* tune also features the quality of free rhythm, the entire improvisatory figurations written out by the committee-composers. Both tunes of the *bangdi* solo and "Lan Huahua" are in a two-phrase structure. They are both characterized stylistically with the "high-singing" (*gaoge*) voice notated with *fermatas* in a high *tessitura* at the beginning.

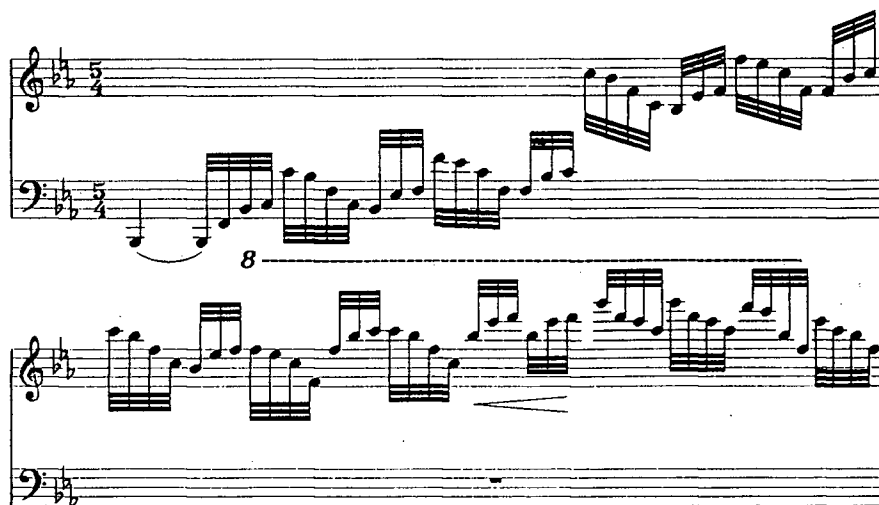
arranged marriage, which was common in the old Chinese feudal society, with an old man. Lan Huahua rebelled against this enforced marriage in the strongest way possible for her in those days: by committing suicide. In that society, this action was considered revolutionary, a daring rejection of the feudal society at that time.)

⁸² Zhou Chuanrueng, *The Complete Collection of Chinese Folk Songs*, (Taipei: Limin Wuenhua Chubanshe, 1979), p.138.

They both begin with a perfect fourth and emphasize the interval of a perfect fourth in their melodic contour.

Following the short *bangdi* solo, the piano solo (Example 22) enters with idiomatic gestures reminiscent of the *zheng*⁸³ with its plucked strings and improvisatory sweeping movement (*guazou*).⁸⁴ At the beginning, this passage features running 32nd notes, and it ends with lyrical *legato* lines — both of which are typical of the *zheng*'s figuration. The committee-composers succeeded in transposing the characteristically delicate, vibrating, and swift quality of the *zheng* for the piano. The *legato* lines are not meant to be played in a Western *cantabile* style. Rather, they allude to the plucking, vibrating, articulated sound of the *zheng*. This effect can be recreated by the pianist through a detached, snapping, or plucking touch on the piano keys.

Example 22. Yellow River Resentment m.3



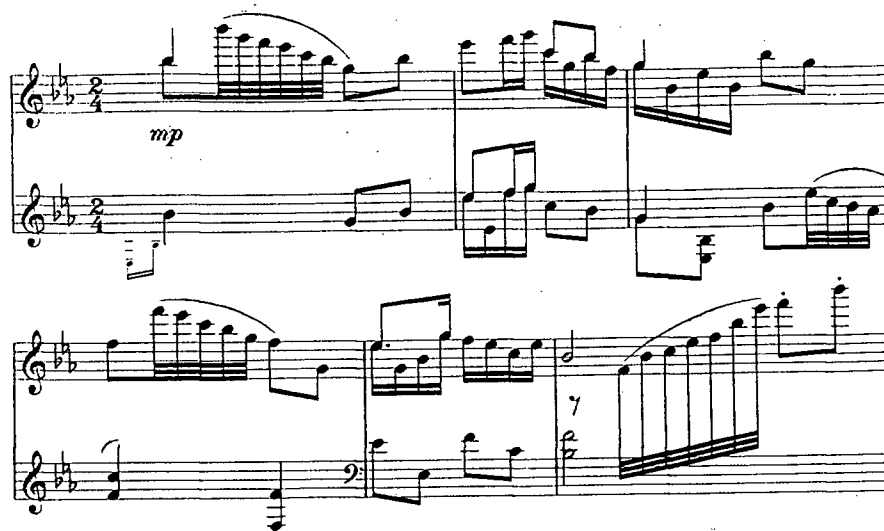
⁸³ A *Zheng* is a type of Chinese zither, shaped like a half tube, with a varying number of strings. The sixteen-stringed *zheng* is the most well-known and popular.

⁸⁴ Yuan Jingfang, *Minzu Qiyue*, fourth edition, (Beijing: Renmin Yinyue Chubanshe, 1993), p.158.



The main theme (Example 23) in the A section is also written vividly in the *zheng* idiom. The salient feature of this theme is the sound of plucking multiple notes in a single descending or ascending sweeping impulse (*gua* or *hua*), as is performed on a *zheng*. The melodic idea of this main theme may be played with a non-*legato* touch to suggest the plucking articulation. The sound of simultaneous plucking of two strings on a *zheng* is projected through a texture of unison in the piano. The sound of open fifths and octaves in the accompaniment is reminiscent of the *zheng*'s resonance and colour.

Example 23. Yellow River Resentment, mm.4-9



The main theme, (which is partially quoted in Example 23) features an irregular phrasing structure, which is organized into six-plus-eight-measure phrases. Its modality is modulated from E flat-*Zhi* mode (an E flat pentatonic scale centering on B flat) to E flat-*Shang* mode (an E flat pentatonic scale centering on F). Its style is similar to that of the folk song “Xiu Hebao”⁸⁵ (Example 24), which is popular in the northern part of Shanxi province. Both the main theme and the melody of “Xiu Hebao” are stylized with emphasis on the interval of a perfect fourth, which is a typical feature of northern Shanxi folk song.⁸⁶ The theme and melody also share the same *Shang* mode and narrative folk style; and their melodic shapes tend to be angular and disjunct. The “Xiu Hebao” is a narrative love song about a young girl thinking of her lover while she embroiders a pouch for him. The main theme narrates the story of daily life along the Yellow River and suggests the meaning of this

⁸⁵ Du, *Zhongguo Mingde Jingxuan*, p.110.

⁸⁶ Han, “Folk Songs of the Han Chinese: Characteristics and Classifications.” *Asian Music*, p.110.

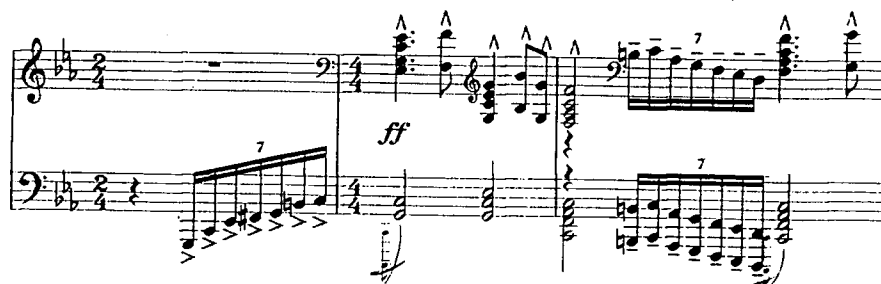
section's subtitle: "a happy and blissful life along the Yellow River."

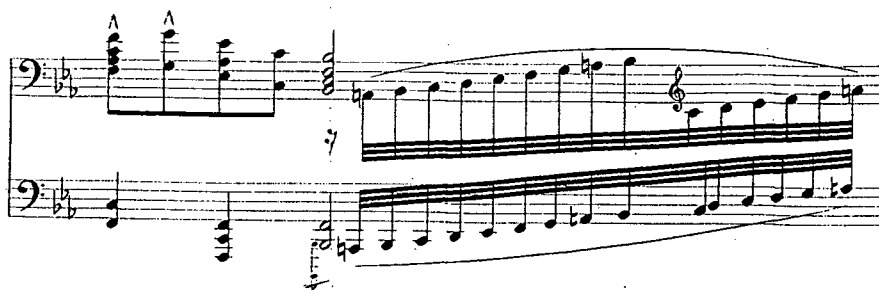
Example 24. "Xiu Hebao"



When the second theme (Example 25) enters in the B section, the mood changes abruptly from happiness to resentment. The music carries two subtitles: (1) "Pathos," and (2) "The Japanese invasion and savagery of China," in which countless people were killed. The piano enters with heavy and dark sonority, featuring big chords, octaves, and fast running 16th and 32nd notes. The intensity and pathos of the solo piano part is reinforced by the orchestra with its propelling string tremolos and a French horn call. This orchestral device, using string tremolos to intensify the piano's solo statement is similar to that used in the middle section of the second movement of Chopin's Piano Concerto No.2.

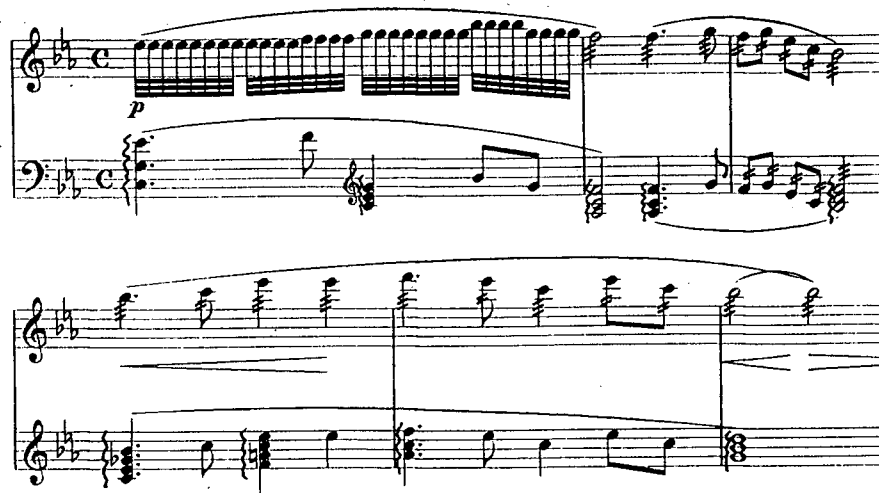
Example 25. Yellow River Resentment, mm.56-59





Example 25 shows how the irregular phrasing is characterized by short, three-measure segments; and how the homophonic texture is enriched with either ascending or descending, and cadenza-like figurations. This second theme is a pentatonic melody centering on the E flat-Gong mode (*Gong* = E flat). Its triadic functional chordal structure, with the emphasis on the dominant chord (B flat-D-F) resolving into the tonic chord (E flat-G-B flat), however, alludes to the tonality of E flat major as well. The second theme expands into its thematic variation (Example 26), which is in a slower tempo than that of the second theme itself.

Example 26. Yellow River Resentment, mm.66-74





In Example 26, the second theme is transformed from a resentful voice to a grievous tone. This theme features the characteristic idioms of the *pipa* or *yangqin*⁸⁷ with its fast, light, repetitive notes. Such repetitive notes are more easily played on a *pipa* than they are on a piano: the “rotating-finger” (*lun zhi*)⁸⁸ technique applied to the *pipa*’s silky strings readily produces such a plaintive Chinese voice, whereas it is more difficult to simulate this sound on a piano, given the heavier-hammered, metal string quality of its notes. Similarly, these fast, light repetitive notes are more naturally produced on the *yangqin*, where the player uses two sticks. Pianists may use a delicate touch to create a fragile sound that evokes the colour, vibration, resonance, and characteristic “articulation or intonation” (*yi yang dun cuo*)⁸⁹ of both *pipa* and *yangqin*. This theme reflects the *Chorus* lyrics: “I can only save and care for children and old ones. Run! Escape with your life. Our fathers and mothers are killed. I am lost and cannot go home either.”

Xian Xinghai told the pupils in his composition class: “In the tune of the second theme [Example 26], one can hear the same spirit of lament as is heard in such folk songs as

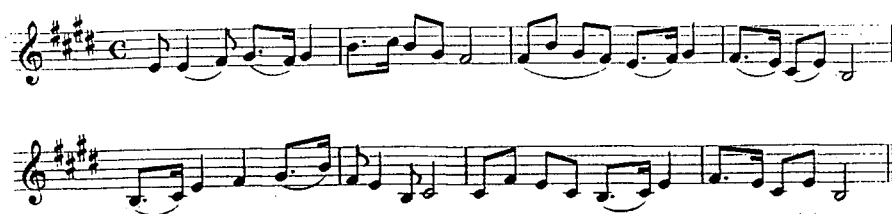
⁸⁷ A *pipa* is a pear-shape lute with four strings and twenty-four frets. It is plucked either with real or synthetic nails. A *yangqin* is a butterfly-shape hammer dulcimer with metal strings struck by a pair of bamboo sticks.

⁸⁸ Yuan, *Minzu Qiyue*, pp.230-231.

⁸⁹ *Yi yang dun cuo* is an expression denoting the four tones of Mandarin. This kind of language tone is often reflected in the *pipa* and *yangqin* sound, through its consecutive wave-like vibration and dynamic shape, which can reflect the four tones of Mandarin.

“Meng Jiang Nü”⁹⁰ [Example 27]. In the tune of the second theme, however, Meng Jiang Nü’s grief and sorrow are elevated to the level of pathos and agony.⁹¹ The folk song “Meng Jiang Nü” is typical of the genre of lament. The song tells of Meng Jiang Nü’s anguish when her husband was forced by the Qin Emperor (221-210 B.C.) to leave his home for many years in order to build the Great Wall. Meng Jiang Nü would walk for miles to see her husband and get winter clothing to him, and she sang this tune (Example 27) to express her grief.⁹² Indeed, it was said that her singing and crying had brought the Great Wall crashing down.

Example 27. “Meng Jiang Nü”



In Example 27, the melody moves generally in step-wise intervals, and its form is a four-phrase structure, each phrase having two measures. It is centered in a *E-Zhi* mode (an E, F#, G#, B, C# pentatonic scale centering on B). In Example 26, the melody also moves in a curved rather than angular contour, which emphasizes the step-wise intervals. Its phrasing is an irregular four-phrase structure: each of the first two phrases contains one-and-a-half measures, and each of the next two phrases contains three measures. It is centered in a *E flat-Gong* mode (an E flat, F, G, B flat, C pentatonic scale centering on E flat). Except for some

⁹⁰Du, *Zhongguo Minge Jingxuan*, pp.53-54.

⁹¹Ma, *Xian Xinghai Zhuan*, p.279.

⁹²Du, *Zhongguo Minge Jingxuan*, pp.153-154.

variant features between them, Example 26 and Example 27 are similar to each other because of the emphasis on the second (*Shang*) and the fifth (*Zhi*) of their pentatonic scales. Further, they resemble each other in the melodic shape of their first two phrases, which start on *Gong*, move to *Shang*, and end on *Zhi*.

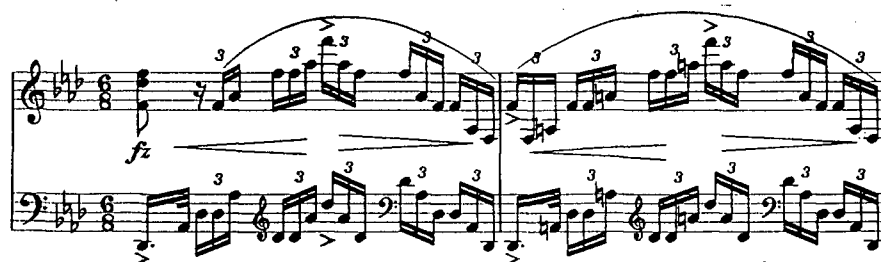
In Example 28, the second theme is transformed from the previous grievous tone into a sensual, earthy piano monologue featuring rich chordal textures and high dynamic levels. The music reflects the meaning of the *Chorus* lyrics: "You [the Japanese] and I have no cause for hatred or enmity. Even so, you have killed all my dear relatives. Why do I survive, stripped of my spirit, with nothing left to live for?" The tone is as of one crying and raving. The piano monologue is temporarily tonicized in B major and modulated to D flat major in its closing passages, where the string section accompanies the piano and restates part of the monologue's thematic idea. The figurations in these closing passages are similar to those in the final section of Chopin's Balladen op.52 (Example 29).

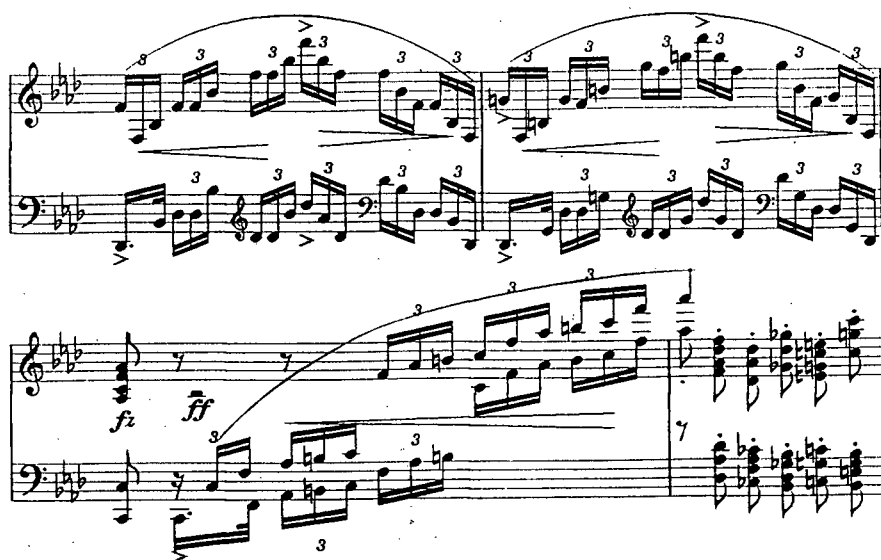
Example 28. Yellow River Resentment, mm.84-93

8-4



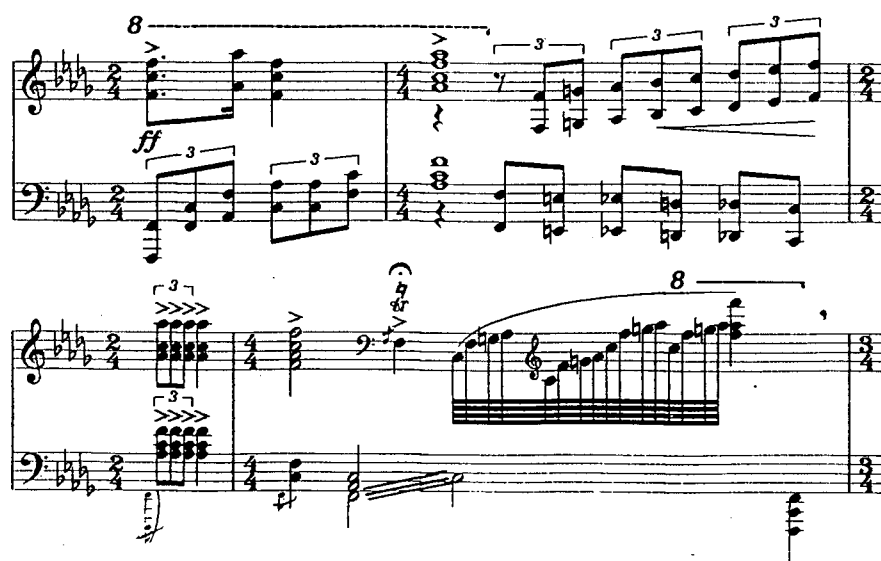
Example 29. Chopin Balladen op.52 (the final section)





Chopin utilized this characteristic figuration (Example 29), to lead into its following cadenza-like section. In the closing passages shown in Example 28, a musical impulse or momentum similar to that in the Chopin example carries the music to its next cadenza-like C section (Example 30).

Example 30. Yellow River Resentment, mm.94-107



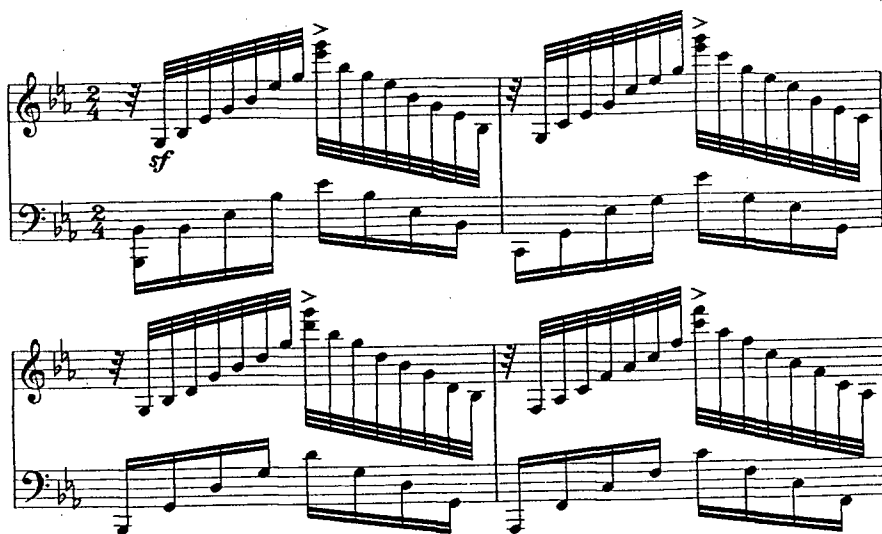
The musical score is written for piano in 3/4 time, featuring a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). It consists of five systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The first system begins with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and includes triplet markings. The second system features a rapid ascending scale in the treble staff, marked with an '8' above it, and continues with triplet patterns. The third system is characterized by dense, powerful chords in both hands, with many notes marked with accents (>). The fourth system shows a change in the bass line with a '7' below the staff and continues with triplet figures. The fifth system concludes with a final rapid scale in the treble, also marked with an '8' above it, and triplet patterns in the bass. The score is filled with complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and fast-moving lines.

The third theme (Example 30) is characterized by fast Lisztian octaves, swift scales, and powerful chords. It suggests an accusing tone, which accords with the subtitle in the C

section: "Prosecute!" The third theme reflects the spirit of the *Chorus* lyrics: "Wild wind, ah! Do not shout. Black clouds, ah! Do not hide. Yellow River, ah! Do not weep." Through his thematic idea, Xian imbued this passage with life, transposing the language tones and exhaling voice "ah" into a similar phrased musical structure, with timing that is identical to the poetic lyrics. The first phrase has four measures; it centres on F minor and features repetitive pitches on A flat descending down a third, suggesting the spirit of struggle in the lyrics "Do not shout." The second phrase has three measures, and ends with the unresolved dominant chord of D flat major. Its short phrasing and unstable harmonic quality vividly reflect the mood of the words, "Do not hide." The third phrase, with its seven long measures, renders the image of the long and great Yellow River; it finally resolves in D flat major to reflect the tones of "Do not weep." These three phrases suggest the natural qualities of "Wild wind," "Black cloud," and "Yellow River" by using an active rhythm with dotted eighths and short sixteenths. The combination of duple and triple mensuration corresponds to the metre and cadence of the *Chorus* lyrics.

The final A' section returns to the first thematic idea, which is restated by the orchestra and coupled with broken chords in the piano part (Example 31). The figuration of those broken chords is similar to that used in Chopin's *Étude*, No.12, Op.25. The momentum of those broken chords supports the thematic statement and drives the music to its conclusion on a majestic chordal sonority, which is reinforced with a triadic functional harmony in E flat major.

Example 31. Yellow River Resentment, mm.138-141



Defense of the Yellow River

Xian Xinghai said: "The reality of this [Sino-Japanese] war has created a true need for a patriotic song in defense of the Yellow River."⁹³ In the *Chorus*, his "Defense of the Yellow River" was written in "a simple canon style for a four-voice chorus to encourage and stir up a patriotic mood."⁹⁴ It is based on a single theme that is simply repeated three times, rather than being developed. Regarding this, Xian said, "Every phrase should be sung in a strong, healthy, and optimistic voice. This music will sound interesting, magnificent, and great, so long as you sing out the melodies continuously."⁹⁵

⁹³ Xian, *Huanghe Dahechang*, pp.61-62.

⁹⁴ *ibid*, p.62.

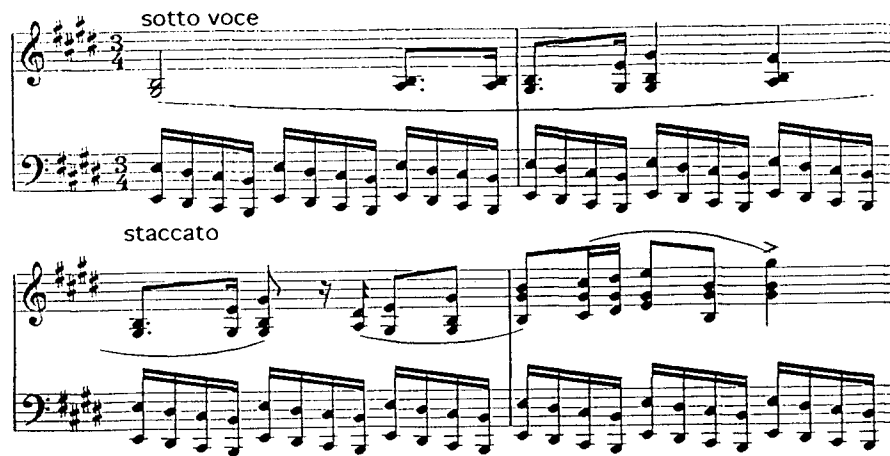
⁹⁵ *ibid*, p.62.

In the *Concerto*, committee-composers kept the simple canon style and marching character of Xian's original score, and structured the "Defense of the Yellow River" as a variation. The piece opens with a brilliant, short orchestral introduction carrying "The East Is Red" tune (Example 3), while the subtitle reads: "Chairman Mao summons the people to fight." The piano entry follows with a long passage of fast and brilliant octaves denoting support of Mao's cause. The main theme (Example 32) is introduced in the solo piano part and is tonicized in A major. Its accompanying figuration features the constant descent of four octaves — a pattern similar to that in the middle section (Example 33) of Chopin's Polonaise in A flat major, Opus 53. By adopting Chopin's marching style, the committee-composers attempted to convey a similar sense of national pride.

Example 32. Defense of the Yellow River mm19-26



Example 33. Chopin Polonaise in A flat major, op.53



The main theme of the “Defense of the Yellow River” in the *Concerto* is restated eight times, and modified with various textures, tonal orientations, and figurations:

1. (See score No.3) The main theme is restated in the piano with a *staccato* quality and soft dynamics. It is still tonicized in A major, with a thin, two-voice texture. The piano is accompanied by the strings with their light bouncing notes.
2. (See score No.4) The string section plays the main theme in unison and the piano echoes the strings with figurations in unison.
3. (See score No.5) The main theme is restated both in the piano and the string section in a simple canon style. The piano part features octaves and thirds, while the sonority gradually increases in strength. The expanded texture and accumulated dynamics here suggest the meaning of the subtitle: “Our revolutionary force is swelling.”
4. (See score No.7 or Example 34) The main theme is modulated to D major and written

with a simple chordal texture. It is shown in the piano and the brass section in a simple canon style and with high dynamic level, which reflects the subtitle: "Majesty and braveness."

Example 34. Defense of the Yellow River, mm.133-144

The musical score for Example 34, "Defense of the Yellow River," measures 133-144. It is written for piano and brass in 2/4 time, key of D major. The score is organized into three systems of staves. The first system features a piano part with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and a brass part. The second system continues the piano and brass parts. The third system shows the piano part with a dotted rhythmic figuration and big bouncing chords with high dynamics, while the brass part continues with a fast scale.

5. (See score No.10) The main theme, tonicized in C major, is introduced by a solo clarinet, which is reinforced with embellished figurations in the piano part.
6. (See Example 35) Another modulation of the main theme to F major follows. The main theme shown in the piano part is reinforced with a dotted rhythmic figuration and big bouncing chords with high dynamics. The string section plays the fast scale-

like figurations to support the piano part.

Example 35. Defense of the Yellow River, mm.217-224



7. (See score No.15) The octave bass lines shown in the piano part restate the main theme in A flat major. They are accompanied by dark chords in triplets and are decorated with swift sixteenth-note figurations. Climax: (See score No.19) After having the main theme restated seven times, this music reaches a climax in which “The East Is Red” is reintroduced. This time it denotes the subtitle: “Long live Chairman Mao! Long live the people’s victory.” “The East Is Red” centering on D major is played in tutti and supported by brilliant pianistic writing that features bright chords and grand octaves.
8. (see score No.21) The interplay of the main theme enters again in a simple canon style between the piano and string section. The D major tonality continues, and later (see score No.22) the main theme and “The East Is Red” are illustrated

simultaneously to designate the subtitle: “Raise up Mao’s thought! Lift up the Red flag and march forward!” The “Internationale” (Example 36) is interwoven into the orchestra part, and this reinforces the ideology of communism. In the final section (see score No.25), the fast and bright octaves in the piano part echo the opening octave passages, and conclude with “The East Is Red” in a powerful tutti.

Example 36. “Internationale” (the final five measures)



“Defense of the Yellow River” was intended to serve “the common people” (*laobaixing*), and the committee-composers created a simple thematic variation on the original *Chorus* tune. The function of this piece was to send out Mao’s messages rather than to illustrate profound musical thought. I find the bombast and exaggerated virtuoso display exhibited in “Defense of the Yellow River” has the effect of weakening the whole *Concerto*. Such techniques accorded well, however, with the ideology of the Cultural Revolution: Mao encouraged a prosecuting tone for destroying the enemy — a tactic that was made explicit in his 1966 declaration, “the Sixteen Points.”⁹⁶ The accusing tone, first introduced in the C section of the “Yellow River Resentment,” is conveyed here with virtuosic piano writing, and it directly conveys the spirit of the Cultural Revolution. Musicologist Liu Jingzhi

⁹⁶ Wakeman, *History and Will*, p. 311.

commented: "Those works in which Mao is the subject are not music but slogans."⁹⁷ In fact, Mao dominates the whole piece "Defense of the Yellow River" from beginning to end, the subtitle in the climax being "Long live Chairman Mao!"

In 1989, because of what was considered to be an excessive emphasis on Maoist communism, the score was revised by composer Shi Shucheng. Shi reduced the heavy political ideology by deleting "The East Is Red" (Example 3) and the "Internationale" (Example 36). Shi replaced them with the boatmen's theme (Example 7) in the C section from the "Yellow River Boatmen's Song," where the boatmen finally reach the shore with relief. The rest of the music remains unchanged. Shi attempted to give the piece renewed meaning: that the Sino-Japanese War was fought by *all* Chinese people, not just those living under Mao and the communist party.⁹⁸ Shi's revision was also an attempt at encouraging contemporary musicians to look at this piece in a new light.

⁹⁷ Liu, ed., *History of New Music in China 1946-1976*, p.183.

⁹⁸ This information is based on my investigation of the score in 1989, as well as my interview with conductor David Chen.

CONCLUSION

In this document, I have attempted to evaluate and interpret the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* both in light of its historical background and by exploring the genesis of its musical style. The *Concerto* is a strong statement of Chinese historical, political, and cultural values. Musicologist Bi Xizhou wrote in 1981 that for musicians who lived through the Cultural Revolution, “this *Concerto* is not just a pure musical work. It is synonymous with that troublesome period for which these musicians hold such loathing. These musicians were crushed, so for them the *Yellow River Piano Concerto* became branded with the same indelible stamp. No wonder we are not willing to talk about this piece!”⁹⁹ Bi’s statement explains why there are so few studies of this *Concerto*, and why, after Mao’s death in 1976, musicians avoided this music. The very political function of this *Concerto* made it controversial.

As for the quality of the music itself, Liu Jingzhi commented: “The *Yellow River Piano Concerto* is too brilliant and without enough poetic flavour, which suited the taste of Jiang Qing exactly. In terms of musical effect, the *Concerto* is much weaker than the original *Yellow River Great Chorus*.”¹⁰⁰ While this criticism has some validity, it seems to ignore the extenuating circumstances of the Cultural Revolution, and the constraints under which the committee-composers had to write. For me, Xian’s *Chorus* is powerful music — and its thematic ideas, based on folk style, are the main shaping forces of the *Concerto*.

⁹⁹ Bi Xizhou, “Dalu Yinyuejia Dui Huanghe Gangqin Xiezouqu De Pingjia.” *Jingbao*, p.65.

¹⁰⁰ Liu, ed., *History of New Music in China 1946-1976*, p.175.

Musicologist Han Kuo-Huang also criticized the work: "The *Concerto* is nothing to speak of compared to the lyrical *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto* . . ." ¹⁰¹ While I find the *Yellow River Piano Concerto*'s "Defense of the Yellow River" to be detrimental to the whole, I maintain that its other three pieces do have merit. Liu's comment about this *Concerto* being too brilliant and without enough poetic flavour is valid, in my opinion, only for the final piece.

The *Yellow River Piano Concerto* is structured differently from that of a Western piano concerto, its four pieces being linked by subject. Traditional Chinese composers tended to stress the emotional states evoked by visual scenes, literature, and their historical heritage, so in this sense the *Concerto* is like a "song suite," where the emphasis is on a series of linked emotional states. ¹⁰² By retaining this quality of traditional aesthetics, the committee-composers rendered this *Concerto* accessible, at least to the Chinese. In 1962, prior to the Cultural Revolution, composer Lu Huabuo said:

Music with titles or annotated programs is native and traditional to our national classical music, which we should promote. We should not, however, reject absolute music. Non-programmatic music has its own effect. It is not restricted to any concrete content . . . Its affective power may be stronger than that of programmatic music. ¹⁰³

Lu's comments provide evidence that, during the 1960s, composers were aware of the value of abstract music. Although the committee-composers would have been aware of its value too, they chose not to (or were unable to) use such abstract titles as "sonata" or "rondo" in the *Concerto*. Programmatic titles and political subtitles more strongly served the ideology of

¹⁰¹ Han, "Because Her Name is the Yellow River." *Performing Arts Review*, No. 5, p.100.

¹⁰² The songs in a "song suite" may be composed individually; or several may be linked together to become the scenes of, for example, a Chinese opera.

¹⁰³ Liu, ed., *History of New Music in China 1946-1976*, p.25.

the Cultural Revolution. For musicians who lived through the Cultural Revolution, silence may indeed be more beautiful now than “model works.” On the other hand, interpretations today are not bound by the original work’s subtitles. If musicians are interested in performing this *Concerto*, they can interpret the music in their own individual ways, based on both the musical aesthetics and the historical background of the work.

The orchestral scoring in the *Concerto* lacks substance, like the orchestral writing in Chopin’s two piano concertos. As a performer, I find its texture is too thin to support the piano in creating an integral and balanced sonority between the parts. The orchestra functions more as if it were an accompaniment for a song, often repeating or doubling main melodic lines of the solo part.

The synthesis of Western music and Chinese folk style in the *Concerto* reflects the values and needs of the Cultural Revolution. Mao’s ideology was to “Let the past serve the present,” which may echo an idea of the Hungarian composer Béla Bartók: “For an artist it is not only right to have roots in the art of some former times, it is a necessity.”¹⁰⁴ Bartók meant that individual creativity should be rooted in tradition, rather than being restricted to it. Composers during the Cultural Revolution, however, were restricted and the committee-composers’ freedom of choice was limited. Composers during the ten years of the Cultural Revolution did not have freedom to create modern music using twelve-tone techniques or atonal devices, for example, and under Jiang Qing’s guidance the committee composers adopted Xian’s thematic ideas, which were rooted in folk style. Folk music, however, does indeed have the power to speak to the heart and arouse patriotism, and this, in part, accounts

¹⁰⁴ Glenn Watkins, *Soundings*, (New York: Schirmer Books, 1988), p.408.

for the continued popularity of this *Concerto*.

Another of Mao's dictums besides, "Let the past serve the present," was "[Let] foreign things serve China." Accordingly, the committee-composers adopted various Western musical styles (for example, those of Liszt and Chopin) and wove them into the *Concerto*. This made sense in any case, since China had, in 1969, barely thirty years of piano history, and, therefore, a limited repertoire. The committee-composers — despite, or because of, the limitations imposed upon them — created a Chinese piano concerto in which Chinese instrumental idioms were assimilated into Western pianistic idioms. Here, too, is another explanation for the *Concerto's* continued popularity in China, and the composers' explorations in combining Western and Chinese styles had the effect of advancing the development of piano music in China.

Aside from discussions about the relative merits of its music, *The Yellow River Piano Concerto* is important from a broad historical perspective. Even though it has been coloured by its association with the Cultural Revolution, it is a key piece linking traditional Chinese music with contemporary works. A wide historical perspective, one that does not focus narrowly on the Cultural Revolution, can shed new light on the work as a valuable piece in the overall Chinese piano repertoire. This broader perspective can open the way for musicologists, performers, students, and music lovers to view this transitional piece in a new light and explore new interpretations.

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APPENDIX A

Example 1, *Buffalo Boy's Flute*, A section

Musical score for Example 1, *Buffalo Boy's Flute*, A section. The score is written for two staves (treble and bass clef) in 2/4 time. It consists of four systems of music. The first system begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The second system concludes with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The third system includes a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The fourth system continues the melodic and harmonic progression.

Example 2, *Buffalo Boy's Flute*, B section.

Musical score for Example 2, *Buffalo Boy's Flute*, B section. The score is written for two staves (treble and bass clef) in 2/4 time. It consists of two systems of music. The first system begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features triplet markings (3) over the treble staff. The second system continues with similar triplet markings and harmonic accompaniment.

APPENDIX B

THE PIANO SCORE (1969)

Yellow River Piano Concerto

- 1. Prelude: Yellow River Boatman's Song**
- 2. Yellow River Ode**
- 3. Yellow River Resentment**
- 4. Defense of the Yellow River**

Prelude: Yellow River Boatman's Song

一、前奏：黄河船夫曲

汹涌澎湃 $\text{♩} = 152$ 幻灯字幕：(船工们同惊涛骇浪搏斗)

The musical score is written for a grand piano (II) in 2/4 time, with a tempo of 152 beats per minute. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score is divided into four systems, each containing a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The first system begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The second system continues the melody in the treble clef. The third system features a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp, with a forte (sf) dynamic marking. The fourth system continues the melody in the treble clef. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

(黄河激流汹涌澎湃)

The musical score is written for piano and consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes staves I and II. Staff I is in the treble clef and staff II is in the bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The first system begins with a piano (p) dynamic. Staff I has a melodic line with a forte (ff) dynamic marking. Staff II has a bass line with a sforzando (sfz) dynamic marking. The second system continues the piece with staves I and II, showing complex melodic lines and arpeggiated figures. The score ends with a final chord in staff I.

〔坚定有力的船工号子〕

3

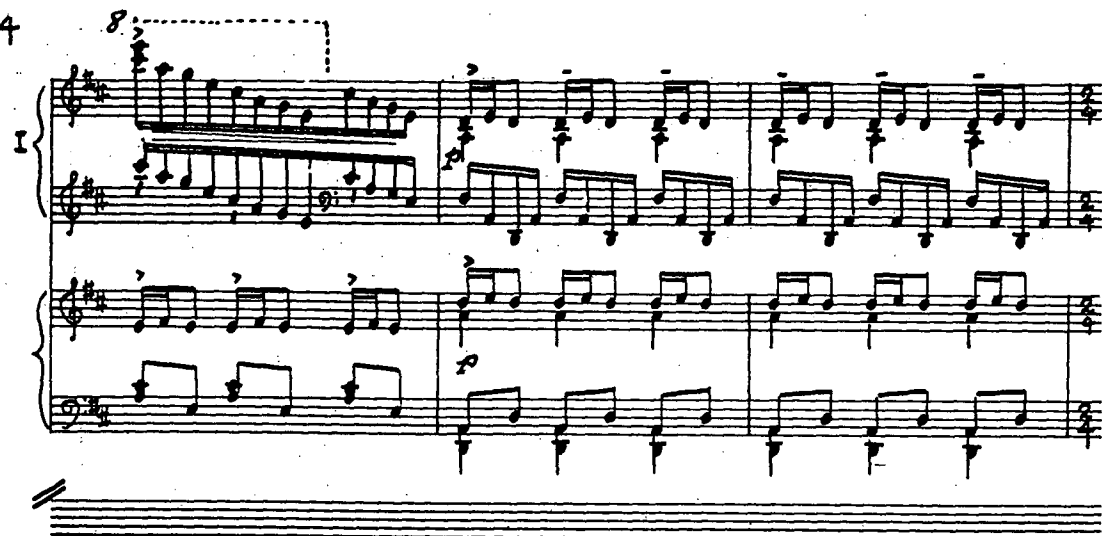
1 $\text{♩} = 88$

2 $\text{♩} = 162$

4

8.

I



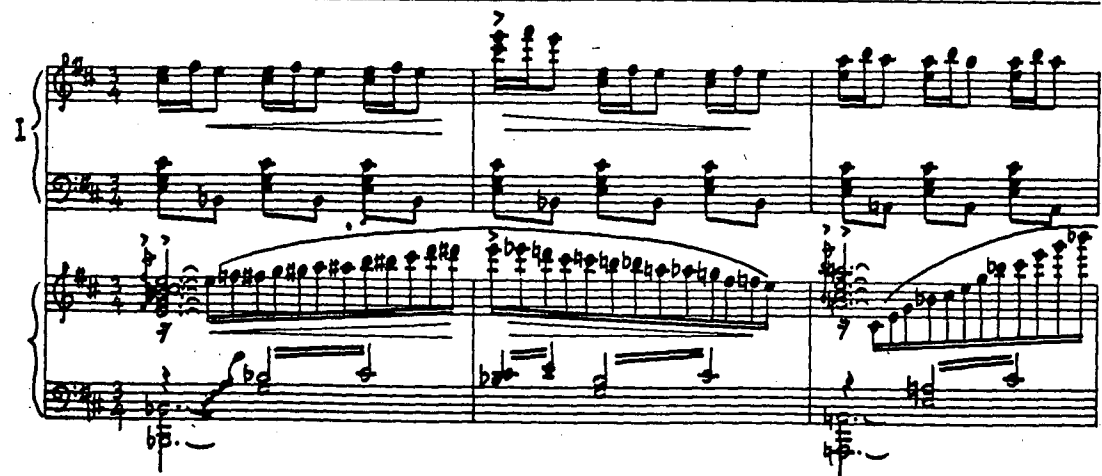
First system of a musical score. It consists of two staves, each with a treble and bass clef. The top staff is marked with a '1' and a dashed box above it. The music is in 4/4 time and features a melody in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#).

I



Second system of the musical score. It continues the melody and bass line from the first system. The music is marked with 'sf' (sforzando) in several places, indicating a strong accent. The key signature remains two sharps.

I



Third system of the musical score. It features a more complex melody in the right hand with many beamed sixteenth notes. The left hand continues with a supporting bass line. The key signature remains two sharps.

8-... 渐慢 [3] ♩=108 渐快 5

[4]

6

坚毅乐观

♩ = 138

I

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is marked with a piano dynamic *mf* and features a series of chords and eighth notes. The lower staff is marked with a piano dynamic *mp* and features a series of eighth notes. The system concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

I

The second system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is marked with a piano dynamic *f* and features a series of chords and eighth notes. The lower staff is marked with a piano dynamic *mf* and features a series of eighth notes. The system concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

I

The third system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is marked with a piano dynamic *sf* and features a series of chords and eighth notes. The lower staff is marked with a piano dynamic *mf* and features a series of eighth notes. The system concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

渐快 7

6

6

8

7

162

10 11 12

8

I

13

14

12

9

(冲过急流险滩)

ff

mp

f

sfz

8

I

(b)

sfz

p

渐弱

渐慢

〔看见胜利的曙光〕

8 J=56

p

p

10

9

Measures 9 and 10 of a musical score. The score is written for three staves. The top staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a complex melodic line with many sixteenth notes. The middle staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a complex melodic line with many sixteenth notes. The bottom staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a simple harmonic line with whole notes and half notes. The dynamic marking *pp* is present in the bottom staff.

Measures 11 and 12 of a musical score. The score is written for three staves. The top staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a complex melodic line with many sixteenth notes. The middle staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a complex melodic line with many sixteenth notes. The bottom staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a simple harmonic line with whole notes and half notes.

Measures 13 and 14 of a musical score. The score is written for three staves. The top staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a complex melodic line with many sixteenth notes. The middle staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a complex melodic line with many sixteenth notes. The bottom staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a simple harmonic line with whole notes and half notes. The dynamic marking *pp* is present in the middle staff. The text "(继续战斗 勇往直前)" is written above the top staff. The measure number 10 is written in a box above the top staff.

I

I

I

12

First system of musical notation, measures 12 to 21. The system includes a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The right hand (RH) features a melodic line with a slur over measures 12-21, marked with a fermata and a '21' below it. The left hand (LH) plays a rhythmic accompaniment with 'sf' (sforzando) markings. A measure number '47' is written above the RH staff at the end of the system.

Second system of musical notation, measures 22 to 26. The system includes a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The right hand (RH) features a melodic line with a slur over measures 22-26, marked with a fermata and a '26' below it. The left hand (LH) plays a rhythmic accompaniment with 'sf' (sforzando) and 'ff' (fortissimo) markings. A measure number '47' is written above the RH staff at the end of the system.

Third system of musical notation, measures 27 to 30. The system includes a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The right hand (RH) features a melodic line with a slur over measures 27-30, marked with a fermata and a '30' below it. The left hand (LH) plays a rhythmic accompaniment with 'ff' (fortissimo) markings.

Fourth system of musical notation, measures 31 to 34. The system includes a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The right hand (RH) features a melodic line with a slur over measures 31-34, marked with a fermata and a '34' below it. The left hand (LH) plays a rhythmic accompaniment with 'ff' (fortissimo) markings.

Fifth system of musical notation, measures 35 to 38. The system includes a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The right hand (RH) features a melodic line with a slur over measures 35-38, marked with a fermata and a '38' below it. The left hand (LH) plays a rhythmic accompaniment with 'ff' (fortissimo) markings.

Sixth system of musical notation, measures 39 to 42. The system includes a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The right hand (RH) features a melodic line with a slur over measures 39-42, marked with a fermata and a '42' below it. The left hand (LH) plays a rhythmic accompaniment with 'ff' (fortissimo) markings.

Seventh system of musical notation, measures 43 to 46. The system includes a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The right hand (RH) features a melodic line with a slur over measures 43-46, marked with a fermata and a '46' below it. The left hand (LH) plays a rhythmic accompaniment with 'ff' (fortissimo) markings.

二、黄河颂 Yellow River Ode

13

庄严 缓慢 追溯 $J=58$ (追溯中华民族的悠久历史)

II *mf* (渐)

II

II *mp*

I *mf* $J=69$

I

p

I

mf

II

♩ = 54

I

I

mp

② 歌颂 $J=80$

15

First system of musical notation. It consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The vocal line begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in both hands. A first ending bracket labeled 'I' is present at the beginning of the system.

Second system of musical notation, continuing the vocal and piano parts. The piano part includes a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic marking. The system concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Third system of musical notation, continuing the composition. It features further development of the vocal melody and piano accompaniment, with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic marking. The system ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

放宽

放宽 3 (歌颂中国人民的革命传统)

原速

4 稍快 $\text{♩} = 104$

17

渐慢

I

II

ff

渐慢

II

mf

Yellow River Resentment

三、黄河愤

辽阔 节奏自由 (革命根据地阳光普照)

The musical score is arranged in three systems. The first system is for Piano II, featuring a melody in the right hand with a dynamic marking of *mf* and a *rit.* (ritardando) marking. The second system is for Piano I, featuring a melody in the right hand with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano). The third system is also for Piano I, featuring a melody in the right hand with a dynamic marking of *p*. The score includes various musical notations such as treble and bass clefs, dynamic markings, and complex rhythmic patterns.

I

渐慢

欢快 $\text{♩} = 88$

mp

I

I

I

The musical score is written for piano and consists of three systems. Each system has a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The first system begins with a first ending bracket labeled '1' and a second ending bracket labeled '2'. The music is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes various articulations such as slurs and accents. The second system continues the melodic and harmonic development. The third system concludes with a final cadence. The score is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 4/4 time signature.

First system of musical notation, measures 1-4. The upper staff (treble clef) contains a melodic line with a *mp* (mezzo-piano) dynamic marking. The lower staff (bass clef) contains a supporting bass line. The key signature is one flat (B-flat).

Second system of musical notation, measures 5-7. The section is titled "明亮" (Bright) in Chinese characters, preceded by a box containing the number 2. The upper staff (treble clef) features a melodic line with a *mp* dynamic marking. The lower staff (bass clef) contains a supporting bass line. The key signature is one flat (B-flat).

Third system of musical notation, measures 8-10. The upper staff (treble clef) contains a melodic line with a *mf* (mezzo-forte) dynamic marking. The lower staff (bass clef) contains a supporting bass line. The key signature is one flat (B-flat).

Fourth system of musical notation, measures 11-13. The upper staff (treble clef) contains a melodic line with a *mf* dynamic marking. The lower staff (bass clef) contains a supporting bass line. The key signature is one flat (B-flat).

The musical score is written for piano and consists of three systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clef). The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The first system begins with a first ending bracket labeled 'I' over the first two measures. The right hand features a melodic line with slurs and a crescendo leading to a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords and a 7th fingering indicated. The second system continues the melodic development in the right hand, with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic marking. The third system shows further melodic and harmonic progression, including a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic marking. The score is punctuated by double bar lines and repeat signs between systems.

First system of musical notation, measures 1-4. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a piano (p) introduction in the right hand and a mezzo-forte (mf) accompaniment in the left hand. The tempo marking "稍渐慢" (Ritardando) appears above the final measure. Dynamics include *p*, *mf*, *渐弱* (Ritardando), and *pp*.

Second system of musical notation, measures 5-8. The score continues in G major and 4/4 time. It features a forte (ff) melody in the right hand and a forte (sf) accompaniment in the left hand. The tempo marking "稍渐慢" (Ritardando) is present. Dynamics include *ff* and *sf*.

Third system of musical notation, measures 9-12. The score continues in G major and 4/4 time. It features a mezzo-piano (mp) melody in the right hand and a mezzo-piano (mp) accompaniment in the left hand. The tempo marking "稍渐慢" (Ritardando) is present. Dynamics include *mp*.

First system of musical notation. It includes a piano (p) part with a complex, fast-moving melody in the right hand and a more rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. A violin (I) part is also present, with a melodic line that often parallels the piano's right hand. Dynamic markings include *sub. p* (subito piano) and *mp* (mezzo-piano).

(人民遭受深重苦难)

⑥ $J = 56$
4 3 2 1

Second system of musical notation. The tempo is marked $J = 56$. The piano part features a series of rapid sixteenth-note passages in the right hand. The violin part continues with a melodic line. The system concludes with a double bar line.

Third system of musical notation. The piano part has a more active, rhythmic accompaniment. The violin part features a melodic line with some slurs. Dynamic markings include *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *pp* (pianissimo).

26

7 $\text{♩} = 96$

I
 II
 II

渐强

mp *mf* *f*

(阶段供民族乐加火爆)

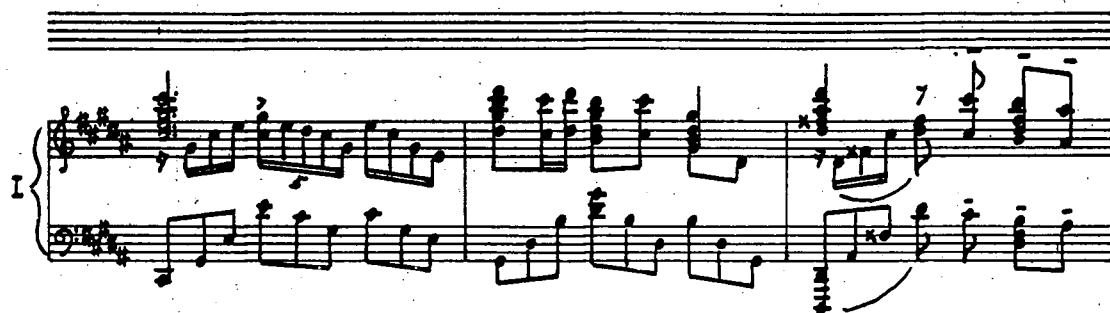
II

f

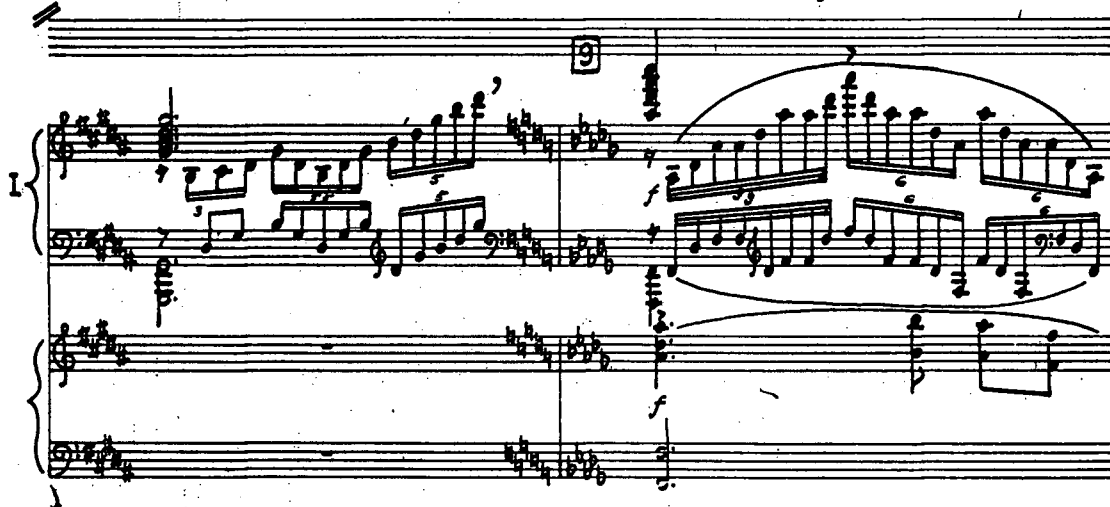
8 $\text{♩} = 96$

I

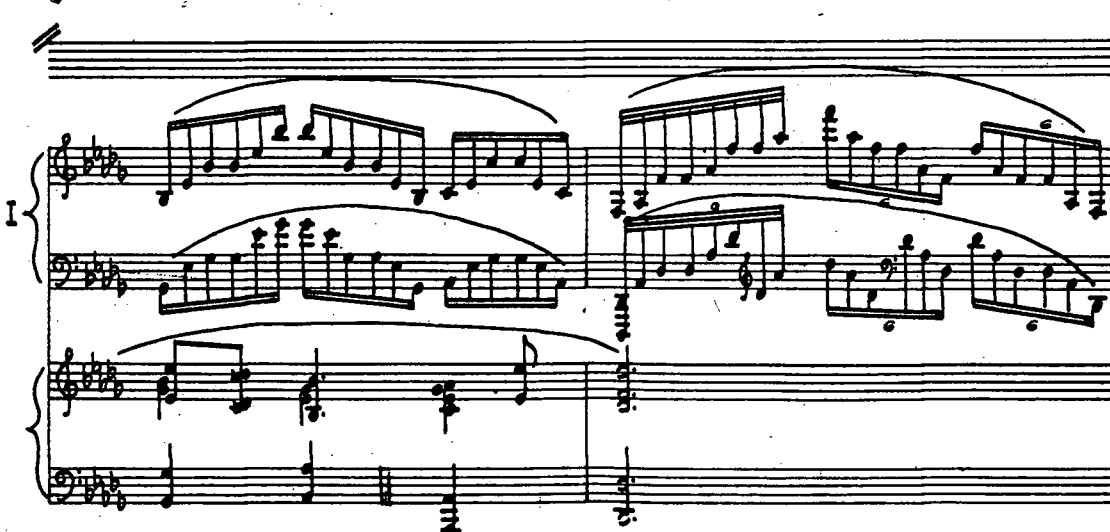
ff



The first system of musical notation consists of a grand staff with two staves. The upper staff contains a melodic line with various ornaments and a fermata. The lower staff contains a bass line with a similar melodic contour. The system is marked with a '1' in a box at the beginning.



The second system of musical notation consists of a grand staff with two staves. The upper staff contains a melodic line with a fermata and a measure marked with a '9' in a box. The lower staff contains a bass line with a similar melodic contour. The system is marked with a '1' in a box at the beginning.



The third system of musical notation consists of a grand staff with two staves. The upper staff contains a melodic line with a fermata and a measure marked with a '2' in a box. The lower staff contains a bass line with a similar melodic contour. The system is marked with a '1' in a box at the beginning.

控訴地

Musical score for "控訴地" (Accusation Land), page 28. The score is written for piano (I) and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 2/4 time signature. The piece is marked with a tempo of *Andante* (indicated by a large 'A' in a circle). The score is divided into four systems, each containing a grand staff (treble and bass clef). The first system begins with a forte (*ff*) dynamic. The second system includes a melodic line in the right hand with a long slur. The third system features a melodic line in the right hand with a long slur and a forte (*ff*) dynamic. The fourth system includes a melodic line in the right hand with a long slur and a *dim.* (diminuendo) marking. The score concludes with a final chord in the right hand.

10

Measures 10 and 11 of a musical score. Measure 10 features a melody in the upper voice with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a bass line with a forte (*f*) dynamic. Measure 11 continues the melody with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. A first ending bracket labeled '1' spans the end of measure 11.

Measures 12 and 13 of a musical score. Measure 12 features a melody in the upper voice with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic and a bass line with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 13 continues the melody with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. A first ending bracket labeled '1' spans the end of measure 13.

Measures 14 and 15 of a musical score. Measure 14 features a melody in the upper voice with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a bass line with a forte (*f*) dynamic. Measure 15 continues the melody with a forte (*f*) dynamic. A first ending bracket labeled '1' spans the end of measure 15.

Handwritten musical score for piano, page 30. The score is written on three systems of staves. The first system consists of a grand staff (treble and bass clef) and a piano staff (treble and bass clef). The second system also consists of a grand staff and a piano staff. The third system consists of a grand staff and a piano staff. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The first system begins with a forte (ff) dynamic marking. The second system begins with a piano (p) dynamic marking. The third system includes a section marked with a box containing the number 12. The score is written in a single system of staves, with the piano part on the right and the grand staff on the left.

First system of musical notation, featuring a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The music is in a key with two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a 4/4 time signature. The first staff contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the second staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines.

Second system of musical notation, continuing the piece. It features a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The music is in a key with two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a 4/4 time signature. The first staff contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the second staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines.

Third system of musical notation, continuing the piece. It features a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The music is in a key with two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a 4/4 time signature. The first staff contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the second staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. Above the first staff, the tempo markings "慢" (Adagio), "由慢渐快" (Ritardando/Allegro), and "放宽" (Ad libitum) are written.

32

(黄河怒涛滚滚, 人民激愤满腔)

13

♩ = 80

This musical score is for piano, measures 32 through 44. It is written in 2/4 time with a tempo of quarter note = 80. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into three systems, each with a repeat sign at the beginning. Each system contains a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The first system (measures 32-34) includes a first ending bracket labeled 'I' over measures 32 and 33. The second system (measures 35-37) also has a first ending bracket labeled 'I' over measures 35 and 36. The third system (measures 38-40) has a first ending bracket labeled 'I' over measures 38 and 39. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, and rests. Dynamics include *sf* (sforzando) and *f* (forte). The piece concludes with a final chord in measure 44.

The first system of musical notation on page 33 consists of two staves. The upper staff is marked with a '1' and contains a complex melodic line with many beamed sixteenth notes and some triplets. The lower staff contains a bass line with fewer notes, including some triplets. The system concludes with a double bar line.

The second system of musical notation on page 33 also consists of two staves. The upper staff continues the melodic line from the first system. The lower staff features a more active bass line with some triplets and a long, sweeping slur over several measures. The system ends with a double bar line.

The third system of musical notation on page 33 consists of two staves. The upper staff features a series of chords or dense clusters of notes, some of which are beamed together. The lower staff contains a bass line with chords and some individual notes. The system concludes with a double bar line.

The first system of the musical score features two staves, labeled I and II. Staff I contains a complex melodic line with many beamed sixteenth notes, creating a sense of rapid movement. Staff II provides a harmonic accompaniment with sustained chords and some moving lines. The music is written in a key with one flat (B-flat) and a 2/4 time signature.

四、保卫黄河 Defense of the Yellow River

〔毛主席党中央发出战斗号召〕

The second system continues the musical theme. It includes a tempo marking of $\text{♩} = 112$. The notation features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some passages marked with a '10' indicating a specific rhythmic pattern or measure count. The accompaniment in staff II remains active, supporting the main melody.

The third system shows a dynamic shift. The tempo is marked as '由慢到快' (from slow to fast). The music becomes more intense, with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic marking. The melodic lines in both staves I and II are more pronounced, with increased use of beamed notes and a driving rhythm. The key signature and time signature remain consistent with the previous sections.

The image displays a handwritten musical score on page 35, consisting of four systems of piano accompaniment. Each system is marked with a large 'I' on the left, indicating the first system of a piece. The notation is written on grand staves (treble and bass clefs joined). The first system shows a complex, fast-moving melody in the right hand with many beamed sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a steady, rhythmic accompaniment. The second system continues this pattern with similar melodic and harmonic structures. The third system introduces a more melodic line in the right hand, with the left hand still providing harmonic support. The fourth system features a more complex texture, with the right hand playing a melodic line and the left hand playing a more active, rhythmic part. The score is written in black ink on white paper, with some corrections and markings visible throughout.

(抗日軍民奔赴战場)

1. 184

p...

sf

I

II

II

mp

2. 斗志昂扬

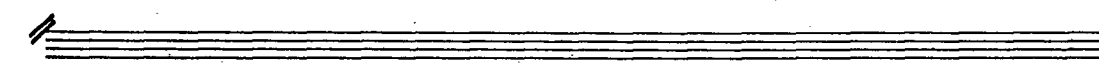
I

f

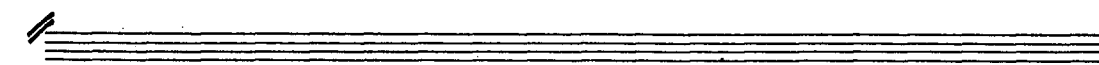
II

f

First system of musical notation, measures 1-5. It consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef, and a piano accompaniment with a treble and bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The melody in the treble clef features eighth and sixteenth notes, while the piano accompaniment consists of chords and single notes.



Second system of musical notation, measures 6-10. It continues the melody and piano accompaniment from the first system.



Third system of musical notation, measures 11-15. It continues the melody and piano accompaniment from the second system.

First system (measures 127-131): The right hand (RH) plays a melody with eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. The left hand (LH) provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. A first ending bracket labeled 'I' spans measures 127-131.

Second system (measures 132-136): Continues the musical texture. The RH melody is more active, featuring many beamed sixteenth notes. The LH accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines.

Third system (measures 137-141): Includes a section marked with a box containing the number '3' above measure 137. Dynamic markings *sfp* (sforzando piano) and *pp* (pianissimo) are present in measures 138 and 139. The RH continues with a melodic line, while the LH features a dense texture of chords in measures 140 and 141.

I

The first system of musical notation for piano. It consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). It contains six measures of music, primarily featuring eighth and quarter notes. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and contains six measures of music, primarily featuring quarter and eighth notes. A brace on the left side groups the two staves together.

A set of empty musical staves, consisting of two staves with five lines each, separated by a double bar line.

I

The second system of musical notation for piano, identical in format to the first. It consists of two staves in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of two sharps. The upper staff contains six measures of music, and the lower staff contains six measures of music. A brace on the left side groups the two staves together.

A set of empty musical staves, consisting of two staves with five lines each, separated by a double bar line.

I

The third system of musical notation for piano, identical in format to the first two. It consists of two staves in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of two sharps. The upper staff contains six measures of music, and the lower staff contains six measures of music. A brace on the left side groups the two staves together.

I

跳音

I

I

5 〔革命武装发 41

I

The first system of the musical score is written for a grand piano (I). It consists of three staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 4/4. It contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, ending with a *mf* dynamic marking. The middle staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, featuring a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, providing a harmonic foundation with chords and single notes. A *p* (piano) dynamic marking is present at the beginning of the middle staff.

展壮大)

I

The second system of the musical score is written for a grand piano (I). It consists of three staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 4/4. It contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The middle staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, featuring a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, providing a harmonic foundation with chords and single notes. A *mf* (mezzo-forte) dynamic marking is present at the beginning of the middle staff.

I

The third system of the musical score is written for a grand piano (I). It consists of three staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 4/4. It contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The middle staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, featuring a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, providing a harmonic foundation with chords and single notes. A *mp* (mezzo-piano) dynamic marking is present at the beginning of the middle staff.

First system of musical notation, measures 1-6. The system includes a grand staff with treble and bass clefs, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 2/4 time signature. The notation is marked with a large 'I' on the left. The music features a melody in the treble clef and a supporting bass line in the bass clef.

Second system of musical notation, measures 7-12. The system includes a grand staff with treble and bass clefs, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 2/4 time signature. The notation is marked with a large 'I' on the left. The music features a melody in the treble clef and a supporting bass line in the bass clef. A dynamic marking 'f' (forte) is present in measure 10.

Third system of musical notation, measures 13-18. The system includes a grand staff with treble and bass clefs, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 2/4 time signature. The notation is marked with a large 'I' on the left. The music features a melody in the treble clef and a supporting bass line in the bass clef.

I

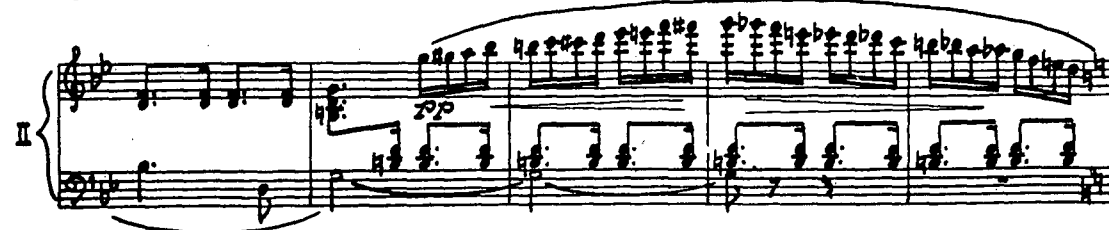
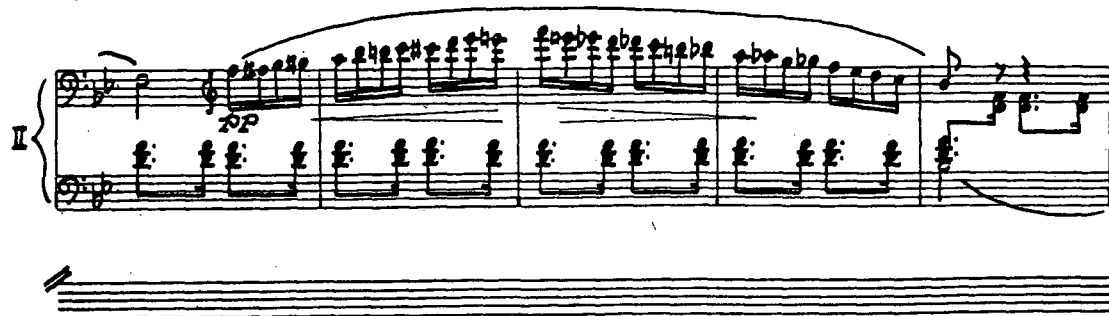
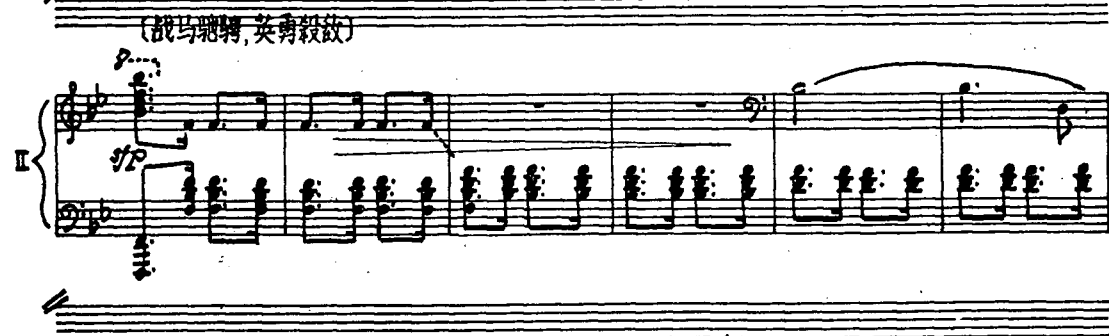
The first system of musical notation consists of six measures. It features a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The melody in the treble clef is composed of eighth and quarter notes, while the bass clef provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes. A first ending bracket labeled 'I' spans the first two measures.

I

The second system of musical notation consists of six measures. It continues the piece with similar melodic and harmonic patterns. A first ending bracket labeled 'I' spans the first two measures of this system.

The third system of musical notation consists of six measures. It concludes the piece with a final cadence. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and bar lines.

This musical score page, numbered 45, contains measures 134 through 138. It is written for piano in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The score is divided into three systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clef). The first system (measures 134-135) is marked with a first ending bracket 'I'. The second system (measures 136-137) includes a first ending bracket 'I' and a second ending bracket 'II' in measure 137. The third system (measure 138) is marked with a second ending bracket 'II'. Dynamics include *ff* (fortissimo) in measure 137. The notation features various chords, arpeggios, and melodic lines with accents and slurs.



10

The musical score is divided into three systems, each containing a violin part (labeled 'I') and a piano accompaniment. The first system (measures 10-14) features a violin melody with a long slur and a piano accompaniment with a steady eighth-note pattern. The second system (measures 15-19) continues the violin melody with more complex rhythmic patterns and the piano accompaniment. The third system (measures 20-24) includes the instruction '漸強' (crescendo) above the violin part and below the piano part, indicating a gradual increase in volume. The piano part in this system features a more active, rhythmic accompaniment.

First system of musical notation, measures 48-52. It consists of two staves. The upper staff features a melodic line with eighth-note patterns and rests, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a dashed line above it. The lower staff provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines.

Second system of musical notation, measures 53-57. It consists of two staves. The upper staff has a melodic line with eighth-note patterns, marked with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The lower staff features a more active melodic line with eighth-note patterns, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic.

Third system of musical notation, measures 58-62. It consists of two staves. The upper staff has a melodic line with eighth-note patterns, marked with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The lower staff features a more active melodic line with eighth-note patterns, also marked with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic.

First system of musical notation, measures 1-4. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music features a melody in the upper staff and a supporting bass line in the lower staff. Dynamic markings include *mf* (mezzo-forte) in measure 3 and *p* (piano) in measure 2. A fermata is placed over the first note of the lower staff in measure 2.

Second system of musical notation, measures 5-8. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music continues with a melody in the upper staff and a supporting bass line in the lower staff. Dynamic markings include *f* (forte) in measure 6 and *mf* (mezzo-forte) in measure 7.

Third system of musical notation, measures 9-12. The system consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music continues with a melody in the upper staff and a supporting bass line in the lower staff. Dynamic markings include *ff* (fortissimo) in measure 10 and *f* (forte) in measure 11. A first ending bracket labeled "I" spans measures 9 and 10. A measure number box containing "12" is located above the first staff in measure 12.

Measures 50 and 51 of a musical score. The score is written for two staves. The left staff features a melody with eighth and sixteenth notes, marked with an accent (>) and a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The right staff provides harmonic support with chords and rests. A first ending bracket labeled 'I' spans the final measures of both staves.

Measures 52 and 53 of a musical score. The left staff contains a complex passage with many beamed sixteenth notes, marked with an accent (>) and a first ending bracket labeled 'I'. The right staff continues the harmonic accompaniment with chords and rests.

Measures 54 and 55 of a musical score. The left staff features a melody with eighth and sixteenth notes, marked with an accent (>) and a first ending bracket labeled 'I'. The right staff provides harmonic support with chords and rests.

The musical score is divided into three systems, each with two staves labeled I and II. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4.

System 1: Staff I begins with a piano (p) dynamic and a series of eighth notes. Staff II has a forte (f) dynamic and features a complex rhythmic pattern with many beamed notes. A dashed line with an '8' above it spans the first two measures of both staves.

System 2: Staff I has a fortissimo (ff) dynamic and contains a dense, rapid sequence of notes. Staff II has a mezzo-forte (sfz) dynamic and features a series of beamed notes. A box containing the number '15' is positioned above the first measure of Staff I.

System 3: Staff I has a piano (p) dynamic and features a series of beamed notes. Staff II has a mezzo-forte (sfz) dynamic and features a series of beamed notes. A dashed line with an '8' above it spans the first two measures of both staves.

Handwritten musical score for piano, measures 15-17. The score is written for a grand piano (I) and includes dynamic markings (*p*, *mp*, *f*) and articulation marks (accents, slurs). The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4.

Measure 15: The piano part features a complex, rapid ascending and descending scale-like pattern in the right hand, with a corresponding bass line. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamic markings include *p* and *mp*.

Measure 16: The piano part continues with a similar rapid pattern in the right hand. The left hand accompaniment remains steady. Dynamic markings include *p* and *mp*.

Measure 17: The piano part features a complex, rapid ascending and descending scale-like pattern in the right hand, with a corresponding bass line. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamic markings include *p* and *mp*.

I

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is marked with a '1' and contains four measures of music. The lower staff contains four measures of music. The music is written in a key with one flat and a 4/4 time signature. The first measure of the upper staff has a '1' above it. The second measure of the upper staff has a '2' above it. The third measure of the upper staff has a '3' above it. The fourth measure of the upper staff has a '4' above it. The first measure of the lower staff has a '1' below it. The second measure of the lower staff has a '2' below it. The third measure of the lower staff has a '3' below it. The fourth measure of the lower staff has a '4' below it.

I

The second system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is marked with a '1' and contains four measures of music. The lower staff contains four measures of music. The music is written in a key with one flat and a 4/4 time signature. The first measure of the upper staff has a '1' above it. The second measure of the upper staff has a '2' above it. The third measure of the upper staff has a '3' above it. The fourth measure of the upper staff has a '4' above it. The first measure of the lower staff has a '1' below it. The second measure of the lower staff has a '2' below it. The third measure of the lower staff has a '3' below it. The fourth measure of the lower staff has a '4' below it.

The third system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff contains four measures of music. The lower staff contains four measures of music. The music is written in a key with one flat and a 4/4 time signature. The first measure of the upper staff has a '1' above it. The second measure of the upper staff has a '2' above it. The third measure of the upper staff has a '3' above it. The fourth measure of the upper staff has a '4' above it. The first measure of the lower staff has a '1' below it. The second measure of the lower staff has a '2' below it. The third measure of the lower staff has a '3' below it. The fourth measure of the lower staff has a '4' below it.

由慢到快

First system of musical notation, measures 1-3. The score is for a piano (I) and includes a treble and bass staff. The tempo instruction "由慢到快" (Ritardando to Allegro) is present. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The first system shows a complex melodic line in the treble staff and a supporting bass line. A fermata is placed over the first measure of the treble staff.

Second system of musical notation, measures 4-6. The score is for a piano (I) and includes a treble and bass staff. The tempo instruction "由慢到快" (Ritardando to Allegro) is present. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The second system shows a complex melodic line in the treble staff and a supporting bass line. A fermata is placed over the first measure of the treble staff.

Third system of musical notation, measures 7-9. The score is for a piano (I) and includes a treble and bass staff. The tempo instruction "放寬" (Ad libitum) is present. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The third system shows a complex melodic line in the treble staff and a supporting bass line. A fermata is placed over the first measure of the treble staff.

(毛主席万岁！人民战争胜利万岁！)

55

$\text{♩} = 83$

19

I

ff

p

144

56

稍快 $\text{♩} = 84$

First system of musical notation, measures 56-58. It features a piano (p) and a first violin (I) part. The piano part includes a complex, rapid sixteenth-note figure in the right hand and a simpler bass line in the left hand. The violin part has a melodic line with some grace notes. The system is divided into three measures by bar lines.

Second system of musical notation, measures 59-61. The piano part continues with the rapid sixteenth-note figure in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The violin part has a melodic line with some grace notes. The system is divided into three measures by bar lines.

Third system of musical notation, measures 62-64. The piano part continues with the rapid sixteenth-note figure in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The violin part has a melodic line with some grace notes. The system is divided into three measures by bar lines.

由慢渐快

20 $\text{♩} = 76$

ff

渐慢

57

58 [21] $\text{♩} = 200$

I

sf *p* *p*

I

mf *mf*

I

mf

22 (高举毛泽东思想伟大红旗奋勇前进!)

59

First system of musical notation (Measures 22-27). The system includes a piano (p) part and a vocal part (I). The piano part features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The vocal part (I) is marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The piano part is marked with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The system concludes with a double bar line.

Second system of musical notation (Measures 28-33). The system includes a piano (p) part and a vocal part (I). The piano part features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The vocal part (I) is marked with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The piano part is marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The system concludes with a double bar line.

Third system of musical notation (Measures 34-39). The system includes a piano (p) part and a vocal part (I). The piano part features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The vocal part (I) is marked with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The piano part is marked with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The system concludes with a double bar line.

60

24 (將世界革命进行到底)

fff

放寬

25

♩ = 84

sf

8

♩ = 69

61

First system of musical notation, measures 1-4. It features a grand staff with two systems of staves. The first system has a treble and bass staff, and the second system has a treble and bass staff. The music is in 4/4 time, marked with a tempo of 69 beats per minute. The first system includes a first ending bracket labeled 'I'.

Second system of musical notation, measures 5-8. It continues the grand staff format. The first system includes a first ending bracket labeled 'I'. The music includes dynamic markings such as *ff* (fortissimo) and *sfz* (sforzando).

Third system of musical notation, measures 9-12. It continues the grand staff format. The music includes dynamic markings such as *ff* (fortissimo) and *sfz* (sforzando).

Fourth system of musical notation, measures 13-16. It continues the grand staff format. The music includes dynamic markings such as *ff* (fortissimo) and *sfz* (sforzando).

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Cass. 144

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Recital Hall

Tuesday, November 23, 1993

8:00 p.m.

DOCTORAL RECITAL*

SHING-LIH CHEN, piano

Trio Op. 99, B^b major

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Allegro Moderato
Andante un poco mosso
Scherzo, Allegro
Rondo, Allegro vivace

Karen Park, *violin*
Paul McCulloch, *cello*

- INTERMISSION -

Trio G minor (Trio élégiaque 1892)

Sergei Rachmaninov
(1873-1943)

Anne Simons, *violin*
Paul McCulloch, *cello*

Piano Quartet in G minor K.V. 478

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Allegro
Andante
Allegro Moderato

Andrew Dawes, *violin*
Mark Luchkow, *viola*
Paul McCulloch, *cello*

* In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree with a major in Piano Performance.

Cass. 3 of 4
- THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Recital Hall
Sunday, September 18, 1994
8:00 p.m.

DOCTORAL RECITAL*

SHING-LIH CHEN, piano

Préludes pour le piano
No. 1, Grave
No. 2, Allegretto tranquillo
No. 8, Vivace

Frank Martin
(1890-1974)

VIER Impromptus, D. 935
Allegro moderato
Allegretto
Andante
Allegro scherzando

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

- INTERMISSION -

Les collines d'Anacapri
Le vent dans la plaine
La sérénade interrompue
Ce qu'a vu le vent d'ouest

Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

Nocturne in c minor, Op. 48, No. 1
Grand Polonaise Brillante in E-flat major, Op. 22

Frédéric Chopin
(1810-1849)

* In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree with a major in Piano Performance.

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Recital Hall

Wednesday, November 1, 1995

8:00 p.m.

Cass. 3 of 4

DOCTORAL LECTURE RECITAL*

SHING-LIH CHEN, Piano

Yellow River Piano Concerto (1969)

1. Prelude: Yellow River Boatman's Song
(Yellow River Boatman's Song, revised 1989.)
2. Yellow River Ode
3. Yellow River Resentment
(Yellow River Ballade, revised 1989.)

Yin Chengzong
Liu Zhuang
Chu Wanghua
Sheng Lihong
Shi Shucheng
Xu Feixing

Yunlin Yang, Orchestra Reduction

* In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree with a major in Piano.

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Recital Hall
Wednesday, April 10th, 1996
8:00 p.m.

DOCTORAL THESIS RECITAL*

SHING-LIH CHEN, Piano

Preludes, Op. 34

Dimitri Shostakovich
(1906-1995)

No. 14, Adagio
No. 2, Allegretto
No. 10, Moderato non troppo
No. 12, Allegro non troppo
No. 20, Allegretto furioso
No. 24, Allegretto

Les Fées sont déxquises danseuses
Bruyères
General Lavine - eccentric

Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

Two Impromptus, D. 899

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Allegro
Allegretto

- INTERMISSION -

24 Preludes, Op. 28

Frédéric Chopin
(1810-1849)

Agitato	Andantino	Lento	Vivace
Lento	Molto agitato	Allegro	Largo
Vivace	Largo	Sostenuto	Cantabile
Largo	Allegro molto	Presto con fuoco	Molto agitato
Allegro molto	Vivace	Allegretto	Moderato
Lento assai	Presto	Allegro molto	Allegro appassionato

* In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree with a major in Piano .

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Recital Hall

Tuesday, November 23, 1993

8:00 p.m.

Cash. 1d4

DOCTORAL RECITAL*

SHING-LIH CHEN, piano

Trio Op. 99, B^b major

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Allegro Moderato
Andante un poco mosso
Scherzo, Allegro
Rondo, Allegro vivace

Karen Park, *violin*
Paul McCulloch, *cello*

- INTERMISSION -

Trio G minor (Trio élégiaque 1892)

Sergei Rachmaninov
(1873-1943)

Anne Simons, *violin*
Paul McCulloch, *cello*

Piano Quartet in G minor K.V. 478

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Allegro
Andante
Allegro Moderato

Andrew Dawes, *violin*
Mark Luchkow, *viola*
Paul McCulloch, *cello*

* In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree with a major in Piano Performance.

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Recital Hall

Sunday, September 18, 1994

8:00 p.m.

Cass. 3 of 4

DOCTORAL RECITAL*

SHING-LIH CHEN, piano

Préludes pour le piano

No. 1, Grave

No. 2, Allegretto tranquillo

No. 8, Vivace

Frank Martin

(1890-1974)

VIER Impromptus, D. 935

Allegro moderato

Allegretto

Andante

Allegro scherzando

Franz Schubert

(1797-1828)

- INTERMISSION -

Les collines d'Anacapri

Le vent dans la plaine

La sérénade interrompue

Ce qu'a vu le vent d'ouest

Claude Debussy

(1862-1918)

Nocturne in c minor, Op. 48, No. 1

Grand Polonaise Brillante in E-flat major, Op. 22

Frédéric Chopin

(1810-1849)

* In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree with a major in Piano Performance.

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Recital Hall

Wednesday, November 1, 1995

8:00 p.m.

Cass. 3 of 4

DOCTORAL LECTURE RECITAL*

SHING-LIH CHEN, Piano

Yellow River Piano Concerto (1969)

1. Prelude: Yellow River Boatman's Song
(Yellow River Boatman's Song, revised 1989.)
2. Yellow River Ode
3. Yellow River Resentment
(Yellow River Ballade, revised 1989.)

Yin Chengzong
Liu Zhuang
Chu Wanghua
Sheng Lihong
Shi Shucheng
Xu Feixing

Yunlin Yang, Orchestra Reduction

* In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree with a major in Piano.

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Recital Hall

Wednesday, April 10th, 1996

8:00 p.m.

Ass. # of 4

DOCTORAL THESIS RECITAL*

SHING-LIH CHEN, Piano

Preludes, Op. 34

Dimitri Shostakovich
(1906-1995)

No. 14, Adagio
No. 2, Allegretto
No. 10, Moderato non troppo
No. 12, Allegro non troppo
No. 20, Allegretto furioso
No. 24, Allegretto

Les Fées sont déxquises danseuses
Bruyères
General Lavine - eccentric

Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

Two Impromptus, D. 899

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Allegro
Allegretto

- INTERMISSION -

24 Preludes, Op. 28

Frédéric Chopin
(1810-1849)

Agitato	Andantino	Lento	Vivace
Lento	Molto agitato	Allegro	Largo
Vivace	Largo	Sostenuto	Cantabile
Largo	Allegro molto	Presto con fuoco	Molto agitato
Allegro molto	Vivace	Allegretto	Moderato
Lento assai	Presto	Allegro molto	Allegro appassionato

* In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree with a major in Piano .