

Sounding China:

A Companion to
Chinese Traditional Music



Guo Shuhui

Translated by Li Mingyue

来自中国的 声音

中国传统音乐概览

郭树荟

著

李明月

译



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来自中国的声音
Sounding China

First Preface

The treasure of traditional Chinese music is as rich as what the sea possesses. With a five-thousand-year history, Chinese music was developed across a vast land of about 9,600,000 km² on which people of fifty-six ethnic groups inhabited. A kaleidoscopic range of traditional musical styles and genres were born here, which constitutes a part of the culture of world music. As a mirror of the conceptions of traditional culture, Chinese music is deeply linked to people's everyday life, including labour, customs and rituals. Chinese music itself forms a complete cultural system.

Traditional Chinese music is characterised by distinctive aesthetical features. It values simplicity, drawing out particular ways of appreciation, and laying emphasis on the perception of atmospheric moods and meanings. The music is the result of the crystallisation of people's inner lives over centuries. It has also played a great role in cultivating people's mind and refines people's temperament.

Chinese music is always in change, in development, open for possibilities. The universal musical practice of mass across vast areas has developed a monolithic music system that involves diverse forms and shows complex structures. It is, without doubt, a difficult task to give a comprehensive representation of this system within the length of several hundred pages. Professor Guo Shuhui of Shanghai Conservatory of Music accepted this challenge. With diligence, great expertise, and rich knowledge, Guo has incorporated in her writing profundity and an easy-to-understand approach. Arranged chronologically, the narration of the book is led by the carefully-selected musical examples that are representative of different periods and genres. A pearl newly added to the existent scholarly research on Chinese traditional music, this book also serves the respectable purpose of making writings on this music accessible to readers that are alien to Chinese culture.

I congratulate the author on the publication of this book, and I hope that more non-Chinese-speaking readers would know and like Chinese music through this book.

Jiang Mingdun
Early summer 2019
Shanghai

序一



中华传统音乐是一片浩瀚的大海。五千余年的传承发展，九百六十万平方公里大地上的流布变异，五十六个民族的芬芳异彩，形成了宝藏丰富、色彩斑斓的“百花园”。中国传统音乐是世界音乐的一个组成部分。它深深地渗透着中国传统文化的理念，和人民群众的生产、生活、精神风貌、习俗礼仪紧密地联系在一起，构成了一个完整的文化系统。

中国传统音乐有着自己独特的审美特征，崇尚简约，讲究品味，体悟意境。千百年来，它伴随着历史的路程，表述着人们的心声，发挥了“动心化人”“陶冶性情”的积极作用。

中国音乐总是在不断变化着、发展着、开放着的，经过极其广泛的群众性的艺术实践，形成了一个内涵庞大、品种多样、结构纷繁的整体。要在短短几百页的篇幅里介绍它的全貌，实属非常难为之事。上海音乐学院郭树荟教授承担了这一艰巨的任务，她以扎实的专业基础、丰富的知识积累和深入的研究，厚积薄发，深入浅出，在众多的材料中精选出各个时期、不同领域和品种类型的代表作品，以历史发展为序，精心编著，为当今中国传统音乐的研究领域增添了一部精品，为中国传统音乐走向世界提供了珍贵的材料。

在此，特祝贺书著出版，并期待世界上更多的朋友了解中国音乐，喜爱中国音乐。

江明惇
2019年初夏
于上海



Second Preface

Like other forms of Chinese culture, Chinese music has developed a self-organising, self-contained system over thousands of years of accumulation and sedimentation. This system is mainly comprised of two sub-systems. One is the system of regional culture, which is constituted by China's vast territory and its multifarious geographical and cultural environments. Dozens of Neolithic cultural centers formed since ancient times, including Hongshan, Yangshao, Longshan, Majiayao, Yuyao, and Qujialing. Many musical antiquities unearthed from the excavated sites of these Neolithic cultures show regional differences in their material, shape, and decorative pattern. Before the end of Pre-Qin dynasty (before 220 BC), regional cultures that were mature and distinctive boomed in areas like Qilu, Yanzhao, Sanjin, Sanqin, Jingchu, Wuyue, Bashu, which laid the geographical foundation for the later thriving of regional music. Another sub-system is constituted by music genres that have survived the long history. In contemporary China, almost every province, city, and autonomous region – even the subordinate counties – has developed its own music genres and performance forms under varied natural, jurisdictional, social, economic, linguistic and folkloric influences. The variety in the genre and the style is astonishing. Regional traits and richness of genre thus offer us two major perspectives for approaching and understanding the autonomous system of Chinese music.

Gobi deserts, plateaus, and mountain ranges occupy the most parts of the north, south, and south-west China; only the south and the south-east are facing the sea. This geographical condition led to the formation of Chinese society and culture that was naturally characterised by a degree of isolation. It is for this reason that we could qualify Chinese culture and music with as self-organising and self-contained. By self-organising, I mean that the traditional Chinese music genres and styles were created by the wisdom of folk musicians generation by generation under the circumstance where there was often a lack in communication with the external world; by self-contained, I am talking about the genesis and the social functions of Chinese music. Since remote ages, music has been deeply connected with the everyday life and the ethical and emotional lives of Chinese people. People made music for self-entertainment and for practical social purposes. Several records from ancient literature invite us to imagine the pictures in which, for example, 'three men hold oxen's tails, dancing and singing eight verses ('Ancient Music' from *Lu's Spring and Autumn Annals*), or 'people strike the stones, stoke the stones; the hundred beasts

序二



中国音乐与中国文化一样，历经数千年积蕴，形成了一个自构的自在系统。这个系统主要由两个子系统组成。其一是它的地域文化系统，这是中国广阔多样的自然地理和人文环境促成的。上古时代，中国先后形成了以红山、仰韶、龙山、马家窑、余姚、屈家岭等为代表的数十个新石器氏族文化中心，诸多新石器遗址出土的音乐文物，已经有了材质、形制、纹饰的地域差异；至先秦时代，则有齐鲁、燕赵、三晋、三秦、荆楚、吴越、巴蜀等多个已经相当成熟、特色鲜明的地域文化，它们成为后世色彩斑斓的中国区域音乐的底色。其二是它的乐种体裁系统，这个系统是在中国音乐漫长的历史岁月中积淀而成的。在自然、政区、社会、经济、语言、民俗等因素的影响下，今天的中国，几乎每个省、市、自治区乃至每个市县的区域空间都流传着多姿多彩的音乐体裁和乐种形式，其样态和风格的多样性无与伦比。从而，音乐的区域特色和体裁乐种的丰富蕴藏，即成为世人认识或揭示这个自在的中国音乐系统的两大切入点。又因为中国的北、西、西南多为沙漠、戈壁、高原、大山，仅东南和南方面向大海，而使它的社会、文化具有某种天然的封闭性，所以，我们也就有理由说它的文化、音乐是一个自构的自在系统。所谓“自构”者，是指它在多数缺乏与外部交流的情况下，凭借历代民间音乐家的智慧，创造了属于中国自己的传统音乐乐种体裁和音乐风格；所谓“自在”者，是指它的社会功用多半与中国民众的日常生活相融合，具有鲜明的自娱性和实践性。可以想象，古代文献所记载的“三人操牛尾，投足以歌八阙”（《吕氏春秋·古乐》）、“击石拊石，百兽率舞”（《尚书·益稷》），恰恰是这种“自娱”音乐生活的写照，也是其“自在”特性的真实反映。这

take up the dance' (*Yiji* from *Book of Documents*). These examples could be seen as testimony to the roles that music played in self-entertainment and public social life. Having said that, I do not mean to deny the fact that musics from outside China's territory were absorbed and integrated into Chinese music over the long history of its development. Instead, I would like to emphasise here what is characteristic of today's traditional Chinese music that is representative of the musical cultures of East Asia.

This book is written in the hope of encouraging communication between the musical cultures of China and other countries. Entitling her book *Sounding China*, Guo, first of all, wants to place emphasis on the significant role of 'sound' in distinguishing between cultural landscapes of different nations and ethnic groups. The 'sound' as such exists in every single piece of instrumental and vocal music of different regions and different periods. The qualities of this sound are innate to Chinese culture, and they can be directly perceived through listening. In the meantime, Guo writes in a concise style and structures the book into thirteen short chapters. The narrative of each chapter, organised chronologically, involves a selection of classical pieces of different eras. It is said that a straw shows which way the wind blows. The collection of musical pieces discussed in this book, I believe, can provide an incisive perspective to readers to whom Chinese music is still new. It is noticeable that in addressing her music examples within the short length, the author is concerned with both the system of regional cultures and the system of genres of Chinese music – as I have mentioned earlier before. The book's authentic representation of the landscape of Chinese music is made possible through the combination of such wide temporal and vast spatial perspectives.

I hope readers could appreciate the book to the fullest, so as to unlock the secrets of the sounds of China.

Therefore, I write this preface.

Qiao Jianzhong

On 4 May 2019

Written in Thinking-benevolence study,
in the old capital Xi'an

样说并不是否认中国音乐在生存、成长过程中对域外音乐的汲取和吸收，而是想强调今天流传的中国传统音乐作为东亚音乐文化典型所具备的那种独特性。

本书为推进中外音乐文化交流而著。作者以“来自中国的声音”为题，首先就是要突显“声音”作为区分不同民族音乐的一种文化景观所具有的重要性，这样的“声音”存在于中国古往今来各民族、各地区所有声乐、器乐体裁品种的每一首曲目之中，蕴含于其中的那种与生俱来、挥之不去的“声音”个性，将直接诉诸于人们的听觉。同时，限于篇幅，作者用精练的行文和十三个章节，以历史为序，向读者呈现历代中国音乐的典范之作，见微知著，以一当十，引导读者走进中国音乐的大世界。我们还特别注意到，书中所有举证，既关注到我们前面提及的中国音乐的地域系统，又在有限的篇幅中通过曲目而涉猎到中国音乐的乐种体裁系统，以丰富多样的体裁满足了社会大众的精神需求，凸显了作为东方音乐典范的中国特色。

愿读者用心品读，以解“中国声音”之奥秘。

是为序。

乔建中

2019年5月4日

于古都西安 思仁斋

Third Preface

Due to the nature of my work, I have often been collaborating with overseas media companies and musical institutions. On the one hand, I wish to import high-quality music programmes from abroad. On the other hand, I try to introduce programmes about Chinese music produced by Classical Musical Radio 947 to overseas listeners. In 2016, I met the producer of 98.7 WFMT Chicago. When talking about our collaboration project, he mentioned that he knew very little about Chinese music. There were books published in English introducing Japanese music, but there was no such thing made for Chinese music. His words made me think. China has such a rich musical culture. As a media person, I felt obliged to promote Chinese culture internationally. I told the producer that we would produce a series of Chinese traditional music that were easy to understand for the general public as soon as we could. I delivered this idea to Professor Guo Shuhui at the Department of Musicology at Shanghai Conservatory of Music who is specialised in Chinese traditional music theory. Professor Guo deeply empathised with my idea, and accepted my invitation to write texts for the radio programme unconditionally. In order to produce a bi-lingual text, Guo invited Li Mingyue, a then-DPhil-candidate in musicology at the University of Oxford to be the English translator. In the meantime, I thought that the text could be transformed into a book, accompanied by a CD, so that it could be accessible to more people who are interested in Chinese folk music. This idea then won the supports from Fei Weiyao and Liu Lijuan, president and vice-president at Shanghai Music Publishing House.

Even for an author like Professor Guo, who is prolific in academic works, it is not easy to write a book on Chinese music that is easily digestible for non-Chinese-speaking readers. To accompany the texts with audio is another challenge. In a certain sense, writing a book like this can even be harder than writing a normal textbook. Professor Guo finished the writing of thirteen chapters within two years during when she was at the same time busy with teaching at the conservatory. As the initiator and the planner of this project, I am also the first reader to read the complete draft of this book. I was moved and gratified by what are presented in this book. To begin with, the author uses clear and comprehensive language to narrate the historical development of various genres of Chinese music in different periods and regions, at the same time briefly contextualising classical musical works in their social and historical

序三



由于工作关系，我经常和境外的传媒和音乐机构合作交流，一方面引进一些境外优秀的音乐节目，另一方面也推荐“经典947”制作的音乐节目，让更多的海外听众了解中国音乐。2016年我与芝加哥WFMT古典音乐网的负责人洽谈与“经典947”的合作，期间，该负责人说，他们对中国的音乐不了解，也没有关于介绍中国民族音乐的书，而日本就有专门介绍他们民族音乐的书。他的话引起了我的思索，中国音乐文化极为丰富，作为传媒工作者传播中国文化是义不容辞的责任。于是，我与负责人说，我们尽快制作一套通俗易懂的音乐节目，介绍中国本土民族音乐节目提供给你们播出。我立刻找到了我的学妹，上海音乐学院音乐学系中国传统音乐理论研究生学科的郭树荟教授，郭教授听了我的想法颇有同感，毫无条件地答应了撰写节目稿，同时她还联系了在英国牛津大学攻读博士的李明月同学作为著述的翻译者，用双语制作这套系列节目。同时我又想到不仅应该出广播节目，还应该出一本书和唱片，以后能让更多的人了解中国的民族民间音乐，这一想法得到了上海音乐出版社费维耀社长和刘丽娟副社长的大力支持。

郭树荟教授虽然学术上颇有造诣，但要写一部让外国人能看得懂的介绍中国音乐的书著，并且除了文字还要有音像资料对应，这确实是一个不小的挑战。郭教授在繁忙的教学工作之余，历时两年，终于完成了这部13套的著述。作为这部书的策划者，我迫不及待地在第一时间作为读者看完全部稿件，深为感动和欣慰。首先，这本书用非常通俗的语言，以中国音乐发展的历史脉络为主线，介绍了不同时期、不同区域和主要体裁类别的中国音乐经典曲目，同时还简略地介绍了乐曲的社会和时代背景，让读者清晰地了解中国

backgrounds. Readers can thus have a sense of the ways in which musics were inherited, transmitted, and transformed. Secondly, regarding the choice of classical pieces, compositions by contemporary Chinese composers like Zhu Jian'er are also included. These pieces draw on materials of folk music and the language of traditional musical instruments. They often fall into the category of the 'easy-to-listen' contemporary music, and are imprinted with particular ethos. Aimed for international readers, Guo Shuhui's *Sounding China: A Companion to Chinese Traditional Music* serves as a gateway to the acquaintance and the understanding of the universe of Chinese culture.

Shen Shuqiang
Chief executive of Classical Music FM 94.7,
Shanghai People's Radio Station
2 April 2019

音乐的传承、传播与变化形式；其次在经典曲目的选择上，加入了如朱践耳先生等中国当代作曲家运用民族民间音乐素材和中国传统乐器创作的作品，可听性很强，也颇具时代感。郭树荟教授撰写的这本《来自中国的声音》，无疑将会成为世界了解中国文化的一个窗口。

沈舒强

上海人民广播电台经典947频率总监

2019年4月2日



Author's Preface

On the Publication of the Chinses-English Version of *Sounding China: A Companion to Chinese Traditional Music*

Chinese traditional music has developed a unique form of artistic expression and is characterized by its distinctive humanistic thinking and aesthetic taste. A number of musical works have become classics. Introducing the classics and the culture of Chinese traditional music to the world, or more simply, sharing this music with others, is derived from the artistic need of the public to communicate with and to know about each other, which, I believe, has profound historical and sociological significance.

The framework of this book, *Sounding China*, due to be published by Shanghai Music Publishing House, includes thirteen parts. Adopting a predominantly scholarly perspective, the narrative of the book encloses a historical thread and unfolds around a constellation of classic musical works. Originally planned as a bi-lingual text, it also embraces audio-visual supplements including pictures, audio tracks. The book contextualises the major forms of Chinese music in a historical-cultural background, laying emphasis on the music's social functions. As a listening guide, it introduces and analyses a number of genres ranging from folk songs, instrumental music, the music of *shuochang*, and the music of *xiqu* to classics of contemporary musical works that are inspired by the culture of Chinese traditional music. The basic assumption of the book is concerned with integrating scholarly enthusiasm into a perspective that can empathize with readers of a wide scope. It attempts to address some very fundamental aspects of Chinese traditional music with profundity, and adopts an easy-to-understand approach based on a language style that is simple and vivid. The narrative of the book, marked with a sensitivity directly derived from the listening experience of the music, focuses on songs, ballads, figures, and singing styles that have undergone changes through time. Through their sounds, literary texts, narrative contents, images, and legends, these musics display the richness of artistic language that lies at the heart of Chinese traditional music. Each era crystallizes into distinctive historical memories; every piece of instrumental music and the vocal tune is enriched with imaginary space emerging from the personal experience of listening. These

自序



关于《来自中国的声音·中国传统音乐概览》 中英文版出版

中国传统音乐有着自身独特的艺术表达形式、人文思想、审美情趣，产生了许多经典的音乐艺术作品。向世界传播、介绍中国传统音乐的经典与文化，分享中国传统音乐，这是人类相互交流、相互认知的艺术诉求，有着深远的历史与现实意义。

由上海音乐出版社出版的这部《来自中国的声音》，将在十三套框架内，以史为引、以经典艺术为主、以学术研究的视野，采用中英文对照，图片音像配套，将中国音乐主要表现的艺术形式，放置在历史文化的语境及功能中，聆听、分析、认知中国民歌音乐、器乐音乐、说唱音乐、戏曲音乐以及与中国传统音乐文化相关联的现当代音乐代表作品。全书以专业化的情怀融入大众的视角，语言深入浅出、生动平实、意蕴深邃。那些历经时代变迁的歌谣、乐曲、人物、唱腔，伴随赏析与聆听的文字叙事，透过乐音的声响、标题、内容、形象、故事，呈现了丰富的艺术语汇，展示了中国传统音乐的内涵。每一个时代都有着不同的历史记忆，而音乐的记忆，一首歌儿、一首乐曲、一段唱腔，都会为每个个体增添清晰的遐想空间。这些乐音承载着个人情感的、驻足于历史事件的细枝末叶。古人奏过的乐，今人唱过的歌，都能触摸到心灵的感动。在听乐、赏乐、读乐的时光中，逝去的乐音无不折射着独特的光能，伴随着中国人文、民俗气息的画面，散发出中国音乐文化的博大与精深，使读者将乐音、文字与之相关联的人文、美学、历史相互映射，感受中国音乐文化的创造力、审美力。

musical sounds bear details that are imprinted with both private emotions and historical significance. The musics, be those played by our ancestors or songs sung by people today, always triggers feelings deep in one's heart. In listening to, reading about and appreciating these musical bygones, images of traditional Chinese folklore that are engraved in the sounds are also evoked. I hope that this book could offer its readers access to the cultural and aesthetical history that is represented in the musical sounds and texts, and that the readers could also perceive the musical imagination and sensibility that are unique to this culture.

Books that are devoted to the appreciation of Chinese music remain rare throughout different periods of the cultural development of modern China; books of this kind coming along with English translation are even more so. There is thus an urgent need for scholarly monographs on Chinese traditional music in both Chinese and English, ideally with visual illustrations and audio examples of high quality. The planning and the publication of *Sounding China* could be regarded as a result of cultural self-consciousness and a result of the intention to bridge Chinese culture and cultures of other parts of the world. The universe of music is boundaryless. In examining and interpreting a repertoire of classic musical pieces and weaving the observations into a narration, this book could perhaps present the stories and the spirit of Chinese music to international readers who are interested in this topic.

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Or the eighteenth day of the first month of
lunar year *Jihai*