

MUSICAL IDENTITY IN TAIWANESE INSTRUMENTAL THEATER: *TEN-SIDE
AMBUSH* AND *THE JOURNEY OF MONKEY KING* BY HUANG CHEN MING

By

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To all who helped me travel this road

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LIST OF TERMS

- ABORIGIANL MUSIC** The music of the local Taiwanese aboriginal tribes, dividing into two major groups, one group is from mountains, and the other one is from the plains region.
- BEIGUAN** The music from northern Mainland China and has developed in Taiwan since 17th century. Mostly the music serves for religious function.
- CHINESE BROADCAST ORCHESTRA (COB)**
This orchestra was originally founded in Nanjing, China in 1935 but came to Taiwan in 1949 with the R.O.C. government. Their musical performances are primarily Chinese music from Mainland China.
- CHINESE MUSIC** This term means the music from the Mainland China.
- DEMOCRATIC PROGRASSIVE PARTY (DPP)**
The second political party in Taiwan founded in 1986.
- DI** A Chinese wind instrument similar like Western flutes. The sizes and pitches are different in diversity of theatrical productions.
- ERHU** It is a two-stringed bowed instrument commonly found in Mainland China and in Taiwan.
- GUZHENG** It is Chinese plucked zither instrument from Mainland China and it is seldom used in Taiwanese music, such as *nanguan* and *beiguan*.
- INSTRUMENTAL THEATER**
A genre of musical expression for which musicians are trained to become performers in multiple expression fields: music, drama, and dance movement, created by Huang Cheng Ming in 2005.
- KUOMINTANG (KMT)** The first political party founded in 1894 in Mainland China and re-established in Taiwan in 1949.
- MATERIAL LAW ORDER**
A law announced by R.O.C. government in 1949. This law repressed democracy and curtailed cultural development
- NANGUAN** This term describes the music came from Fujiang, southern China, and imported in Taiwan around 1650s. The musical style mostly follows one major melody and ornaments in diversity way.
- PENTATONIC SCALE** A musical scale divided octave into five steps. In Chinese music, the basic scale is 1, 2, 3, 5, 6. If 1=C. then the scale would be C, D, E, G, A.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA (P.R.C.)

It is an official name of Mainland China.

PIPA

A four-stringed plucked instrument with pear-shaped body made by wood over one meter long commonly performed in Mainland China and Taiwan.

REPUBLIC OF CHINA (R.O.C.)

It is an official name of Taiwan.

RUAN

There are two different types of ruan mentioned in this thesis: one is a four-stringed instrument with round belly came from mainland China; other is two-stringed instrument from Taiwan.

SILK AND BAMBOO MUSIC

It is a genre of music that popularizes in southern China. It contains stringed and wind instruments.

SHANG

A Chinese wind instrument, which is also the only wind instrument that can produce harmony.

SUONA

It is a wind instrument commonly used in various theatrical productions in China and Taiwan

TAIKO

It refers to Japanese drum and also the performance

TAIWANESE OPERA MUSIC

It is the only musical genre that originated in Taiwan, which combined with Taiwanese indigenous music performing styles, lyric settings, aesthetic expression, and spoken language.

XINJIANG MUSICAL SCALE

Musical scale from Xinjiang music, normally is a heptatonic. In this thesis the scale is C, D, E, F #, G, A #, B.

YANGQIN

This term is a Chinese hammered dulcimer originally came from Middle East Turkey

Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
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This thesis focuses on two theatrical works *Ten-side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King* composed by Huang Chen Ming in the context of different artistic ideas, educational systems, and Taiwanese historical background. Huang and the Chai-Found Workshop intended to present their perspective of Taiwanese traditional music through these two works. However, the elements of the works can be perceived in many different ways.

Governmental policies during several Taiwanese historical periods affected musical choices among the population and led to diverse interpretations of the meaning of Taiwanese national identity during the twentieth century. There are three different historical periods - Japanese colonization, two Chiang Presidents period, and the recent period of multi-party of democracy that were particularly important. During these periods, each government manipulated Taiwanese people's national identity through their political policies and educational systems, which created a multilayered national identity within the present Taiwanese society. This situation affected not only politics but also the Taiwanese traditional music. Taiwanese performance groups of traditional music were

influenced by governmental standards set for the funding and support of artistic activities. The founding of the Chai-Found Workshop and the creation of two instrumental theatrical pieces *Ten-side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King* serve as examples of this influence.

The analysis of selected staging materials from these two works reveals that the understanding and interpretation of the links of music and national identity in Taiwan layers elements of Japanese, Chinese, and present Taiwanese identity together. In this thesis, I analyze four elements from these works, 1) program description by Huang, 2) stage setup, 3) musical elements of the work, and 4) written language presented as part of the stage setting, in order to demonstrate that Taiwanese traditional musical performance can be perceived from different

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Taiwanese Instrumental Theater is a new genre of musical expression for which musicians are trained to become performers in multiple expressive fields: music, drama, and dance movement. Created by Huang Cheng Ming¹ in 2005, this type of theatrical training differentiates the Instrumental Theater from other westernized theatrical genres found in Taiwan that create specialized roles for musicians, dancers, and actors. Huang's purpose in was to create an experimental genre of theater based on the roots of traditional Taiwanese musical performance. According to Lin Hui Kuan (2009)², the new instrumental theater promotes the position of traditional Taiwanese music in the area of theater production. Moreover, Huang believes that this musical genre can best present his idea of traditional Taiwanese music to modern audiences. However, in what ways does this new type of Taiwanese theater present traditional Taiwanese music and how is this related to Taiwanese national identity?

The main focus in this thesis is to examine the two specific theatrical works *Ten-side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King* in order to present the different understanding and interpretation of the links to music of national identity in the context of international flows of artistic ideas, educational systems, and Taiwanese historical background. The thesis uses a semiotic framework to analyze selected artistic elements from the two works, such as music, costumes, stage setting, dance gesture, and spectacle. Moreover, the creation of a workshop and the composer's compositional

¹ Huang is the composer of *Ten-side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King*, and also the director of Chai-Found Workshop.

² Hui Kuan, Lin. *The Discovery of Interdisciplinary Performance in Traditional Music*. Master Thesis. Taiwan: Fo Guang University, Graduate Institution of Arts Studies, 2009.

motivation are described and analyzed as distinct from the audiences' interpretations.

Chapter 1 contains the outlines of two main theoretical frameworks (semiotics and national identity), research methodology, and the literature reviews. I apply semiotic theory in my analysis primarily based on Turino's (1999)³ adaptation of the Peircian' semiotic model of sign and object relationships, which includes symbol, icon, and index. Under this framework, I show how musical and theatrical signs link to Taiwanese national identity in the later chapters. For the theory of national identity, I mostly focus on the Turino's definition of musical nationalism.⁴ In addition, I also apply the definition of Taiwanese identity from Taiwanese political scholars. Those theories of musical nationalism and Taiwanese national identity inform my interpretation of identity issues and link to questions of Taiwanese cultural and musical identity. To achieve this goal, I first introduce methods of data collection. Second, I analyze the data in order to understand the cultural meanings of various stage elements. Finally, I present a literature review of the books, articles, and dissertations consulted in this thesis.

Chapter 2 describes Taiwanese political and musical history and discusses the closely linked concepts of Taiwanese music and Chinese music in contemporary Taiwan. For understanding the musical culture in Taiwan, the discussion is framed within the context of Taiwanese political history. This historical development affected the interpretation and perception of different kinds of music in Taiwan and their links to Taiwanese national identity. Therefore, the first section is a brief description of Taiwanese history explaining how the shifting political powers in Taiwan influenced the

³ Turino, Thomas, "Signs of Imagination, Identity, and Experience: A Peircian Semiotic Theory for Music", In *Ethnomusicology* 43, No.2 (Spring-Summer, 1999): 221-25.

⁴ Turino, Thomas, "Nationalism and Latin American Music: Selected Case Studies and Theoretical Considerations", In *Latin American Music Review* 24, No. 2 (Autumn-Winter, 2003): 169-209.

musical and cultural expressions on the island. I then address the differences of Taiwanese and Chinese music using the information from different politicians and political scholars, and the evidence from official documents from the government institutions. Based on an analysis of those data, I interpret how the idea of Taiwanese music has been constructed.

After the description of Taiwanese political and musical cultural development, the design of the Chai-Found workshop and the musicians' musical training background are also considered as important factors that influence their musical expression of Taiwanese national identity. In chapter 3, I present the Chai-Found Musical Workshop in the context of Taiwan's political environment during the 1980s-1990s. I also incorporate the musicians' biographies to demonstrate the impact of Chinese musical training on their idea of Taiwanese music and on their performance techniques. Moreover, I reveal the development of Chai-Found Workshop in order to illustrate their transition from Chinese music to a focus on constructing a Taiwanese musical identity that informs the two instrumental theater works discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 4 presents the content of *Ten-side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King* and the examination of semiotic presentations using the selected elements from these two works to illustrate links between staging material and Taiwanese national identity. I first describe Huang Chang Ming's primary motives and techniques in creating these two works and the storylines of them. Then, the following part shows the analysis of different staging materials from the different acts. This includes musical characteristics (melody and harmony); the meaning of words that reveal the composers' national identity; the stage set up that affect the audiences' perception; the use of

written symbols in *Ten-side Ambush* that shows the identification of Taiwanese and Chinese. Through these four examples I present a diversity of perceptions and interpretations of the works between different people, such as composers, creators, and audiences.

Theoretical Framework

Semiotic Framework

Every visual and aural element of staging contains the potential to convey meaning to audiences. Meanings might be intentionally or unintentionally prescribed by presenters, such as composers, creators, choreographers, and directors. Presenters communicate with their audiences through the artistic signs they perform. The way of displaying the signs comprises the presenter's own life experience and his or her own perspectives. The audiences also interpret the signs through their own life experiences, educational backgrounds, generational affiliation, and other aspects of their own history. Therefore, one particular element of staging may be interpreted differently by different people yielding multiple meanings for the element. In Peirce's semiotic theory, "a sign can be anything that is perceived by an observer which stands for or calls to mind something else and by doing so creates an effect in the observer."

Peirce distinguished three basic ways or categories in which signs and their objects are related to each other: *symbol*, *icon*, and *index*. Symbols involve primarily linguistic definitions and propositions. Symbolic communication is established through social agreement. In iconic and indexical communication on the other hand, linguistic definitions and social agreement are not needed. In artistic communication, it is the indexical and iconic realms that are most important. Therefore, in this thesis, I focus primarily on the iconic and indexical levels to understand how aspects of staging and

presentation are perceived by the presenters and audiences.

A *symbol* is a sign whose meaning is primarily established through linguistic definition and socially agreement. That is, the symbol sign usually refers to language or a system of graphic notations like a musical score. The meaning behind the words and notes of a musical scores accounts for its symbolic meaning but does not reveal the full meaning of utterances and musical performances because iconic and indexical processes are also present. Moreover, in order to successfully communicate the meaning between presenters and receivers (audiences), the definition of words and scores has to be agreed by their society. For example, for an audience member who does not understand Mandarin, a Mandarin character displayed in the back scene of *Ten-Side Ambush* might be interpreted merely as an icon of a generic Chinese writing system. However, for a Taiwanese or Chinese person, the characters evoke not only their iconic daily reading of such characters, but also hold rich indexical meanings.

An *icon* is a way that people connect an object to a sign through some sort of perceived quality of resemblance or similarity. If a specific melodic sequence is familiar to an audience member, this melody may act in an iconic way allowing for him to recognize it, and relate this melody to a particular song or piece that he has previously heard. Also, individual listeners might link a melody to a general category of melodies (genre or style) because of shared melodic qualities (such as similar sequences of intervals). An instrument can also be an icon for audiences to distinguish where the music is from, Western or Eastern, or even to pinpoint a particular country. Although icons function in a relatively direct way to connect objects and signs, a person's "internal context" (personal history) also affects the way she might perceive an icon. This can

affect the interpretation of a sign that presented intentionally by presenter. This is how Thomas Turino (2008)⁵ describes the meaning of iconic sign as related to the receivers' own life experience. A traditional example of a Chinese written lyric might operate for Taiwanese as an iconic sign of the Taiwanese writing system, but for most Americans or Europeans, Chinese writing characters are not part of their life experience and do not communicate to them as icons of Taiwanese writing. People who have no Chinese educational background likely would not recognize the difference between traditional Chinese characters and simple Chinese characters. Therefore, the perception of this icon would be different between people who lived in China and Taiwan and the people who lived outside of these areas.

An *index* is also a type of sign that is interpreted by people according to their own experiences of linking specific signs and objects together. The meaning of indexical signs arises from the fact that the sign and object are experienced together. That is, the sign is linked to its object through co-occurrence. A fire truck siren (sign) might remind people about fire, because in the actual life, every time when the siren rings, there is a fire. An example given by Turino is that if a song was broadcasted in a commercial advertisement again and again, the song will be an indexical sign for the advertisement. People will link the song to the product because they co-occur in an advertisement. Another example is a national anthem. When people hear a particular melody when standing to salute the flag of a nation or when being told to stand and honor their country, as the melody can serve as an indexical sign for people to link the song to a country. People's actual life experiences place a major part of interpretation of indexical

⁵ Turino, Thomas, *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation*, Chicago: The Chicago University Press, 2008.

signs, because, as Turino mentions, the perception of this type of sign is based on actual experiences. Indexes are somewhat unpredictable in that no two individuals have identical life experiences. However, groups of people do share common experiences and this leads to the powerful nature of indexes to create common meanings among people with common experiences. Artists can use a staging material or a musical melody to serve as indexical sign for general common sign for audiences within a particular space, environment, or time period.

To sum up, in this thesis, I apply semiotic theory, including the symbols, indexical, and iconic aspects, to the analysis of staging materials presented in this two instrumental theater works. I further study how those signs and objects relationships links to the shifting aspects of national identity in Taiwan.

Musical Nationalism

The theatrical works present the signs on the stage that has the message of national identity is a main focus in this thesis. By national identity, Thomas Turino (2003)⁶ describes that nation is an identity unit whose members define themselves as a nation in relation to having or aspiring to their own state by legal sanction. That is, people regarded themselves in a particular region and related themselves to the culture, language, and life within this region, living with those characteristics to identify themselves from other people of other space, also they have the legally right to agree concept of their territory is their nation.

Within this framework, cultural activities are frequently interpreted as expression of the nation, and people use such signs to distinguish themselves from the other nations.

⁶ Turino, Thomas. "Nationalism and Latin American Music"

This is cultural nationalism and when the cultural expressions involve music, one can refer to this as musical nationalism. Both artists and non-artists are involved in the policies and artistic production of musical nationalism. The non-artists include the governmental officials and non-governmental authorities that have the power to influence artistic production. They affect changes in national identity through policy and appropriate the certain cultural activities to create the emblems of the nation. For instance during the Japanese colonial period, the Japanese colonial government in Taiwan implemented policies that inserted Japanese musical elements into Taiwan. They wanted the musical life of Taiwan to include Japanese musical styles and elements.

Artists frequently use their works to present their identity by manipulating the artistic materials in their work. This can lead to a change in life experiences and hence, the cultural formation of identities changes. In the two theatrical works that are analyzed later in this thesis, the pentatonic scale and use of local farmers' outfits were consciously intended by Huang Chen Ming to convey a sense of traditional Taiwanese musical identity.⁷ Those were elements selected by Huang so that Taiwanese audiences would recognize and indexically link this to their life experience of Taiwanese identity.

Methodology

This thesis presents the understanding of the way musical and theatrical signs in the two instrumental theatrical pieces have been employed to create a sense of Taiwanese national identity, relating music to the context of historical development, social context, and the semiotic functions within Taiwanese society. In order to approach

⁷ Hung Min, Hung, *The Inherited of Traditional Music in China from Geographic View*, Taiwan: Tainan National University of the Arts, Graduate School of Ethnomusicology, 2003.

this research, I went through three major processes: data collection, personal interviews, and analysis of performance practices of these two instrumental Theater works, *Ten-side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King*. I then cross analyzed the data information from the content of the interviews program notes, and historical accounts and the musical and theatrical analyses.

I gathered the data from a variety of different sources. First, I researched information about the Chai-Found Workshop, including their news, website, and other publications. I also collected information from dissertations and articles written by the musicians who participated in the workshop. These data reveal the interpretation of Taiwanese music from the composers and performers perspectives. Second, I collected data from other scholars, which also include articles, dissertations, concert reviews, newspaper clippings, and press conferences that related to traditional Taiwanese music and more specifically to these two instrumental theater works. This information presents diverse perspectives of traditional Taiwanese music and the perceptions differ from those composers and musicians. In other words, those data represent one part of audiences view about Chai-Found and their music. This information accounts for a broader view of the Chai-Found Workshop and perspective on the definition and interpretation of Taiwanese music.

The last part of this source of data comes from my readings of historical textbooks and other scholarship. I draw on these sources of information to reveal the shifting concepts and roles of traditional music within the context of Taiwanese political history. I focus on three different historical periods, 1) Japanese colonization (1895-1945), 2) Republic of China under two Chiang presidencies (1946-1986), and 3) the recent period

of multi-party democracy (1987-present). This analysis allows me to explore how politics affected the musical performances and shifting and layered nature of Taiwan's national musical identity.

Formal interviews are the second method of collecting information in this research. I employ a structured set of questions to ask of the informants in personal interviews. I interviewed the composer Huang Chen Ming and one of the musicians, Wu Tsung Hsien, from Chai-Found Workshop. Second, I conducted question-response questionnaires through email. Most of these questions are about their perspectives of Taiwanese musical theater and how individuals interpret music, acting, and dancing in relation to Taiwanese national identity. Furthermore, I draw on the interviews to gain information about the musicians' reflections on creating these two theatrical works and how they present their idea of traditional Taiwanese music.

In the analysis of these two theatrical works, I utilized the DVDs, CDs and scores. The former two products were published by Chai-Found Workshop but the later one, scores, is unpublished. I was able to secure the score for five acts of *Ten-side Ambush* and first part of *The Journey of Monkey King* from the composer, Huang Chen Ming. In order to combine the signs of staging materials with the Peircian semiotic theory, I separate the elements into musical and theatrical components. In the musical part, my analysis includes melody, intervals, harmony, and timbre. From the theatrical elements, I include stage settings, back scenes, and costumes. With the information described above, I cross-analyzed the information and present the relationship between the semiotic presentation in these two theatrical works and historical matters.

Literature Review

Understanding the complexity of theatrical presentation explored in these two instrumental theatrical works requires information and knowledge from different disciplines of scholarly writing. I consulted works on Taiwanese political history as well as those more specifically on musical history in the island. I also consulted works explaining semiotic theory in relation to musical nationalism.

Analyzing historical sources helps to explain the complex combination of Taiwanese, Chinese, and Japanese musical heritage in Taiwan. Historical sources can also help clarify the colonial situation that affected Taiwanese musical development and the complicated issues of national identity. Moreover, it also helps to understand the historical relationship between Chinese culture and Taiwanese culture. The main sources I consulted comprise Hsiu, Lu Yu's *History of Taiwanese Music*, Chieh Ying Chu's *Colonial Imagination and Cultural Writing of the Postwar Taiwanese Popular Songs 1950-1970*, Chen Chung Lin's article "Taiwanese Education History in Japanese Colonization Period: The Critique and Inspiration from the Japanization Education Policy", and Davison Gary Marvin's *A Short History of Taiwan: The Case for Independence*. These sources describe the political and musical history of the island that were key to the development national musical culture. This historical context helps to understand the meaning of the particular signs presented in the two theatrical works and the way these elements link to Taiwanese, Chinese, and Japanese heritage on the island.

Linking to the political historical development is the emergence of a Taiwanese national identity. The knowledge of musical nationalism can help to understand the situation of Taiwanese musical national identity. In this thesis, I consulted Sue Tuohy's

article “The Sonic Dimensions of Nationalism in Modern China: Musical Representation and Transformation”, Su Chen Tsai’s dissertation *The Reception and Rejection of Japanese Cultural to Taiwanese: Colonization, Modernization, and Cultural Identity*, Christopher Hughes’s book *Taiwan and Chinese Nationalism: National Identity and Status in International Society*, Thomas Turino’s article “Nationalism and Latin American Music,” and Martin Stokes’s chapter “Introduction: Ethnicity, Identity, and Music,” from his book *Ethnicity, Identity, and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*. From these sources, I apply issues of political identity to issues to the musical and cultural interpretation. Those resources enable me to describe and analyze the notion of colonialism and political power that influenced the artistic expression.

In addition, I examine books and articles about semiotics of art (music, theater and dramatic art). Keir Elam’s *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, Sponler Claire and Xiaomei Chen’s co-edited book *East of West: Cross-Cultural Performance and the Staging of Difference*, Turino’s “Signs of Imagination, Identity, and Experience: A Peircian Semiotic Theory of Music” and his book *Music as Social Life* were all consulted. The understanding of semiotic theory through these resources allows me to correlate historical data with the generation of meaning through the interpretation of signs presented in the two instrumental theater works. Moreover, I also used that theoretical framework to analyze the different perception between presenter and receiver, using the semiotic theory to link the signs with the idea of national identity.

Finally, the source of Chai-Found Workshop and the studies of *Ten-side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King* play a major role of examining the subject matter. Therefore, the biography, articles, and the dissertation by Huang Chen Ming are

valuable for understanding a presenter's perspective. In addition the following sources were consulted: Huang Chen Ming's dissertation *The Modernity of Traditional Instruments – Using an Ensemble of Silk and Bamboo Music as an Example*; Huang Tien Yin, *The Contemporary Discovery of Traditional Music: Chair-Found Workshop*, Yang Chun Wei and Tseng Chung Hui's co-writing article "The Study of Bamboo and Silk Music – Ten-Side Ambush of Chai-Found Workshop as an Subject," and Lin Hui Kuan, *The Exploration of Traditional Instrumental Music*.

Aboriginal Music, *Nanguan*, *Beiguan*, Taiwanese Opera Music and Chinese Music

Aboriginal music refers to the music of the local Taiwanese aboriginal tribes. Their language and culture are part of the larger Austronesian world, which refers to the native peoples in Oceania and Southeast Asia.⁸ There are two groups of aborigines in Taiwan, one group is from mountains, and the other one is from the plains region. They mostly are small-scale societies with musical cultures of primarily vocal repertoires as they use only a few musical instruments, sometimes only in particular ceremonies. Their singing styles feature call-and-response organization⁹ and they frequently combine music with dancing and social action, such as working or sending messages to other people.

Nanguan music originated from Fujiang, southern China. Lu Yu Hsiu asserts that there is no specific evidence to prove when *Nanguan* immigrated to Taiwan. However, according to Pî-hái Kì-iû, the *Nanguan* were already in Taiwan at least from the late

⁸ Ching Ming, Chen, Huang Chao Jen, and Shih Chih Hui, *Knowledge of Taiwan*, Taiwan: Li Ming Cultural Enterprise Co. Ltd. 1996.

⁹ Chang Hui, Hsu, *The First Edition of Taiwan Music History*, Taiwan: Quan Yin Musical Score Publication, 1996.

1650s. *Nanguan* musical ensembles contain four to ten musicians who perform in the clubs,¹⁰ tea houses, and temple during celebrations and ceremonial events. *Nanguan* instruments can be divided into five instruments, *pipa*, *sanxian*, *dòngxiāo*, *èrxíán*, and *paiban*.¹¹ The former two are plucked instruments; the third one is an aerophone; *èrxíán* is a bowed instrument, and the last one is percussion. *Nanguan pipa* is different with the Chinese *pipa*. The former one usually is played in horizontal position, but the latter one is usually played in vertically position. The shape of *sanxian* is similar in different places, but the size of *nanguan sanxian* is relatively small than the Beijing *sanxian*. The pitch is also higher. *Dòngxiāo* is also similar in diverse areas, even to the Japanese *shakuhachi*. Musicians play it in vertical position. *Èrxíán* derived from the same *erhu* family, and has two strings and made of wood. The performing style of *nanguan* music mostly consists of a main melody and ornaments. It seldom contains obvious harmony between different melodic lines.

Beiguan music came from northern China. It has a very long history and probably dates to around the middle of 17th century.¹² Similar to *nanguan*, there is no solid evidence to prove when *beiguan* music first arrived in Taiwan but it thrived around the early 20th century throughout the island. It features many different musical genres and performance ensembles. It could be played by a small ensemble with silk and bamboo instruments; it could be a big band that comprises percussions and winds; it also could

¹⁰ The *nanguan* club is similar to the club of Jiangnan Sizhu music club where the musicians play music in it. Those musicians mostly are members in the clubs but sometimes not depend on the rules of each club.

¹¹ Nora, Yeh, "Nanguan Music Repertoire: Categories, Notation, and Performance Practice", In *Asian Music* 19, No.2 (Spring – Summer, 1988): 31-70.

¹² Zheng, Rongda, "Beiguan music and its new notational method", In *Journal of Wuhan Conservatory of Music, China*, (1:93): 42-49.

be a performing group that contains both instrumental music and singing. Therefore, the number of musicians used to perform *beiguan* music ranges from two to fifteen.

Beiguan music is usually performed in or around religious temples because the music almost always serves a religious function. The *Gongche* notation system for this music is similar to *nanguan*, but the melodic qualities are slightly different. The major instruments in *beiguan* contain percussion, bowed string instruments, and aerophone instruments. The musical sounds of these instruments are louder than *nanguan*.

Taiwanese opera, according to Hsu Chang Hui,(1996)¹³ is the only musical type that originated in Taiwan. However, Lu Yu Hsiu (2009)¹⁴ also mentions that it was actually inherited from southern China. Because the opera came to Taiwan a very long time ago (according to Lu Yu Hsiu, it probably thrived in Taiwan around late 19th century), it was combined with Taiwanese indigenous music performing styles, lyric settings, aesthetic expression, and spoken language. For this reason, Hsu Chang Hui's believes Taiwanese opera originated in Taiwan. In addition, Taiwanese opera contains acting, moving, and singing together with the instrumental music accompaniment. There are two different performing styles in Taiwanese opera, one is performed inside and the other one is an out-door-performance style. The inside performance style served religious and entertainment functions; the later one normally functions only as entertainment.

In Taiwan, professional conservatories instruct mainly Chinese music rather than Taiwanese music and the musicians in Chai-Found Workshop play Chinese instruments:

¹³ Chang Hui, Hsu, *The First Edition of Taiwan Music History*.

¹⁴ Lu Yu,Hsiu, *History of Taiwan Music*, Taiwan: Wu-Nan Cultural Enterprise, 2009.

the erhu, pipa, yangqin, guzheng etc. Those Chinese instruments and Chinese teachers came to Taiwan from Mainland China with the Republic of China (R.O.C.) government after 1949. The musical aesthetic, style, and performance practices were all imported directly from Mainland China. Chu Tuen Ning (2008)¹⁵ describes that this music is now regarded as part of Taiwanese music heritage, but the more acceptable category is “Chinese Ethnicity” music. The “Chinese Ethnicity” means a broader sense of people and culture from Chinese heritage. They are not calling themselves Chinese people, but were Chinese descendants. For example, the people from Singapore, or elsewhere in the world rather than in Mainland China.

Do the musical works *Ten-side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King* count as “Taiwanese” music? Huang Chen Ming, the composer, created these works to present his idea of Taiwanese music. But for some audiences, the inclusions of elements such as Japanese *taiko* drums make the works less Taiwanese. In chapter 2, I present historical and political background that created a multilayered Taiwanese musical identity including Chinese, Japanese, and other foreign element into Taiwanese national identity.

¹⁵ Yuen Ning, Chu, *The Discussion of Contemporary Chinese Musical Orchestra – Little Giant Chinese Chamber Orchestra as Example*, Taiwan: National Taiwan Normal University, 2008.

CHAPTER 2 THE BACKGROUND OF TAIWANESE MUSIC

Taiwanese political history affects the Taiwanese people's perception of their national identity and their interpretation of artistic elements presented in traditional musical performances. In this chapter, I describe how political power has been used actively to shape the musical components of national identity in traditional Taiwanese music. This is the context in which the two instrumental theater works, *Ten-Side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King* were created.

Within the last one hundred years, Taiwan has experienced three major periods of political rule, 1) Japanese colonization (1895-1945), 2) Republic of China under two Chiang presidencies (1946-1986),¹ and 3) the recent period of multi-party democracy (1987-present).² Each government has used political power to control what genres of music on the island were taught in schools and conservatories were performed and broadcast in the media, and how the history of Taiwanese music would be represented. These policies affected the way Taiwanese musical heritage was perceived by the Taiwanese people. Government officials used legal restrictions to manipulate musical style, aesthetics, lyrical content, and the music education. Their attempt was to mold Taiwanese music according to their political agenda. This impacted traditional music and popular music.

¹ Makeham, John, and A-chin Hsiao ed. *Cultural, Ethnic, and Political Nationalism in Contemporary Taiwan: Bentuhua*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. John defines this period from 1946-1980s, the two Chiang Presidents, were the first and second president in Taiwan after the Japanese colonization. They came from mainland China, and their governments and political behaviors were directly inherited from old government of Republic of China back to mainland China.

² Makeham, John *Cultural, Ethnic...*, John names this period call "The Stirrings of Taiwan Nationalism in Taiwan." Because after 1987, the ended of the Materials Law Order gave the Taiwanese people more freedom and power to control their own life. The government at this period transformed from a monocracy two presidents Chiangs to a more democratic government.

Taiwan has a long history of close interaction with China and Japan because of its geographical position and historical events. Before 1895, the island of Taiwan was a province of China and its political, cultural, and musical identities were closely linked to the Mainland. However, this changed when Japan occupied Taiwan in 1895. The following fifty years of Japanese colonial rule transformed Taiwanese to include Japanese elements into an already complex and layered set of national elements. This transformed the perception of Taiwan's musical heritage and helped to shape a new understanding of Taiwanese national identity found in traditional Taiwanese musical performing practice.

The Taiwanese Musical History

Japanese Colonization (1895-1945)

In the late 19th century, the Japanese extended their territories and started to occupy the surrounding countries, including Taiwan. In 1894, Qing Dynasty, the last dynasty of China, was defeated by the Japanese as a result of the First Sino-Japanese War.³ This was a war between Japan and China over the control of the Korean peninsula. The result of losing the war for the Qing Dynasty was to surrender the possession of many of its territories. The Treaty of Shimonoseki⁴ (馬關條約) was signed at the *Shunpanrō* hall on April 17, 1895, for which Taiwan was officially ceded to the Japanese who would control the island for the next fifty years.⁵

³ The name of the war "First Sino" is a year name, of which is based on the Chinese ancient time designated, a sexagenarian cycle of naming the year. The 1895 was the first sino year.

⁴ The punishment for Japanese in this treaty was to surrender and gave Taiwan back to Mainland China.

⁵ Gary Marvin, Davison, *A Short History of Taiwan: The Case for Independence*, London: Praeger, 2003.

During the early period of Japanese colonial rule, many Taiwanese refused to obey the Japanese-led government and resisted assimilation into the Japanese culture being imported into Taiwan. In response, the Japanese acted to quell the local Taiwanese resistance and moved to restrict elements of Chinese cultural heritage in the island. The Japanese also used their political power to suppress Taiwanese indigenous cultures and assimilate the indigenous population into Japanese life-styles. This kind of action can be termed as the “Japanization” of Taiwan and its culture. It was a general strategy that the Japanese used to dominate the various colonial territories they occupied and to assimilate local populations into the dominant culture. This was not the first time that Japanese had annexed surrounding countries; Hokkaido and Okinawa are two other examples. Before these territories became part of Japan, they were independent countries, but their aboriginal languages⁶ and customs were virtually wiped out by the Japanese after 1879. In 1889, Japan intended to repeat the same action with Taiwan after signing the Treaty of Shimonoseki. There were many announcements from different Japanese governmental departments. First, the Ministry of Education promulgated a new policy on the usage of language that mandated the use of Japanese language for official business and in all educational contexts. During this period, Chinese Mandarin and indigenous Taiwanese languages, such as Tâi-uân-uē and Hakka dialect (two indigenous Taiwanese languages), were forbidden. Furthermore, in the area of religion, the Taiwanese had to follow the rules of *Shinbutsu shūgō*, which is an amalgamation of *Kami* and *Buddhas*. *Kami* is a word of spirit and faith;⁷ *Buddhas* is a

⁶ Hokkaido original language is Aninu and Okinawa is Ryukyuan

⁷ Unknown, *The Kami Way; an introduction to Shrine Shinto*, Tokyo, International Institute for the Study of Religions, 1959. Kami is a word that represents the Japanese religious spiritual faith.

religion and philosophy of belief and practice.⁸ Another example of Japanization is that the Chinese traditional *Shidian* Ceremony (祭孔大典), a ceremony that celebrates teachers was replaced by the Japanese *Shrine* ceremony (神氏祭典). From such religious and ceremonial changes, Taiwanese traditional ritual music also changed to include Japanese elements.

The Japanese government controlled Taiwanese and Chinese cultural activities in order to prevent pro-Taiwanese patriotic sentiment. Lin Zheng Wen and Wu Mi Cha (2004)⁹ describe how the Japanese movie policy (put into practice around 1930s-1940s) restricted the type of movies shown to Taiwanese audiences. Although Taiwanese and Chinese movies were not totally prohibited during this period, Japanese colonial administrators frequently cancelled non-Japanese movies that became too popular. This indicates that the Japanese understood that movies and other forms of cultural expression had the potential to inculcate national sentiments among the population and they wanted to control Taiwanese sentiment because the Japanese were afraid that the Taiwanese would rise in revolt against Japanese colonial control.

The restrictions imposed by the Japanese in the area of musical and theatrical performances were even more rigid. Lu Yu Hsiu (2009)¹⁰ mentions that all Taiwanese and Chinese opera, drama, and music were abandoned in the early period of Japanese colonization. Many of the Taiwanese musical and theatrical genres stagnated because

⁸ W. Mitchell, Donald, *Buddhism: Introducing the Buddhist Experience*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002. It's a religion popular in almost whole Asia. Original was from India. When imported in Taiwan, it started to spread all over the island and became one of the most important religions in Taiwan.

⁹ Jo Lin Cheng Wen, and Wu Mi Cha ed., *Transcending the Boundary of Taiwanese History: Dialogue with East Asian History*, Taipei: Sower Cultural Company, 2004.

¹⁰ Lu Yu, Hsiu, *History of Taiwanese Music*.

of the legal restrictions imposed by the Japanese. Performance groups were required to change their genres and styles of musical performance to be more “Japanese.” However, not all traditional performance genres disappeared during this colonial period. In many locations outside of the capital cities, local artists continued to compose and to perform secretly, keeping the Taiwanese and Chinese performance practices thriving in this island. Wang Ying Fen (2004)¹¹ mentions that local musicians and buskers still performed on the streets and alleys in the early Japanese colonization period, but as mentioned before, many of artists were compelled to change their style of performance to conform to the Japanese musical aesthetics. This was how they survived as professional artists during the Japanese period.

Deng Yu Xian was a composer whose music was affected by the Japanese in both explicit and implicit ways. Deng was born in 1906, which was during the time the Japanese were implementing the policies of “Japanization.” Wen Ching (2001)¹² mentions that during this period, music education required singing and learning Japanese music. The teaching and singing of *enka* (a type of Japanese popular music based on Japanese traditional musical style) was an example of how the Japanese infused their culture through musical education in Taiwan. Moreover, according to Huang Yu Yuan (2007),¹³ the Japanese government forced the Taiwanese to listen to Japanese music on the radio, on television, and in school. Such policies brought

¹¹ Ying Fen, Wang, “The forbidden and revival of Taiwanese Han Music during the World: The “Survey of Taiwanese Musical Groups from 1934 as Basic Subjects,” In *Taiwan National University Humanity Taiwanica* 61, (11, 2004): 1-24.

¹² Ching, Wen, “The Taiwanese Folk Song Composer – Den Yu Xian,” *The Face of Taiwanese Folk Song*, 2001 <http://www.taiwan123.com.tw/musicface/face03-2.htm> (accessed online 1/26/2012)

¹³ Yu Yuan, Huang, *The Development of Taiwanese Popular Music from 1945-1971*, Master Thesis of Graduate School of History of National Central University, 2000.

Japanese music into the everyday listening experiences of the Taiwanese, people, which consequently affected how the Taiwanese music was listened to and composed in this period and for later generations. These were implicit ways that Japanese government sought to transform Taiwanese musical culture to conform to the Japanese models.

On the other hand, they also used more explicit ways to “Japanize” Taiwanese musical culture by mandating that Taiwanese composers write music in the Japanese musical style. They demanded that composers add Japanese lyrics and certain musical elements into the preexisting written Taiwanese musical repertoires. For instance, Deng Yu Xian was required to add Japanese lyrics into his songs “Bāng Chhun Hong” and “Ú lā Hoe” and to change their titles to Japanese. After originally composing them in Tâi-uân-uē (Taiwanese) Japanese lyrics were added. “Ú lā Hoe” was originally a children’s song, but when Japanese lyrics were added, it became a song that about Japanese marriages. On the other hand, the song “Samshu is tear also is expiration” was composed by Japanese composer, Masao Koga, and the Taiwanese lyric was composed by Chang Yun Shan sung by Taiwanese singer, Chun Chun. Besides the changes in language of song lyrics during this period, the Japanese also forced composers to compose music in Japanese musical style. Two examples are the songs “Army of County” and “Sun Rise in Gulanyu.” Wen Ching points out that most Taiwanese who lived during that period now accept those songs with the Japanese lyrics and other Japanese stylistic elements as Taiwanese. If this is correct, one should ask why these songs with the Japanese elements were accepted as Taiwanese and not rejected as foreign? Clearly, this question is linked to the indexical associations that the

Taiwanese of that generation make in relating Japanese culture to a modern and progressive lifestyle.

The Japanese spread its musical culture by bringing new educational approaches, economic development, and modern forms of communication to Taiwan. This served to link Japanese culture to modernized and internationalized life in the minds of the Taiwanese population. The strategy and policies of the Japanese government were effective and led the Taiwanese to believe that Japanese culture and lifestyles were superior to that of the Taiwanese. The Japanese also brought progressive medical techniques and technology into Taiwan and improved the infrastructures of cities. Those actions had two important effects. Japanese made the Taiwanese middle class believe that Japanese education was the way to improve their life. Moreover, Taiwanese internalized the idea that to become Japanese was to make the Taiwanese more progressive and advanced. Secondly, the Japanese colonial government reforms did in fact improved the living conditions for many Taiwanese. Japanese rule, according to Wen Ching, made the general population in Taiwan accept Japanese culture as a positive element of their life. The complex issue of Taiwan's national identity arises from this circumstance.

The Taiwanese were also struggling between these positive feelings and emotional patriotic sentiments that rejected the Japanese as foreign. Liu Ya Fang (2003)¹⁴ mentions that Taiwanese popular music from this period display this conflict between the rejection and assimilation of Japanese cultural values. For the today's

¹⁴ Ya Fang, Liu, "The Grief of Taiwanese Folk Song: From the Folk Song to Japanese Military Song: A Twist and Transition Thinking of Colonization and Modernity." In *Cultural Studies Monthly* 23. (January, 2003) http://www.cc.ncu.edu.tw/~csa/oldjournal/23/journal_park155.htm (accessed online 2/15/2012)

Taiwanese audiences who lived during that period, songs such as “Bāng Chhun Hong” and “Ú lā Hoe” mentioned previously, recalled memories of Japanese colonization. But for contemporary Taiwanese audiences of later generations, who did not experience Japanese colonization, such songs do not evoke the same memories. When such pieces are performed on the stage today, the songs carry different meanings, which consequently require different interpretations. In 1980, the song “Bāng Chhun Hong” was revived as a Taiwanese old popular music by present popular singers. The Western-style Taiwanese orchestra Evergreen Symphony Orchestra¹⁵ recorded this song with its original Taiwanese lyrics sung by a choir, which was released on the album titled *World Folk Music*.¹⁶ This recorded version has been used by Eva Airways on their flights to and from Taiwan. As stated in the liner notes of this album, the company wanted the Taiwanese customers to hear a song to make them feel at home. Also, the orchestra performed the song in a cultural exchange concert named Exposition 2010 in Shanghai, China. The idea of presenting “Bāng Chhun Hong” was to showcase the old Taiwanese popular music by excluding Japanese associations and any link of Chinese folksong. The song “Ú lā Hoe” also appears in many of Evergreen Symphony Orchestra performances. The song is mentioned in the program notes of *Taiwanese Spirit Music* where it states that composers edited the song in order to include Taiwanese musical melodies both in traditional Chinese orchestra and Western Orchestra.

These examples suggest that the policies of the Japanese government to explicitly and implicitly control the music in Taiwan during the Japanese colonization

¹⁵ “Evergreen Symphony Orchestra” and “Eva Airline” belongs to the company “Evergreen Group.”

¹⁶ *Taiwanese Folk Song Suite of World Folk Music*. 2004. Eva Airline Boarding Music Collectable. CD-ROM. Chang-Yung-Fa Foundation.

period had a long lasting impact on Taiwanese musical identities. This further affected subsequent interpretations of songs, musicals, and even elements presented in theatrical productions. For example, the Japanese *taiko* drum performance used in the theatrical work *Ten-side Ambush* could be interpreted by a younger generation as a distinct form of Japanese music, but for older audiences who lived during the Japanese colonization period, it might be interpreted as Taiwanese music because Japan is part of their national constructed identity. For the older generations, Japanese *taiko* performance does not just evoke a sense of Japanese music, it is also reminds them of the music they heard and experienced as part of the Taiwan that they experienced in their youth.

Republic of China under Two Chiang Presidencies: World War II (1937-1986)

In 1937, at the beginning of the War, most Taiwanese art performances were not permitted. According to the Hsu Chang Hui (1996)¹⁷ during the war, the Japanese government announced that “the military was the first” and “the Japanese was the superior.” Therefore, except the War and the Japanese, nothing was considered of importance. As a result, the development of Taiwanese traditional music was in stagnation. After the eight years of World War II ended, Taiwanese cultural activities were transformed as the laws began to change to allow local indigenous and Chinese-related art forms to be performed once again.

Taiwan was in an ambiguous position during the war. On one side, many Taiwanese had to fight for the Japanese and against the Taiwanese and Chinese who opposed Japanese rule. The Taiwanese army was forced to treat the pro-Chinese

¹⁷ Chang Hui, Hsu, *The First Edition of Taiwan Music History*.

opposition movement on the island as their enemy. In addition, the Japanese government repressed any local culture that related to Chinese or Taiwanese heritage. As a result, a struggle to define national identity flooded into the Taiwanese's mind, because they had to fight their own neighbors for Japanese, but at the same time Japanese also denied older forms of Taiwanese national identity by suppressing local and Chinese heritage culture. This struggle also involved musical preservation. According to Wang Ying Fen (2004),¹⁸ after the Japanese rule ended, there was a dilemma that the new Taiwanese government faced: should they preserve the Japanese influenced culture or seek to revive older Taiwanese and Chinese musical heritage?

In 1945, the Japanese surrendered Taiwan to the Republic of China (R.O.C.) and the old Japanese law, which forbade the playing of Chinese and Taiwanese music, was rescinded. However, a complex set of local, Chinese, and now Japanese elements comprised the culture of Taiwanese. In 1949, the R.O.C. officials and its military personnel fled from the communist takeover of the mainland and established the R.O.C. government in Taiwan. Because those higher governmental officials came from Mainland China, they tended to protect their old heritages. Lu Yu Hsiu (2009)¹⁹ mentions that Chinese artists and Chinese-style arts were supported by during this time. The R.O.C. government in Taiwan funded the music, drama, and theater from Mainland China, and developed national forms in Taiwan that derived from Chinese artistic heritage. For instance, the Beijing opera became the Taiwanese "national opera" during this period. Moreover, the government also founded new Chinese musical schools and

¹⁸ Ying Fen, Wang. "The forbidden and revival of Taiwanese Han Music during the World"

¹⁹ Lu Yu, Hsiu, *History of Taiwanese Music*.

clubs to maintain their traditions.

While the R.O.C. government supported Chinese cultural heritage, it simultaneously suppressed the local indigenous Taiwanese cultural heritage. It also announced an anti-communist propaganda, which prohibited any connection to communist Chinese heritage. The government even mandated the singing of “patriotic songs” that featured anti-communist sentiments, and called for the reunification of China as a requirement in all Taiwanese schools. Therefore, confusion regarding national identity appeared among the Taiwanese population, mainly because the R.O.C. government put two policies into practice. First, it suppressed the local Taiwanese culture while simultaneously supporting Chinese cultural and identical heritage and secondly, it forbade any Chinese in Taiwan to have relationships with mainland communist China.

Chu Chien Ying (2011)²⁰ describes that the pre-communist Chinese popular music of mainland China also came with the R.O.C. government to Taiwan, and because the first president, Chiang Kai-shek, also came from Mainland China, the popular folksong with Chinese Mandarin lyric and musical style were favored by his government’s policies. Moreover, the R.O.C. made Mandarin Chinese the official language of Taiwan. The *Encyclopedia of Taiwan* (2009)²¹ states that the government instituted a “single language policy,” in which only Mandarin Chinese was allowed. Not only was the Japanese language forbidden, but also Taiwanese and Hakka, two other Chinese dialects considered indigenous languages of Taiwan. According to the Encyclopedia:

²⁰ Chien Ying, Chu, *Colonial Imagination and Cultural Writing of the Post War Taiwanese Popular Songs 1950-1970*, Master Thesis of Graduate School of Advertising, National Chengchi University, 2011.

²¹ *Encyclopedia of Taiwan*, Taipei: Council for Cultural Affairs, Executive Yuan, 2009.

The government aimed to instill Mandarin through the educational system along with the use of administrative resources, social education and the mass media as well as by restricting and forbidding the use and broadcasting of Japanese and the native languages of the country's various ethnic groups.²²

In line with language restrictions, during the early period after World War II, the R.O.C. government also imposed strict policies to repress the indigenous Taiwanese musical and theatrical performances. For example, Taiwanese folksongs, opera with local Taiwanese elements and instrumental music were prohibited. The R.O.C. government used such policies to manipulate people's idea of Taiwanese music. The effect of the policy was to associate Chinese songs and musical forms as the Taiwanese new musical heritage. This was similar to the policies put in place during the Japanese colonization. However, not all the Taiwanese conformed to the new Chinese form of Taiwanese national identity supported by the R.O.C. government.²³

In this early period (around 1950-1970), Taiwanese identity was layered and manifested different orientations. Some of people still regarded the Japanese element to be part of their Taiwanese identity. Other Taiwanese were dominated by the ideas of those who came from Mainland China, repressing their own idea of "themselves" as Taiwanese determined by the government policy and educational system. Fu-Chang Wang (1994)²⁴ explains that the R.O.C. government in Taiwan retains the idea of a "reunited China" in the future. Therefore, they implemented policies so that the Taiwanese had to learn about Mainland China, including geography, history, culture,

²² Ibid.

²³ Chen Feng, Shih, *Taiwanese National Identity*, Taipei: Avantgarde, 2000.

²⁴ Fu Chang, Wang." The People of Protest movement of Taiwanese" In *The first Taiwanese Political Science Annul Dissertation Conference*, 1994.

politic, etc. In the R.O.C. model, “Taiwan was one of China’s thirty-six provinces.”²⁵

Taiwanese students of the time internalized the idea of Taiwan as part of China.

Although government officials from mainland were in the minority, they dominated Taiwan’s leadership and were supported by the American military forces stationed in Taiwan. For some Taiwanese, the island was experiencing a second colonial period, now by the new R.O.C. government.

Material Law Order was put into practice by Taiwanese R.O.C. government, which repressed democracy and curtailed cultural development. Chang and Chen (2009)²⁶ mention that the R.O.C. government prohibited the Taiwanese from forming cultural groups that were not approved by the government during this period. Also the Taiwanese government authorized its military to control social order in Taiwanese, and to support the repression of any anti-government forces and imprisoned political dissidents. In this political context, Taiwanese indigenous and traditional musics were also suppressed. Because of the government’s policy of supporting Chinese heritage, local culture and life styles were forced to conform to an old, pre-communist Chinese model. This not only changed the musical style but also the perception of Taiwanese musical identity. Chinese musical heritage became the only officially supported music allowed to be performed publicly in Taiwan.

The Recent Period of Multi-Party Democracy (1980-present)

The issue of national identity spread out in Taiwanese people, following a series of

²⁵ Makeham John, *Cultural, Ethnic*.

²⁶ Yen Hsien, Chang, and Chen Mei Jung ed., *The Collection Thesis of The White Terror and Transition of Justice during Material Law Order*, Taiwan: Wu San Lian Taiwanese Historical Data Fundamental Association, 2009.

political incidents²⁷ that happened around 1980 that isolated Taiwan from the international community and made its status that of a “non-country.”²⁸ Before these incidents, Taiwan had been treated as a legitimate country recognized by the United Nations and most of the other countries in the world. But now, according to United Nations, the only legitimate representative of China was the communist controlled People’s Republic of China (P.R.C.). However, within Taiwan, the government and citizens still regarded themselves as a nation distinct from Mainland China. Two other important political events occurred, the end of the Material Law Order and the founding of the Democratic Progressive Party. These two events meant that the government did away with policies mandating Chinese cultural heritage in Taiwan and allowed citizens the freedom to form cultural and political groups that were not supported by the R.O.C. government. As a result, Taiwanese began to revisit and reconstruct their national identity and cultural identity. As Taiwanese scholars, politicians, and educators announced their own interpretations of Taiwanese identity, the idea of Taiwanese Music changed.

Taiwan national identity was further enhanced through the direct presidential elections that resulted in the country’s first election Taiwanese president Lee Teng-Hui. Interesting enough, President Lee had experienced Japanese colonization and had a Japanese name 岩里政男, which he kept for the rest of his life. Shih Chen Feng quotes President Lee Teng-Hui as saying “Those who are living or have lived in Taiwan, whose

²⁷ Two major incidents were “Taiwan Withdrawal from United Nations” and “sever diplomatic relations between Taiwan and USA.”

²⁸ Lu Yu, Hsiu, *History of Taiwanese Music*.

hearts are with Taiwan, and who are ready to fight for Taiwan, are Taiwanese.”²⁹

Applying this nationalistic concept to the artistic performances, those arts that are performed in Taiwan, continue to be performed by Taiwanese, and that use Taiwanese instrument, are Taiwanese. In this sense, does Japanese music count as Taiwanese music?

According to Cai Zhong De (1990)³⁰, Japanese music had a very closer connection to the Chinese music extending back to Tang Dynasty 618-907. The central components of Chinese music spread out from this dynasty because at that time, the Tang was the dominant power in the area. Today, the Japanese lyrics even contain the “Traditional Chinese.” Furthermore, the Japanese music also shares similar musical notation, aesthetics, and is based on a similar theoretical system. Therefore, applying ex-President Lee’s opinion, if Japanese music was once performed in Taiwan and now still has some musicians performing it, Japanese music could be part of Taiwanese music. However, from the founding documents, Taiwanese government did not count Japanese music as part of “traditional” Taiwanese music.

Many official government departments, organizations, and institutions put policies in place that defined traditional Taiwanese culture, art, and performance. In 1982, the executive branch announced the Cultural Heritage Conservation Law³¹ in order to revive what they defined as “traditional heritage” in Taiwanese daily life. This law categorized

²⁹ Chen Feng, Shih, *Taiwanese National Identity*. In this book, Shih mentions that these words announced by ex-presidents, Lee Teng-Huias, which content was expressed his idea of “New Taiwanese” in a semi-public speech in 1998.

³⁰ Zhong De, Cai, *The Explanation of the Information of Chinese Musical Aesthetic*, Beijing: People’s Music Publishing House, 1990.

³¹ Council of Cultural Affair, *The preservation law of Cultural Heritage*, Taiwan: Council of Cultural Affair, 2005.

seven items. “Traditional art” related to the performing arts, which included Taiwanese popular folk music (singing folksongs and old popular music), aboriginal music (music from aboriginal tribes, such as *Ami*, *Atayal*, *Paiwan*, *Puyuma* etc.), *nanguan*, *beiguan*, and Taiwanese opera music. Then in 1985, the Ministry of Education held the first year of its National Heritage Awards comprising five different categories of awards: traditional craft, traditional music, traditional drama, traditional acrobatics, and traditional dance. Moreover, in 1989, the Ministry of Education selected several important artists of traditional arts. The government put the term “tradition” in front of the different domains of arts to emphasize their intention to revive local forms of Taiwanese music.

From the government funding of music colleges, the classification also reveals the idea of their definition of traditional Taiwanese music. Around 1985 to 1995, there were many schools founded with the adjective “traditional” in their titles. For example, the first drama department founded in Taiwan National College of Performing Arts (1994) specialized in Taiwanese Opera, which featured indigenous colloquial Taiwanese language and music. The second one followed the same idea, in Taipei National University of the Arts, the department of traditional music was created with divisions in *nanguan*, *beiguan*,³² *pipa*. As the evidence shows, those institutions helped developed the idea of “traditional” Taiwanese performance that centered on the governmental standard of Taiwanese traditional music. Japanese music, Beijing Opera, and Western classical music were not considered part of traditional Taiwanese performance and were not included in any of the newly founded schools.

The political historical data and the relationship to the traditional Taiwanese music

³² The categorization is from the department of Traditional Music of Taipei National University of the Arts, <http://trd-music.tnua.edu.tw/en/about/a.html> (accessed online 1/16/2012).

show that the policies of governments have great effects on Taiwanese people's interpretation and perception of musical identity. These effects did not end with the change of each political period, they continued accumulating in Taiwanese people's minds and influenced their understanding of what Taiwanese music is. Taiwanese music contains multiple layers, combined with those definitions from former political periods and the present government. Therefore, what can be understood as Taiwanese music reaches to many different explanations. The next section will present those explanations from some of Taiwanese politicians and political scholars in order to see how their understanding of "Taiwanese" in the context of Taiwanese history and to apply these concept to "Taiwanese music."

"Taiwanese Music" and "Chinese Music"

The Understanding of Taiwanese Music

To set an understanding of traditional Taiwanese music one has to consider the make-up of Taiwanese society. Taiwan is an immigrant society because the colonization and transformation of different governments. Therefore, in terms of Taiwanese society, it can be perceived as a combination of cultures, citizens, and even the life styles from former dominant countries and political governments. Traditional Taiwanese music has the same conceptual understanding, in which the meaning of "Taiwanese music" includes many different music styles, aesthetics, and genres that have developed on this island that could be defined as Taiwanese music. Therefore, I first explain what Taiwanese music is in terms of the history of the different musical genres that have developed in Taiwan. Second, I consider the ways that political scholars have defined Taiwanese music and apply those ideas to further understanding of Taiwanese music.

Prior to the 17th century, Taiwan did not have many written records on which to

understand the development of Taiwanese music.³³ Mostly Taiwanese musical historical scholars associate Taiwanese music with its oral history and political written documents. Generally, Taiwanese music can be separated into four different types: Han music, aboriginal music, popular folk music, and contemporary art music. According to Robert Blust (1999),³⁴ Taiwanese aboriginal people came to the island from Mainland China before the 17th century. Their music is often considered the authentic and original Taiwanese music. The category of popular folk music remains unclear in most people's minds. Most of pieces considered popular folk music have been popular within the Taiwanese society for a long time. Even though people intended to question whether they are Taiwanese music or not, they don't have enough information to prove the argument. In "History of Taiwanese Music," Lu Yu Hsiu mentions that mostly the "contemporary" music is the music influenced by Western compositional techniques and aesthetics. The musical styles were not inherited from the Chinese, any other aboriginals, or others of Asian heritages; therefore, most Taiwanese scholars exclude contemporary music from traditional Taiwanese music.

While most Taiwanese consider aboriginal and popular folk music from the island to be authentically Taiwanese, the status the Han music is controversial. Han music is prevalent in southern China. It is the most prominent music style in China. In Taiwan, Han music is typically divided into two historical periods, music imported to Taiwan before the 20th century, such as *nanguan* and *beiguan*, and the music that came from China after 1949 with R.O.C. government, including Beijing opera music, *Kunqu*, and

³³ Lu Yu, Hsiu, *History of Taiwanese Music*.

³⁴ Blust, Robert, "Subgrouping, Circularity and Extinction: Some Issues in Austronesian Comparative Linguistics" in E. Zeitoun & P.J.K Li (Eds.) In *Selected papers from the Eighth International Conference on Austronesian Linguistics*, Taipei: Academia Sinica, (1999): 31-94.

Qinqiang.³⁵ Older forms of Han music are treated somewhat like aboriginal music, because they have been present on the island long enough for people to regard it as genuinely Taiwanese. However, the music brought from the Mainland with the R.O.C. government after 1949 is hotly debated in relation to Taiwanese national identity.

Japanese music used to be taught, sung, and performed in Taiwan, but since the end of World War II, it has not been regarded as part of Taiwanese music by the government. The government tried to get rid of the vestiges of Japanese colonization even though the elder generation loved to listen, and to sing Japanese music. The musical style, aesthetics, and even the performing characteristic are similar to Taiwanese music, but for the political reason, it has been excluded from the Taiwanese musical system.

Applying the definition of “Taiwanese Citizen” to “Taiwanese Music”

The debates of the definition of a Taiwanese citizen are similar to those surrounding the definition of Taiwanese music. Whether we should include the former government as part of “Taiwanese” history is a tricky issue. Also some politicians argue that we should not include the history of R.O.C. government in Mainland China, because that is the Chinese government. Applying this concept to music will create a similar issue. For some musical scholars, Taiwanese music should include the former Chinese music, regardless of the fact that it came from Mainland China. This section contains the opinions of many politics and political scholars on the issue of “what count for Taiwanese. I apply those ideas from the political point views to musical aspect to

³⁵ Mei, Wu, and Feng Tong Yi, *The Introduction of Chinese Drama*, China: China Renmin University Press. Co., LTD, 2011. Kungu is the oldest Chinese opera wide spread in whole China. Qinqiang is a folk Chinese opera popular in northern China.

define the Taiwanese music.

Shih Cheng Feng defines “Taiwanese people” from three different perspectives. He categorizes the narrowest view of the Taiwanese as the Holo people who came from Fujiang, south of China, before World War II. But this term has been challenged by aboriginal inhabitants and the Hakka people, who came from Guangdong, a province next to Fujiang. Second, he defines Taiwanese as people who were born and grew up in Taiwan. But this definition excludes those who came to the island from Mainland China after 1949. Finally, he mentioned that after 1990, many people have re-defined their ideas about who is authentically Taiwanese to include a broader segment of the population. For example, former president Lee Teng-Hui maintains that anyone who lives in Taiwan, whose heart is with Taiwan, and who is willing to fight for Taiwan is Taiwanese. This kind of broad definition includes practically anyone on the island, potentially.

Defining “Taiwanese music” is process with similar issues. “Does music that came to the island after 1949 count as Taiwanese music?” or “Is aboriginal music or Han music the only authentic Taiwanese music?” These are essentially political issues and scholars of Taiwanese music often employ such distinctions in their own definitions. According to Lu Yu Hsiu (2003),³⁶ Taiwanese scholars define “aboriginal music” as music made or played by people who came to Taiwan a long time ago. In Lin Chu Chen’s article (2010),³⁷ the evidences shows that at least around 1660s, when the Chinese people came to Taiwan, there were already native people on the island. This

³⁶ Lu Yu, Hsiu, *History of Taiwanese Music*.

³⁷ Lin Chu Cheng, *The Study of Luik-Tui Chungi Temple and Luik-Tui Hakka Social and Cultural Development*, Taiwan: National Taitung University, Graduate school of Hakka Cultural Study, 2010.

means that they were in Taiwan before 1660s. For that reason, there is no controversy over whether aboriginal music counts as Taiwanese music among scholars. *Nanguan* and *Beiguan* were imported around the time that Chinese people first came to Taiwan, around 1660s. These two musical genres have been in Taiwan for over four hundred years. From this point aboriginal, *Nanguan*, and *Beiguan* music all count as Taiwanese and with less skeptic.

Taiwanese opera is another musical genre that is often regarded as authentic Taiwanese music. Although it derives from Beijing opera, it incorporated Taiwanese indigenous musical elements. For example, Wan-Lin Chang (2010)³⁸ describes that Taiwanese opera music absorbed many elements of indigenous music of Yilan (north-east Taiwan) and some popular music from the period of 1945-1965. They even incorporated *nanguan* and *beiguan* music into Taiwanese opera. As a result, Taiwanese opera music is also frequently categorized as Taiwanese music.

Governmental funding documents show what kind of Taiwanese music they supported as “traditional Taiwanese music.” The form Table 2-1 separates the music in two categories; one is classified as Taiwanese and the other one names Chinese music in the “music” section. From the Taiwanese part, the musical programs that contain *nanguan*, *beiguan*, and Taiwanese opera would be put in this section. Also, if “Taiwan” is in its title, it would also be categorized in traditional “Taiwanese” musical section. On the other hand, Chinese music that includes the music and instruments that came after 1949 is put in the section of Chinese music. Furthermore, this category also has the

³⁸ Wan Lin, Cheng, *The Exploration of Taiwanese opera musicians', Tong Su, Chiu-Lin Chen and Guan-Hua Chen, Taiwanese Popular Songs in Japanese colonial period*, Taiwan: National Hsinchu University of Education, 2010.

music with “Chinese” title. Not only have the names revealed the definition of Taiwanese but also the supportive preference of the government. It is evident from Table 2-1, that music put in the Taiwanese category received more funding than the Chinese category.

This chapter has presented the political history that affects the Taiwanese (politicians and political scholars) interpretation of “Taiwan” including its musical identity. The understanding of Taiwanese musical identity can be perceived in many different ways based on those political periods. However, it is not a separate single identity, but a combination of all former identities, including Japanese, Chinese, and present Taiwanese. As this chapter shown, when the song, “Bāng Chun Hong” is presented, it can be interpreted as both Japanese and Taiwanese because this song has been shaped and the content and lyric setting modified, which affects the meaning of musical identity in this two political periods. Therefore, if a composer wants to use a musical component to present Taiwanese music or Japanese music, he has to consider a range of perceptions by the audiences who might have different life experiences and therefore different interpretations of the music. Based on this concept, the main instrumental theater works I intend to discuss, *Ten-side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King*, contain many of staging and musical elements that could be received as Taiwanese, Chinese, or even Japanese music. While the composer intended to present his own interpretation of traditional Taiwanese music, the staging materials and musical elements can be perceived by different people. It does not mean that there is only one way to interpret Taiwanese music, but all the historical effects will influence the meaning of musical identity.

Table 2-1. The Funding survey from National Cultural and Arts Foundation <http://www.ncafroc.org.tw/Content/support-doc.asp> (accessed online 1/16/2012). The numbers are the actual numbers of groups that this institution funded.

Years	Taiwanese	Chinese
86	8	4
87	12	2
88	14	8
89	11	5
90	12	6

CHAPTER 3 THE CHAI-FOUND WORKSHOP AND ITS MUSICIANS

In this chapter, I describe the Chai-Found Workshop and discuss how it developed in the context of a changing Taiwanese society. I also present the musical and educational backgrounds of the original six musicians of the group and show how their backgrounds influenced the direction of Chai-Found Workshop, the development of their performing style, and the compositional characteristics of the group. The chapter will discuss the development of the group's musical style from the time they were founded to the recent period, presenting the opinions of the members about Taiwanese music and showing how they created these two instrumental theatrical works to be further analyzed in chapter 4.

Chai-Found Workshop

The Chai-Found Workshop was founded in 1991 among a group of professional musicians in Taiwan who specialized in traditional Taiwanese and Chinese instrumental ensemble music. The aim of the workshop was to revive not only traditional Taiwanese performing arts but also to develop new ways of presenting the island's musical heritage.¹ The six musicians of the group performed on a variety of instruments derived from Chinese musical heritage: Huang Chen Ming (erhu), Lin Jui Kuan (pipa), Wu Tsung Hsien (di), Yeh Chuan Jeng (guzheng), Li Shu Fen (ruan), and Liang Yen Ping (yangqin). On the group's website is contained the following statement.

Chai-Found workshop encompasses six instruments, which are the most representative of Chinese music, including bowed, plucked, bass, and wind instruments. This organization is able not only to preserve the plentiful

¹ Chai-Found Workshop website, <http://www.cfmw.com.tw/>, (accessed online 2/1/2012)

characteristics of the traditional music of both Taiwanese and Chinese, but also to extend the possibility of creating a new style of traditional music.²

This statement makes it clear that the group was interested in not only preserving the venerable traditions from Taiwan and China but also in creating a new and modern style of traditional music. Their choice of instruments reflected their desire to draw on Chinese music traditions that have influenced Taiwanese music. The *erhu* is a bowed instrument with two strings. It contains a long vertical wooden neck with two pegs on the top, connecting to a cylindrical sound box covered with snakeskin. The bow is made of a reed and the strands comprise horsehair running between two strings. This basic type of *erhu* is commonly found in Mainland China and in Taiwan. In addition to being used as an accompaniment instrument in theater productions and in traditional ensembles like *nanguan èrxian*, the *erhu* has also developed into solo instrument since the mid-twentieth century.³ Contemporary composers frequently base their *erhu* music compositions on Chinese musical structures and styles, such as pentatonic scale, but also incorporate elements from Western violin music (such as extending the performance practice from the traditional 1st or 2nd positions into 3rd and 4th position.⁴

The *di* is a transverse flute similar to a Western flute, but is made of bamboo. It has six finger holes on top, an embouchure hole, and an additional hole covered by a thin membrane which vibrates to produce a characteristic buzzing sound.⁵ Each *di*

² Ibid.

³ Stock Jonathan, "A Historical Account of the Chinese Two-Stringed Fiddle Erhu", In *The Galpin Society Journal* 46 (Mar, 1993): 83-113.

⁴ I Fang, Chen, *Wang JianMin "The First Erhu Rhapsody"*, Thesis, Taiwan: Tainan National University of the Arts, 2005.

⁵ Witzielen, J. Lawrence, *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music: Vol.7: East Asia: China, Japan, and Korea*, New York: Routledge, 2001.

contains approximately two and half octaves and comes in a diversity of sizes and pitch ranges according to the theatrical context in which it is used. In northern *bāngzi* theater music,⁶ the *di* used is a short one and the pitch range is similar to the western piccolo, which is fourth or fifth higher than the *di* flute used in *kunqu*.⁷ However, the *di* used by Wu in the Chai-Found Workshop is rare in Taiwanese music. The wind instruments used primarily in *nangaun* and *beiguan* are known as *dòngxiāo* or *suona*,⁸ which musicians play in vertical positions in contrast to the transverse *di*.

Pipa is a four-stringed plucked instrument with a pear-shaped body made of wood and is more than one meter in length. The front soundboard is flat while the back soundboard is curved. The instrument contains four tuning pegs at the top of the neck. The instrument used by the Chai-Found group is a Chinese *pipa*. This instrument is different from the *nanguan pipa* in several ways. First, the Chinese *pipa* that Lin plays has 30 frets, while the *nanguan pipa* mostly contains 13 to 15 frets. Therefore, the pitch range of Chinese *pipa* (three and half octaves from A to e3) is greater than the *nanguan's* pitch range (normally one and a half to two octaves). Second, musicians play the Chinese *pipa* in a vertical position in contrast to the *nanguan*, which they play in a horizontal position.

The *ruan* that Li plays in Chai-Found group comes from Mainland China and is a

⁶ *Bāngzi* theater, is a folk opera popular in northeast of China. The style contains many northern musical styles, such as disjunction melody and percussion sound.

⁷ Ruru, Li, "Chinese Traditional Theatre and Shakespeare", In *Asian Theatre Journal* 5, No. 1 (Spring, 1968): 38-48. Kunqu is an oldest Chinese opera spread out from the Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces.

⁸ Witzielen, J. Lawrence, *The Garland Encyclopedia*. Two wind instruments commonly used in China and Taiwan. They both performed in vertical and without membrane. *Dòngxiāo* is produced the sound by blowing the wind into the tube and the *suona* is produced the sound by vibrating the reeds as same as oboe.

four-stringed instrument with round belly and a neck with four pegs on the top came. It is different than the *ruan* found in Taiwanese folk music, which contains only two strings and a fewer number of frets. In Taiwan, the Chinese-style *ruan* is used in the Chinese orchestra and also as a solo instrument, but the Taiwanese *ruan* is mostly played as an accompaniment to singing.⁹ In addition, the professional conservatories in Taiwan primarily teach the Chinese *ruan* rather than the Taiwanese *ruan*.

Guzheng is Chinese plucked box zither with either a curved or flat bottom and an arched top. The number of strings range from 13 to 25 and is set on movable bridges, which are adjusted according to the melody being performed. The instrument was developed from the ancient Chinese *se*, a relative of other Asian zithers such as Japanese *koto* and Korean *gayageum*. The musical style before the 19th century featured the pentatonic scale, but in the 20th century, experimental music elements expanded the possibilities of *guzheng*'s music. *Guzheng* is not used in *nangaun* or *beigaun* music nor in Taiwanese opera music.

Yangqin is Chinese hammered dulcimer originally believed to have originated in Turkey. It was introduced to China in the 14th century, where it developed into a distinct Chinese instrument. In an interview, Chang Ya Chun (2011),¹⁰ called the *yangqin* by its English generic name "dulcimer." I asked her why not call it *yangqin* instead and she answered that it is because it was original from Turkey. The word "yan" in Chinese means "Western" and "qin" is a general term for instrument. That is to say, for Chinese people, the name *yangqin* links the instrument to the ancient influence of the West. It

⁹ Yu Jing, Tsai, *The Research on the "Talking to Myself" and "Fantastic Dreams" of Liu Xing's Ruan Music*, Master Thesis, Taiwan: Tainan National University of the Arts, 2010.

¹⁰ Chang Ya Chun, Informal Interview from Facebook by author, 12/06/2011.

contains a trapezoidal wooden sound box and the strings are set on immovable bridges. Two to four strings are tuned together to produce each note on the instrument and the pitch range is from two to four octaves. This instrument is also not used in Taiwanese *nanguan* and *beiguan* music. As with the *ruan*, the *yangqin* is taught primarily in professional conservatories in Taiwan.

The Chai-Found Workshop occasionally uses Chinese percussion in its performances including *luo* (Chinese gong), *ba* (Chinese cymbal), and *gu* (Chinese drum) . Usually those percussions are played by the *yangqin* musician, because in Taiwan, if you learn *yangqin* in a conservatory, you also have to learn to play percussion. When Chai-Found Workshop to presents big musical productions such as the *Ten-side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King*, they typically add Chinese percussion into performance. Huang also uses Japanese *taiko* drums. The six instruments main instruments and most of the percussion are Chinese instruments that were brought to Taiwan with the old R.O.C. government after 1949. The variety of instruments allows the workshop to combine elements from contemporary Western art music with traditional Taiwanese and Chinese music.

Why are members of the Chai-Found Workshop experts in Chinese instead of Taiwanese musical instruments? And why did they receive state funding in order to establish this workshop? The answers to these questions are connected to the political situation of Taiwan during the time they founded this workshop.

Around 1991, Taiwanese society was not as open as it is today. Before 1987, the Taiwanese were not allowed to organize political or even private cultural and artistic groups without government approval. After 1987, the R.O.C. government's new policy

ending the Materials Law Order (1987), not only allowed but also encouraged the creation of private performance groups in Taiwan and subsequently many local performance groups and arts organizations were founded. New groups representing a variety of traditions and performing styles within Taiwanese society were established. For instance, the Contemporary Legend Theater (1986), a group of dancers and actors that focuses on Beijing opera performance and maintains traditional Chinese theatrical aesthetics was founded as was and the Taipei Silk-Bamboo Ensemble (1988), the first silk-bamboo ensemble established in Taiwan. Chai-Found Workshop was part of this new wave of performing arts groups established at this time.

However, the Chai-Found group and others of the time did not focus on Taiwanese traditions; instead, Chinese artistic heritage was a central concern of many of these new performance groups. I argue that there were two primary reasons that the groups founded at this time were connected primarily to art performance traditions from Mainland China. The first reason was that the R.O.C. government had a long history of supporting Chinese artistic heritage in Taiwan and many professional Taiwanese musicians had been trained in these privileged traditions. The new Contemporary Legend Theater and Taipei Silk-Bamboo Ensemble were likely a result of this. The musicians that were in the Chai-Found Workshop were also professional performers of important Chinese musical instruments: *erhu*, *pipa*, and *guzheng*, among others. The second was that those performers had been forced to separate themselves from the art of Mainland China for a long time because of the Materials Law Orders. As a result, contemporary Chinese performing arts, including new developments in music and theater, were not well represented in Taiwan before the 1987 repeal of the Materials

Law Orders. Also because of this, new trends in Chinese traditional arts from the mainland were not widely understood by Taiwanese artists of the time. The dilemma for Taiwanese artists was that they wanted to study and gain greater knowledge of contemporary trends in Chinese musical traditions but had been restricted from traveling to Mainland China. This restriction was significant because the center of Chinese traditional music was in Mainland China. But according to Huang Tien-Yen (2008),¹¹ it was illegal to learn Chinese music from teacher in Mainland China prior to the lifting of the restrictions in 1987. With new artistic freedom and the ability to travel to the mainland, musicians of Chai-Found went to China to study traditional Chinese music.

Between the years of 1986 and 1991, Huang Chen Ming, the main force behind the Chai-Fund Workshop traveled to China several times to learn the traditional Chinese *erhu* music and the art of conducting. In his dissertation, Huang mentions the reasons for going to China during this period.¹² First, because his musical training focused on Taiwan's traditional Chinese musical heritage he felt that he should go to the origin of the music in order to learn from Chinese musicians. Moreover, he recognized that the real virtuosos of Chinese music were in mainland China. Traveling to China, he studied with two teachers, Liu Ming Yuan (*erhu*) and Peng Xiu Wen (conducting). During this period, he worked hard to refine his performing skills in the traditional Chinese musical style and instrumental technique and in understanding the aesthetics of the music. Before returned to Taiwan, he wanted to be as competent as the musicians in China.

¹¹ Tien Yin, Huang, *The Contemporary Discovery of Traditional Music: Chai-Found Workshop*. Master Thesis, National Taiwan Normal University: Graduate School of Ethnomusicology, 2008.

¹² Chen Ming, Huang. *The Modernity of Traditional Instruments – Using an Ensemble of Silk and Bamboo Music as an Example*, Master Thesis, Taipei: Graduate Institute of Art Studies, Fo Guang University, 2008.

However, while pursuing his goals of acquiring the knowledge and musical training of traditional Chinese music, his own identity as a Taiwan musician was called into question. Recalling the words of his conducting teacher in China, Huang writes:

I went to China for a study tour, and conductor Peng Xiu Wen, asked me: can you play a little Taiwanese music for me? I was shocked and felt shame. Back in college, I was not trying to learn local Taiwanese music because I didn't think that it was worth learning. I'm not sure if it was because of being lazy or I was affected by all of the society.¹³

This quote explains the reason why this trip was a turning point for Huang in a journey to rethink his role as a performing artist and his relationship to local Taiwanese musical heritage. Taiwanese musicians who perform Chinese musical heritage of the island always seek the further study of traditional music in Mainland China, but often they forget or don't value local traditional Taiwanese music. But why have musicians like Huang not been interested in learning local Taiwanese music early in their careers? And why did professional Taiwanese musicians not have the knowledge to perform traditional Taiwanese music? To answer this question, we need to understand how external forces influenced traditional musical performance in Taiwan.

Martin Stokes argues that music can be used as a political force in establishing a people's identification with their nation.¹⁴ Taiwan is an example that illustrates the political nature of music in controlling people's ideas about their nation. Between 1945-1980, the R.O.C. government in Taiwan supported Chinese musical heritage and suppressed local forms of Taiwanese music. The government did this through policies that prohibited the founding of many non-Chinese oriented performance groups, and by

¹³ Chen Ming, Huang, Chai-Found Workshop Anniversary, Concert Repertoire, Taiwan: National Concert Hall, 2001.6.26.

¹⁴ Stoke, Martin, "Introduction: Ethnicity, Identity, and Music" In *Ethnicity, Identity, and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*, Oxford: Berg, 1994.

supporting professional conservatories that taught Chinese music. Consequently, few professional musicians including those trained in the conservatory, performed and understood Taiwanese indigenous music. Taiwanese musicians who still performed local traditions of music operated on their own without government support. Especially in the ranks of professional urban musicians, this situation privileged and gave value to Chinese related performing arts. Thus, Chinese musical heritage itself was linked to the dominant cultural values supported by policies of the R.O.C. government, which affected the life experiences of professional musicians in Taiwan by exposing them to Chinese artistic heritage. Huang and the musicians from the Chai-Found Workshop were urban professionals, trained at the conservatory and hence, trained in Chinese music, not in local Taiwanese music.

When the Chinese conductor Peng Xiu Wen asked Huang to play Taiwanese music for him, it not only made Huang feel shame, it also motivated him to think about his own Taiwanese musical identity. In 1991, the year he returned to Taiwan from China, Huang had the initial idea of founding a musical ensemble that would perform Taiwanese indigenous music for their audiences. Lin (2009)¹⁵ points out that Huang was concerned with local Taiwanese musical identity after his Chinese study tour, and then decided to focus his efforts on creating a new type of Taiwanese ensemble that would incorporate local music into its performances.

Huang decided to create a chamber ensemble rather than a large orchestra because he wanted it to be different from the “Chinese Orchestra,” a type of ensemble already present in Taiwan and China that uses Chinese instruments in a large orchestra

¹⁵ Hui Kuan, Lin, *The Discovery of Interdisciplinary Performance*

setting influenced by the model of a Western symphony orchestra. In Huang's eyes, the Chai-Found Workshop would present local Taiwanese music in a smaller ensemble format that was closer to the aesthetics of local Taiwanese traditions.

The Musicians and Their Connection to Taiwanese Music

Except for the director Huang Chen Ming and Wu Tsung Hsien, the other musicians of the workshop had little connection to local Taiwanese music. Members Wu and Liang had graduated from the Chinese music department of Chinese Culture University. Li and Yeh completed their training from Chinese music department of Taiwan's National University of the Arts. Lin was the only member of the ensemble who had not attended a professional conservatory. She graduated from the Communications Department of Shih Hsin University. But Lin had learned the *pipa* while in high school and joined a Chinese music club before she went to the University. This shows that the policies put in place by the R.O.C. government to support Chinese cultural heritage impacted a generation of profession musicians in Taiwan.

Huang's connection to Taiwanese music came from his father who was an apprentice of *beiguan* music, but Huang did not choose to follow his father's interest in the style. Rather Huang maintains that he preferred to learn the Chinese *erhu* as a child.¹⁶ Huang also joined a Chinese musical club in high school and then attended the department of Chinese music at the Chinese Cultural University in 1982. After he graduated in 1986, he went to China to study Chinese music more actively and focused on Beijing opera, *Guangdong* music (music popular in Guangdong, a province of South China Sea coast), and Silk and Bamboo music (music widespread in the area that lower

¹⁶ Cheng Ming, Huang, *The Modernity of Traditional Instruments*.

the *Yangtze* River located in southern China). All of his musical education shows that he favored Chinese music rather than learning *beiguan* from his father.

Wu's connection to local Taiwanese music was his gained through a composition course in college. He utilized Taiwanese local music in his graduation piece call "Hengchun Folksong Caprice" based on a Hengchun folksong call "Sih Siang Ci"¹⁷ (思想起) in 1983. This song has the strong indexical connection to the people's life in Hengchun, a southern town in Taiwan. The lyrics are full of nostalgic feelings for people that came from Mainland China to settle in Hengchun. Every time they sing this song, the memory of their home in Mainland China appears in their mind: "Remember, our ancestor came to Taiwan. They don't even know what it is like/Remember, the sea is dark/and remember the difficulty in the Road to Taiwan."

Wu's intention was to use this song as a compositional element to incorporate Western musical technique. In order to understand the meaning of the piece, he went to Hengchun to record the folk singer that sang this song, and moreover, he collected the story and background data on the song to enhance his interpretation of the song. He intended to connect Taiwanese local music in his composition, but due the political policy and the working environment (CBO), he could not continue composing Taiwanese music.

Chinese music teachers dominated Taiwan's professional music conservatories, school clubs, and governmental departments even after the end of the Material Laws Act. After graduating from college, Huang, Lin, Wu, and Li worked in the Chinese

¹⁷ Yen Ting, Lin, *The Studies of Folksong: Sih Siang Ci (思想起)*, Master Thesis, Taiwan: Taitung University, Chinese Educational Department, 2008.

Broadcast Orchestra (CBO 中廣國樂團). This orchestra was originally founded in Nanjing, China in 1935 but came to Taiwan in 1949 with the R.O.C. government. Until 2002, the musical style of the orchestra comprised Chinese music from the Mainland and featured some sixty musicians. The orchestra was reduced to fifteen musicians in 2002 and changed its repertoire to include both Chinese and Taiwanese music. Performing in this orchestra allowed the future members of the Chai-Found Workshop to earn their living as professional musicians and inspired them to think about founding a new ensemble. Huang mentions that the musical programs of CBO (determined by the R.O.C. government) did not challenge the musicians technically. This was given as the reason they quit the orchestra and founded the Chai-Found Workshop. The other two future Chai-Found Workshop musicians also worked in Chinese Orchestras. Liang was a member of the Affiliated Chinese Orchestra of National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra (國立台灣交響樂團附設國樂團). The repertoire of the orchestra focused on contemporary Chinese music compositions. Yeh was a specialist in Chinese *Guzheng* performance and she was not affiliated with any specific orchestra or ensemble before she joined the Chai-Found group. As we can see from their previous musical experiences, these musicians were much more familiar with Chinese music than with local Taiwanese music before joining the Chai-Found Workshop.

Chai-Found Workshop: Creating and Presenting Taiwanese Music

Six musicians with a common goal of reviving traditional Taiwanese music for Taiwanese society created the Chai-Found Workshop. According to Yang Chun Wei and

Tseng Chung Hui (2011),¹⁸ Huang and Lin were the main founders. Later, they sought additional musicians from the Chinese Broadcast Orchestra (CBO) where they were employed as professional musicians. Finally, when they had six musicians with skills in performing on a variety of instruments, the workshop was officially founded as a group in 1991.

The principal direction of the group was to perform Taiwanese music. Nonetheless, according to their website, they do not limit themselves to local aboriginal Taiwanese music only; they also want to present Chinese music to their audiences. This makes pragmatic sense because growing up under R.O.C. rule in Taiwan, the musicians' backgrounds and training emphasized Chinese musical heritage. In the first two years of its existence, 1991-1993, although the workshops repertoires contained Chinese music, the members of the group started incorporating traditional Taiwanese music into their repertoire. These early years focused on learning, even though they already had begun performing local Taiwanese music. However, because they were not yet confident in their ability to perform Taiwanese music, in public performances they focused on traditional Chinese music when they played for international audiences. In 1994, the direction of Chai-Found Workshop changed after the group performed in Holland. In an interview, I asked Wu Tsung Hsien, player of the *di* in the group, about his recollections of their change of the repertoires. He said he remembers that when they performed in Holland, they face the situation that was the key turning point for them. Below is the quote of his answer to my question.

¹⁸ Chun Wei, Yang, and Tseng Chung Hui's co-writing article "The Study of Bamboo and Silk Music – Ten-side Ambush of Chai-Found Workshop as an Subject" In *Journal of Cultural Enterprise and Management* 6 (January 2011): 131-68.

The host met with us to make sure of the repertoires, and we offered the first version to them. However, he said that, “those repertoires are as same as the groups we hired before, is there any music different from that? Are there any repertoires that came from Taiwan?”¹⁹

Wu continued and explained:

Actually, we had thought of this question before, but because we wanted to create this ensemble as soon as possible, we didn't have enough time to find musicians who know local Taiwanese music and was able to teach us. That was why we always performed Chinese center music. However, that question was a wakeup call. After this performance in Holland, we started right away to learn Taiwanese indigenous music. Taiwanese opera music and *beiguan* music were our first choice.²⁰

Wu's statement highlights his conception of Taiwanese indigenous music as comprising Taiwanese opera and *beiguan* music. At the beginning, they did not really know what Taiwanese music was, but they knew that their performances had to be different from just Chinese music, because for foreigners, Chinese music is not Taiwanese music. At this period, *nanguan*, *beigaun*, and Taiwanese opera music were officially supported by the government as Taiwanese music. Performance groups that featured this music were founded and developed, especially after 1987 (end of the Materials Laws Order). Therefore, the governmental policies gave Chai-Found Workshop musicians a clear indication of the official idea of Taiwanese music. After returning to Taiwan, the musicians of the Chai-Found Workshop started researching the local Taiwanese performing styles, such as music used in ritual ceremonies, folk festivals and various celebrations and learning the music that related to those activities. Moreover, they attempted to use their own compositions to present traditional Taiwanese music. However, the lack of knowledge and musical performance experience motivated them to

¹⁹ Wu Tsung Hsien, interview by author, July 25, 2010.

²⁰ Ibid.

learn indigenous music. Finding the local musicians that knew indigenous music was the first step. One teacher was Chiu Huo Jung, who is a specialist in *Beiguan* drama and its music. Another teacher was Liao Chiung Chih, a specialist in Taiwanese opera.

The workshop's early performance repertoire reflected their idea of presenting traditional Taiwanese music. According to their website, from 1995 to 2002, their repertoires mostly focused on the music they learned from the local Taiwanese artists and musicians. They even invited some of their teachers to perform with Chair-Found Workshop. In 1995, the CD *Traditional Silk and Bamboo Music* presented four pieces of *beiguan* music and two Taiwanese folksongs edited by Wu Tsung Hsien. Two additional pieces are drawn from Chinese musical heritage. The next year, 1996, the group performed with artists from local temples while touring around Taiwan. In 2001, they even performed *beiguan* music in a concert at the National Concert Hall with their teacher Chiu Huo Jung.

Their intention of learning and performing the Taiwanese music had been given incentive by funding from government and from other institutions, such as Council for Cultural Affairs, National Palace Museum, Taipei Chinese Orchestra, and other state entities.²¹ These incentives led them to perform more and more traditional Taiwanese music.

After 2001, the workshop started to change its repertory to include folksongs that were popular within Taiwanese society and other songs from aboriginal groups in order to connect more closely to the Taiwanese people.²² They also wanted to make their

²¹ Chair-Found Workshop website

²² Ibid.

performances and recordings more interesting for their audiences and distinguish themselves from other performing groups in Taiwan. From 2001 to 2003, they incorporated new elements into their performances. They produced a children's play (*Di Tai Lang Yu Kuang Kuang Mei*) in 2003 in order to attract children to listen to traditional Taiwanese music. These attempts of creating new performing manner led them to create the piece *Ten-side Ambush* in 2005.

The Chai-Found Workshop – Rediscovering Taiwanese Music

As professional musicians trained primarily in Chinese related musical traditions, the Chai-Found musicians began learning traditional Taiwanese music from folk musicians in the country and tried to explore traditional indigenous Taiwanese music as much as possible. These professional musicians began as students to learn about the music and played with local musicians in the temples, clubs, and their performing stages. To reciprocate, Chai-Found also invited those of their local teachers to play in National Concert Hall with them, which attracted more audiences and increased numbers of people who understood indigenous music. Musicians of Chai-Found Workshop did not want to compete with local musicians. Mentioning the group motivations, Lin Hui Kuan states:

We are not trying to compete with those folk musicians. We learned from those teachers two or three times a week, but they probably have played that music for twenty or thirty years. However, the most important thing to learn about the traditional music is the spiritual aspect and style of that musical genre, and to absorb the roots of playing that music.²³

The Chai-Found musicians wanted to use the indigenous Taiwanese music forms as the core of their performances and to expose it to their audiences in order to prevent that

²³ Ten Yin, Huang, *Modern Exploration of Traditional Instrumental Music*.

music from becoming extinct. However, in doing this, the Chai-Found musicians did not abandon their original Chinese instruments, nor did they stop performing Chinese music. Instead, they used Chinese instrument to perform Taiwanese music and drew from their musical backgrounds to learn local music, including the style, aesthetic, and performing practice. These musicians also learned Western music, international popular music, and the other artistic performance styles and combined the Taiwanese music with this wide variety of contemporary performing styles to present Taiwanese music and cultural aesthetics to their audiences. This is the background to the development of two new instrumental works: *Ten-side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King*. In chapter 4 I will show how these two works combined traditional Taiwanese, Chinese traditions and elements of Japanese music with contemporary experimental theater setting to present a contemporary Taiwanese musical identity.

CHAPTER 4 THE CASES STUDIES OF SEMIOTIC PRESENTATION AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

Chapter 4 explores Taiwanese musical nationalism. First, I describe the idea of Huang's motivations in composing the pieces *Ten-side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King* and present the story of each work as an orientation to the pieces. I then analyze four elements from these two works to demonstrate Turino's semiotic theory in relation to Taiwanese nationalism. The first example is the words Huang put in the program. The meanings of those words lead the audiences to perceive the idea of national identity and link the pieces specifically to Taiwanese national identity. Second, I consider basic form of the stage set up, which was affected by the Western-style stage. This staged context influenced the presenters' and audiences' interpretation of traditional Taiwanese music. Next, I analyze the musical elements of the works, which Huang intentionally used to present his concept of Taiwanese music. Analysis reveals that some musical elements are actually similar to the music of Xinjiang, the northwest of China. The final area of investigation is the use of written Chinese language characters in the back scene, which illustrates the difference between Taiwan and the Mainland China.

The Idea of Creating *Ten-side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King*

Ten-side Ambush and *The Journey of Monkey King* are two instrumental programmatic musical works that Huang composed for performance by the Chai-Found Workshop. The first work is based on a historical event that happened around 200 BC and the second sets a fictional story from the novel *Journey to the West*, by Wu Cheng'en. Both stories are well known in Taiwan and provide the vehicle for Huang and the Chai-Found Workshop to explore and present different characteristics of the

Chinese instruments performed by the workshop. Huang's use of instrumental music set with theatrical elements was a new experiment within the traditional Taiwanese performance practice. In an interview, I asked why he wanted to set up this kind of performance that was totally different from what they had done before. Huang explained his main reasons for creating these pieces.¹ He wanted to present traditional Taiwanese musical genres on the stage and in different contexts than they are normally performed. Traditionally, *nanguan* is performed in a teahouse or at a club (an informal gathering of musicians); *beiguan* is part of a temple ceremony or celebration; and Taiwanese opera is performed like Western opera with a clear separation singers and instrumental musicians. Huang wanted to compose for a different style of presentation. He changed not only the music per se, but also the scope of the performances. He hired many other musicians to join them to accomplish these two works, including additional musicians to perform *erhu*, *pipa*, *ruan* and percussion. Therefore, these two instrumental theater works are bigger than other former Chai-Found Workshop performances.

Huang wanted to create a new style of instrumental theater that could transform and elevate traditional instrumental music from mere accompaniment to a leading role in stage presentations. Lin Hui Kuan describes that Huang believed that instrumental music had been relegated to accompaniment in the theater resulting in a lack of audiences understanding the artistic merits of instrumental technique and the importance of the interpretation of the musicians. In his view, audiences had only focused their attention on the actors and singers that were represented on the stage. Therefore, he wanted to present the unique artistic possibilities of traditional instruments

¹ Huang Chen Ming, Interview by author, 07/25/2011.

by giving them lead roles on the stage. This idea was not really new² but rather reflected his experience with and awareness of international trends in the performing arts. Huang intended an interdisciplinary performance similar to the musicals *Chicago*, *Cats*, *Notre-Dame de Paris*, and the well-known crossover performance *Cirque du Soleil*, which had given equal importance to the instrumentalists, acrobats, and other performers in theatrical works imported in Taiwan. John Martin (2003)³ describes that more and more composers and creators are using interdisciplinary methodology to create equivalent roles for different artistic expression simultaneously performed together. This type of theatrical work stimulated Huang to think about different ways elevate traditional music in a theatrical work.

In order to prevent the instruments from being reduced to mere accompaniment roles during theatrical stage presentations, Huang's new works called on the instrumentalists to assume acting and choreographed movement responsibilities as well. He started to work with dance and acting instructors to train his musicians. The musicians were required to participate in physical training in order to present demanding acrobatics and dancing. And rather than locating the instrumentalists off stage in an orchestra pit, he put them on the stage. All of this transformed the musicians into multi-rolled performance artists. This also transformed the notion that instrumental performance is an abstract art form without concrete narrative ability. Based on this

² *Company*, 2006 Broadway revival by John Doyle is another example where instrumentalists had been trained to be actors while playing the music. In the original *Company*, composed in 1970, with a Broadway musical style, the actors sing, dance, and act on the stage, but musicians remain in the orchestra pit. The reason that John Doyle created this instrumental version of *Company* was due to a budget cut, it was not as the same reason as Huang that he want to evaluate the position of instrumental music. But the way that John Doyle presents musicians on the stage was similar like the *Ten-side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King*.

³ Martin, John, *The Intercultural Performance Handbook*, New York: Routledge, 2003.

concept, Huang began to present Taiwanese traditional music in this new context so that audiences would rediscover their Taiwanese heritage.⁴

Preserving traditional Taiwanese music and saving it from extinction due to the impact of global technology were motivating reasons he wanted to present this new style of performance to audiences. In an interview, Huang states that the negative impact of global technology had affected Taiwanese knowledge of their local culture and increased its disappearance.

For a long time, the dominant cultures have invaded the subcultures, and accelerated the speed of fading out local indigenous culture. That is the issue that traditional Taiwanese music is going through in the present day.⁵

Clearly, Huang was motivated to restore Taiwanese traditional music in the context of what he perceived as an art form in danger of dying out due to the influence of global culture. The primary approach used by Huang was to present a narrative storyline through instrumental performance. From the 2006 *Ten-side Ambush* to the 2009 *The Journey of the Monkey King*, he applied this method to traditional music to display the characteristics of the figures in the theater text. Another important production technique was to add all possible elements to the subjects to express his theatrical intentions. Without written words and speech, the characteristics of instrumental music and the body performing could not fully present the meaning of the storylines of the texts, so the performers had to receive special training.

⁴ Hui Kuan, Lin, *The Discovery*. Traditionally, the actors of Taiwanese Opera all have to learn four skills: speech, song, dance and combat. It is already an interdisciplinary performance; then Ming wants to revive the traditional, so that it does not represent a completely new performance style to traditional Taiwanese music.

⁵ *Ibid.*

The Storylines and their Settings

Huang's settings of these two theatrical works do not present the entire storylines but only selected parts of the stories, separating them into several different acts. Without spoken and sung dialogue to present the storylines, Huang uses various staging materials, musical elements, facial expressions, and costumes as important objects to convey the meaning of the texts to the audiences.

Ten-side Ambush was the first theatrical work from Chai-Found Workshop in 2005. The main story describes a historical battle "Chu-Han Contention," which happened around 206-202 BC. This period was the post – Qin Dynasty interregnum period in Chinese history. At that time, Qin was almost corrupted and was divided into many small countries. Liu Bang and Xiang Yu both led their countries to attack the central country of *Chu*. Liu led the first assault on *Chu*, therefore, properly speaking, Liu should have been the new king. But Xiang Yu was recalcitrant. He proclaimed himself as king of the Western country *Chu*. Therefore, Liu altered the name of his country to Han. Later, Liu decided to attack Xiang' country. After four years of battle, Liu won the war and expanded the territory. As a result, the country of *Chu* was abolished and Liu started the Han Dynasty.

Huang selected ten parts from the story of "Chu-Han Contention" to create his work *Ten-side Ambush*. This work is ninety minutes long and his intention was to use the characteristics of traditional instrumental music to present the human emotions and feeling that went beyond the historical events of the story, in order to explore the cruel and brutal nature of the war and the love between Liu Bang, Xiang Yu, and Xiang' girlfriend, Yu Ji. He separated the story into ten different acts. Each act focuses on one specific emotion that is linked to the characteristics of one musical instrument. For

example, *pipa* is used to represent Yu Ji in the second act. Huang used *pipa* because it is always be used to depict the beauty of woman in Chinese and Taiwanese culture. Also the music he composed is conjunct and its slow melodic lines are used to portray the elegant, personable of Yu Ji. Another example is the last-second act – The battlefield: Ambush from the ten sides. Huang set many drums, *taikos*, and metal percussions to present the battle scene and the sounds of the war. Those sounds of drums have the iconic links to the sound of artilleries, and the metal percussion was also an iconic to the sound of knives and swords in battle for audiences. Many of these signs set in *Ten-side Ambush* can link to the meaning because those image and sounds elements were familiar (indexical) to audiences both in Taiwan and China.

The Journey of Monkey King was edited from the original fictional novel *The Journey to the West*. Huang set this piece to run about ninety-five minutes long. Considered one of the greatest Chinese classical novels, it was likely written by Wu Cheng'en in the 16th century.⁶ It presents the story of a monkey Sun Wukang, and his three other friends, “Piggy” Zhū Bājiè, “Sandy” Shā Wùjing, and Táng Sānzàng, who journey with him to the West in order to obtain the text of Buddhist. According to the Chai-Found website, the performance of *The Journey of Monkey King* reveals not only the basic storyline, but also the spiritual experiences of the protagonists. There are two topics Huang wanted the audience to notice. The first half of the work is “Self-scrutiny under Buddha’s Palm.” In one scene, Táng Sānzàng punishes Sun Wukang and makes him examine his own behavior during the journey including his rude deeds. The second half is called “Setting-Out” and presents the pilgrims’ journey to the West. This part

⁶ Shih, Hu, *The Textual Research of The Journey to the West*, Taiwan: Yuan-Liou Publishing Co., Ltd, 1923.

mostly presents the positive emotion of life. Huang uses it as a way to connect to the reality that people's loneliness.

Huang used these two stories to present his idea of Taiwanese music. In the next part of this chapter I will explore how Huang presented his works to the audience through written program notes.

The Words in the Program Notes

The words Huang put in the program of *Ten-side Ambush* implies how he interpreted Taiwanese national identity through this theatrical work. Below is one part of the quote from the program notes.

After the fall of the corrupt Qin Dynasty in 206 BC, an immensely cruel 5-year war broke out between several kings, rebels, and warlords. Soon there were only two rivals left: Chu under their leader Xiang Yu, and the Han under Liu Bang. Both sides had the same goal: to unify and rule China. ... After his total victory, he founded the Han Dynasty and became its first emperor. To lighten Xiang Yu's burden, Yu Ji killed herself in a sword dance she performed for her lover. Although he still had a chance to flee, Xiang Yu, the fallen hero, held himself liable and committed suicide.⁷

The program notes mainly describe the event of the story and provide information into the inner emotions of the three major characters. As mentioned above, this story is about the two countries, Chu and Han, and their fight over the territory of central country Chu. Normally, historical textbooks about Chinese history describe the battle objectively and do not mention anything about the battle being about the unification of China.⁸ Moreover, there was no "China" in that period. The country that combined the territories of Chu and Han together was called "Han." However, in the middle of the

⁷ From the program note of *Ten-side Ambush*, 2006.

⁸ See for instance Wang Jia Fan, *General History of China*, Shanghai: East China Normal University Press, 2005 or Human Thesaurus Publishing Group Editor Department, *Illustrate of Chinese History*, Taipei: Human Thesaurus Publishing Group, 2011.

program notes to *Ten-side Ambush*, Huang highlights the issue of unification of Chinese territories in the introduction of the story when he writes that “both sides had the same goal: to unify and rule China.” Compared with these controversial words of *Ten-side Ambush*, the program notes to *The Journey of Monkey King* directly present the story and the part that Huang wants to convey to the audiences. Below is the quote from the program note of *The Journey of Monkey King*.

It is based on the classical Chinese novel ‘Journey to the West’ and depicts the spiritual experiences of Sun Wukong, the monkey king, and his journey to the West with the monk Tripitaka. . . . A juggler working with a glass ball represents the infinite mutations of the monkey king’s mind. The performance is directed by renowned Chinese opera director Hsiao-Pin Lee.⁹

The first part of the program notes presents the basic information of the story and describes how Huang presents the story to the audience. The later part presents the two themes of *The Journey of Monkey King*. This story depicts the events in the area of present day Mainland China, but there is no indication of “China” in the program notes. The reason that these two works should not have “China” in the program note is that they both describe the events before China came into existence. Therefore, the word “unify” in *Ten-side Ambush* is important and worth analytical attention. The issue of unification in the context of Taiwanese politics is a key point for understanding the composer’s intention in setting the work. I refer to the programs and political opinions from two major parties to explain why this word is so controversial.

Two political parties in Taiwan hold different opinions of what constitutes the “Taiwanese.” The first group is “Kuomintang” (KMT). The complete name is actually “Chinese Kuomintang” and they still include the word “Chinese” in their name today

⁹ From the program note of *The Journey of Monkey King*, 2009.

even though this no longer refers to Mainland China. The KMT is the party that originally came from Mainland China when communists took over the Mainland, and their earlier program was “to counterattack the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and to rescue the people from mainland. From their perspective, Taiwan and China were only temporarily separated when the PRC government occupied central China. The KMT want to eventually unify Taiwan and China into one “China.” During the KMT rule under the Chiang presidents, the educational system in Taiwan was based on old Chinese written script. The KMT rule emphasized Taiwan as being part of a larger pre-communist China complex. The politicians regarded themselves as “Chinese,” and they also wanted the people to identify with Chinese heritage. Although from their website,¹⁰ the former program was not there anymore, still, many contemporary policies contain the idea of peaceful communication between Taiwan and China. For the other political party in Taiwan, the “Democratic Progressive Party” (DPP), such policies reveal that the KMT still has a tendency toward unification with China.¹¹ The word “unify” and the idea of unification in the *Ten-side Ambush* program might be interpreted as pro KMT in advocating that Taiwan be unified with China.

The DPP is more persistent about the autonomy and independence of Taiwan. Anything that is connected to China, such as economic and trade cooperation or that acknowledges the Chinese academic degree, is against the policies of the DPP and

¹⁰ Chinese Kuoming Tang, <http://www.kmt.org.tw/>, (accessed online 2/10/2011)

¹¹ The Presidential Debating, 12/04/2011. (accessed online 2/12/2011) The Presidential Candidate Ma Ying Jeou announced his supported of “1992 Consensus,” an economic cooperation policy between Taiwan and China. However, the other candidate Tsai Ing Wen opposed this consensus, because she thinks that this economic cooperation is based on the “one China policy.” That is to say, if the Taiwan want to have economic cooperation with China, Taiwan have to admit the “China is the only legitimate representation of China in the world.” Therefore, the DPP argues that the agreement of 1992 consensus implies that KMT is admitting that Taiwan was part of China.

disapproved of by its political leaders. The DPP website¹² states “Taiwan is an independent country, no matter what happened before.” They oppose the KMT as a legitimate Taiwanese government. Wang Fu Chang’s (1994)¹³ states that “The KMT was an outsider, their government came from China, therefore, if we want Taiwan to be our own, the first thing to do is to beat the KMT.” From their perspective, the indigenous Taiwanese are the people whose ancestors came to Taiwan before 1949, and have lived in Taiwan long enough to call themselves “Taiwanese.” There is no idea “to counterattack the P.R.C. and to rescue the people from mainland” and no desire to “unify” within their program, because they regard Taiwan as an independent country since China surrendered it to Japan.

In the *Ten-side Ambush* the situation between the countries of Chu and Han is similar to and an analogy of the relationship between present day Taiwan and China. The original Qing Dynasty possessed the largest territory in Chinese history. After it was divided into many separate countries, Chu and Han stayed at opposite positions. However, after the Chu-Han Contention, these two countries were united once again. Later, Taiwan and China were separated because of the First Sino-Japanese War and the Japanese occupation of Taiwan for fifty years. Following this, from the communist Chinese perspective, Taiwan was unified back with China after World War II. However, following World War II many Taiwanese retained the idea of the country’s independence from Chinese rule and a strong nationalist identity emerged on the island.

In contemporary Taiwan, the issue of national identity plays a major role in

¹² Democratic Progressive Party, <http://www.dpp.org.tw/index.php>, (accessed online 2/10/2011)

¹³ Fu Chang, Wang, “The People of Protest movement of Taiwanese”, In *The first Taiwanese Political Science Annul Dissertation Conference*, 1994.

interpreting the issue of unity in story presented in the *Ten-side Ambush*. In most historical textbooks there is no mention of the unification of China in relation to Chu-Han Contention. If there was no such evidence to indicate that the goal of this historical battle was to unify the whole country, why does Huang include the idea of “unifying China” in his setting of this story? And does this reflect his political stance? Huang certainly used his theatrical work to present an idea of Taiwanese music. There is no question about this purpose, but for DPP’s politicians, Huang’s choice of this story indicates that he might want to imply that Taiwan and China will or should be united in the same way that Chu and Han were. This interpretation is reinforced by the fact that he included the idea of “unifying” China in the concert program description. Huang’s idea can be interpreted that Taiwan’s identity is linked to Chinese “one China policy.” That is to say, although right now Taiwan and China are different countries, Huang’s theatrical work presents the idea that eventually Taiwan will be the same as *Chu*, backing to Han. Therefore, for DPP, this story cannot be a proper representation of the Taiwanese situation right now; and neither can it represent true Taiwanese music. An investigation of the stage setting and then the musical characteristics used by Huang will further strengthen this idea.

The Stage Set Up Showing the Taiwanese Musical Identity

The scenic design and mise-en scene (style of the design)¹⁴ of theatrical works have great effects on the audiences’ perception of the meaning of the works. These two theatrical terminologies are mostly used to describe the design of stage style and the staging materials arrangement.

¹⁴ Yi Wei, K en, *The Theater Terminology*, Taiwan: Tainan People’s Drama, 2008.

Scenic design refers to stage design itself. The stage presents visual signs that allow the audiences to connect to the theater performance, such as the stage style, apron (the front of the stage), acting area, shape, color, the depth of stage, and the stage space. In addition, since the stage is the first visual contact when audiences walk into the theater or concert hall, the messages from its appearance contain the pre-understanding or the context in which a particular theatrical work is interpreted. At this moment, various iconic signs appear, audiences start to locate the resemblance of the stage in relation to other similar stages, whether they have ever seen this type of stage setting before or not. Afterward, they connect various elements of staging through indexical means to their past experiences. They begin to recall their memory in order to connect to the former plays or concerts and their range of meanings with the same stage. The next step, the audiences link their former experience to the stage and those storylines, scenes and actors. Finally, they project former experiences into the present theatrical work.

The *mise-en-scene* holds the same process of interpreting staging objects as the signs of messages. It is a French term and means that the director used the stage design to tell a story to the audiences. Theoretically, each stage set produces a stage picture that presents what director wants to tell to the audience, highlighting his perspective and logical thinking. This theatrical technique involves iconic and indexical connections for audiences to link their personal experience to the stage. For example, in the crystal ball scene in *The Journey of Monkey King* (Figure 4-1), the director darkens the stage, and puts a big white flower shape prominently in the middle of the stage.

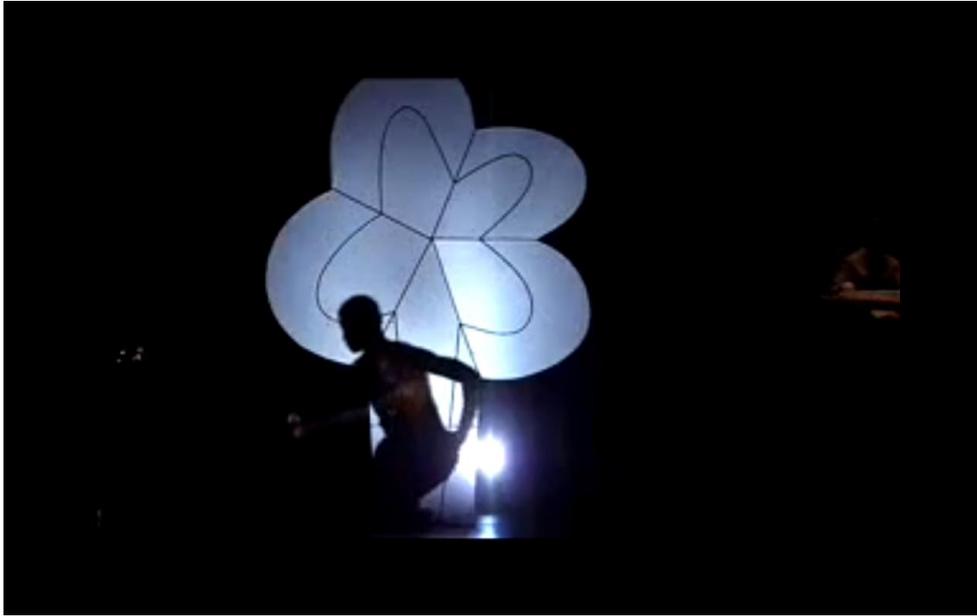


Figure 4-1. Act 2 “Endurance” of *The Journey of Monkey King*

There is a searchlight behind the flower while a dancer is dancing in the front. This makes the scene emphasize a small person within a larger dark shadow. At a press conference,¹⁵ Huang described that this scene is meant to reveal the people in the reality that the small real person has always been constrained by the larger dark shadow. Therefore, this mise-en-scene becomes an indexical sign for audiences to link the stage image to their actual world. The dancer can be interpreted as members of the audience themselves struggling in the shadow of the real life society (the big real shadow). From these two theatrical terms and examples, it is shown that that the combination of scenic design and mise-en-scene plays an important role in conveying the meaning to the audiences.

The use of Chinese traditional instruments as Taiwanese while in the context of a Western Stage creates confusion and ambiguity of music of national identity. Huang’s

¹⁵ Press Conference for *The Journey of Monkey King*. Video from official website of Chai-Found Workshop <http://www.wretch.cc/blog/twoproject/20581587> (accessed online 11/20/2011)

idea of creating these two instrumental pieces is to present the traditional Taiwanese music. He used only Chinese instruments to play the music, and set them in the privileged stage position in order to guide the audiences to appreciate the beauty of the traditional instrumental musical melodic lines and timbres. However, a confusion here is in interpreting Chinese instruments playing authentic Taiwanese music. Yet, the musicians can use the Taiwanese musical instruments because they learned the music from local Taiwanese musicians. But they choose to use the Chinese instruments because they are expert in Chinese instruments not Taiwanese instruments. This situation creates indexical links to the Taiwanese political history. The musicians' musical training background was emphasizing on Chinese musical heritage rather than Taiwanese because they are not as competent on Taiwanese instruments, a situation reflecting the political policies in the period around 1980s. The government restrained the Taiwanese local culture at that time and supported the culture from Chinese heritage. What the musicians were able to learn from the conservatories at that time was Chinese music and Chinese musical instruments. Therefore, the musicians choose to present the Taiwanese music through their Chinese instruments. That is to say, the stage images would be confused because the music they play did not match to the instruments.

In addition, the first contact for the audience is a western performance stage, and this icon frames the connection to the “traditional” Taiwanese musical performing practice. It is a Proscenium Arch (See Figure 4-2, 4-3, and 4-4) originated from Farnese Theater, Parma, Italy around the late 17th century.¹⁶ The features of the stage are large

¹⁶ Kun Liang, Chiu, *The Information and Working Methodology of Taiwanese Theater: Space of Theater*, Taipei: Council for Cultural Affairs, 1998.

frame or arch, and audiences are sitting in front of the stage instead of surrounding it. There is a distance between audiences and performance. In Taiwan, the first Proscenium Arch stage was built in 1980 for The National Theater Concert Hall. Before this, traditional music commonly did not have this kind of performing stage. In the past, traditional Taiwanese music performance spaces were close to the audiences' life environment. For example, *nanguan* music is normally performed in the "club,"¹⁷ which is usually located in a temple. *Nanguan* serves for not only the routine performances, but also the ceremonial presentations (Figure 4-5). The performing space and music are closely connected to each other. The performers are typically educated in the club or in the temple, and share religious bonding with residents every day in the environment. The stage here is not just a performance place; it is a place where people's lives, stories, and memories abound. If there is no temple, there is no *nanguan* music. When people hear the music outside of the temple setting, they still have indexical connections to the temple, to the musicians, and to the ceremony. That is, when they hear *nanguan* music in a formal theatre, they indexically link it to their experiences in the temple setting. *Beiguan* music also serves a similar situation as *nanguan*. It has been used in many performing styles. The major place it is performed is also in clubs, temples or near temples. Therefore, the *beiguan* performance is normally related to the activities of a temple, such as ceremonies or celebrations (see Figure 4-6). Taiwanese opera music is different from those two musical styles, but it also has its own place to practice and perform. Lu (2003)¹⁸ mentions that Taiwanese opera functioned as popular

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Yu Hsiu, Lu, *The History of Taiwanese Music*.

entertainment in Taiwanese society from the 1950s to the 1980s. A Taiwanese opera group has their own building, including a rehearsal room, living space, and also a performance place called the “indoor hall.” But the building is limited to use by only the members of the group and other Taiwanese opera groups or any other musical styles cannot be performed there.

There are still many traditional performance groups performing in conventional places, and playing in the traditional musical styles. However, as the Taiwanese society changed, from an agrarian society to an industrial society, the Taiwanese people’s lives became less centered on activities occurring at the temples or in clubs. Moreover, the invention and wide spread use of radios, televisions, and computers had great effects on people’s entertainment life and options. Generations born after 1980 spend a smaller proportion of their life in and around temples than earlier generations.

For Taiwanese audiences, the setting of a westernized stage with a Proscenium Arch, indexically links to the Western dominant circumstances. It is an example of Western influence in Taiwanese society. Many things in Taiwan are already influenced by the West, such as daily life entertainment, architectures, and even the music. In architectures aspect, Proscenium Arch is built based on the Western acoustic idea of a performance place and the Taiwanese just followed the standard. That is why even the traditional Taiwanese music always performs in such a Westernized stage. In music aspect, according to “History of Taiwanese Music,”¹⁹ the numbers of public Western orchestras out-number Chinese orchestras in Taiwan. However, Huang wants to present a Taiwanese music to the audiences but to perform in proscenium Arch stage, which

¹⁹ Lu Yu, Hsiu, *History of Taiwanese Music*.

does not have the indexical connection to local life. That is to say, Huang's presentation of his two theatrical works on a westernized stage emphasize that the tradition of Taiwanese music can be interpreted differently by people who familiar with the old musical style.



Figure 4-2. From *The Journey of Monkey King*

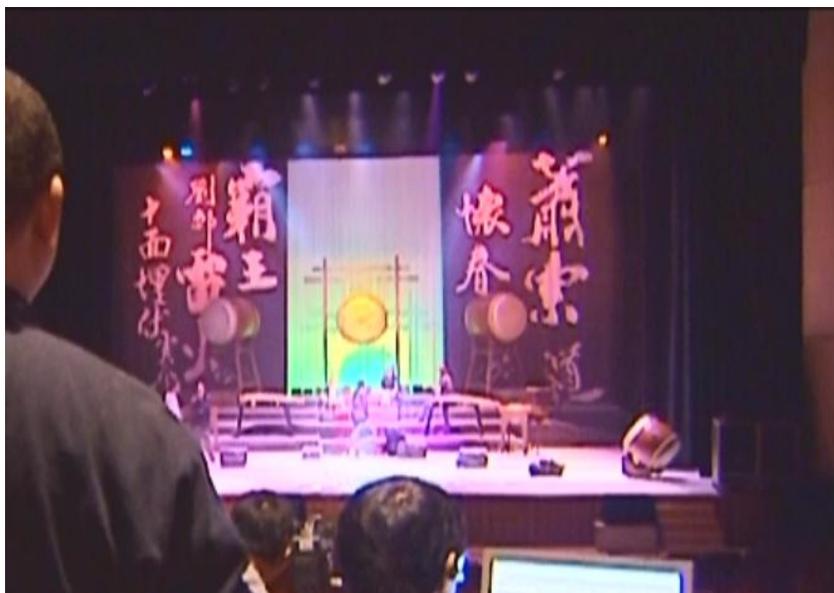


Figure 4-3. *Ten-side Ambush*, The Rehearsal.



Figure 4-4. Auditorium Building, Chicago. Auditorium interior from balcony. 1980. From Library of Congress, Historic American Buildings Survey HABS held in Roosevelt University Archives, Chicago.



Figure 4-5. Bungon Nanguan Musical Group, photo from Leh Cherng Temple official website. <http://www.lech.org.tw/Volunteer%20Corner.htm> (access online 10/08/2011)



Figure 4-6. Beiguan, photo from <http://mypaper.pchome.com.tw/leo821006/post/1308949941> (accessed online 11/04/2011)

In these two works, there is another stage element that causes confusion over Taiwanese national identity: *taiko* drum. Normally the *taiko* drum refers to a specific Japanese drum or its musical performance. This term can be identified as Japanese music, found in many Japanese musical articles and textbooks, but it can not be found as Chinese or Taiwanese music in their musical books. That is to say, most Asian musical scholars would consider the *taiko* drum as Japanese, not Chinese or Taiwanese. However, Figures 4-2 and 4-3 illustrate that both musical works have *taiko* drums in the performance either as part of percussion ensemble or as a solo instrument. If the *taiko* drums were purposely set by Huang as a Japanese musical element in order to diversify the musical performance, it would not be an issue of confusing the musical identity. But from the information in interviews, articles, concert program notes,

dissertations and even Huang's own dissertation, Huang clearly wanted to promote the Taiwanese music and to display his idea of Taiwanese music by presenting these two musical works. Yet, he did not mention why *taiko* drum would be on the stage as part of "Taiwanese music." As I mention previously, Taiwanese national identity was complicated during the Japanese colonization period because of Japanese policies that required Taiwanese people to regard themselves as Japanese. Therefore, the *taiko* drum in these two musical works might be an example that Japanese identity is already a fundamental part of Huang's national identity because he did not mention or discuss anything about the fact that the Japanese *taiko* drum is present in both of these works that are supposed to present his idea of Taiwanese music.

Musical Characteristics

The musical characteristics employed in *Ten Side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King* reflects Huang's musical background in Chinese and Taiwanese music. Turino (2007)²⁰ describes that the choice of certain musical sounds reflects the composers' own life experiences and learning process regardless of the composers' awareness or intention. That is, musical elements can unconsciously reflect the music the composer has learned and listened to before. Huang Chen Ming's musical background involved experience in both indigenous Taiwanese and Chinese musical traditions. The *erhu* he plays comes from Beijing opera of Mainland China and is not the same as the *erhu* typically used in Taiwanese *nanguan*, *tixian*,²¹ or in *beiguan* music. Also, the emphasis of Huang's musical training emphasizes Chinese musical style.

²⁰ Turino, Thomas. *Music as Social Life*.

²¹ This instrument is made of coconut, not wood. The timbre and playing style is similar like Erhu.

Analysis of the musical elements from *Ten-Side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King* reveals that many of musical elements Huang uses are not from *nanguan*, *beiguan*, aboriginal music, or even from music of Taiwanese opera. The choice of musical scale shows that Huang's Chinese *erhu* training affected his compositional style toward Chinese music. Mostly when I analyzed Taiwanese music, such as *nanguan* and *beigaun* music, they normally followed the pentatonic scale²² as root, although they do have some ornament notes. However, the musical scales used in these two works by Huang indicate that the music is closer to Chinese music (Xinjiang music) instead of traditional Taiwanese music.

Example 4-1. "Overture: Desolation" of *Ten-side Ambush*, measure 106

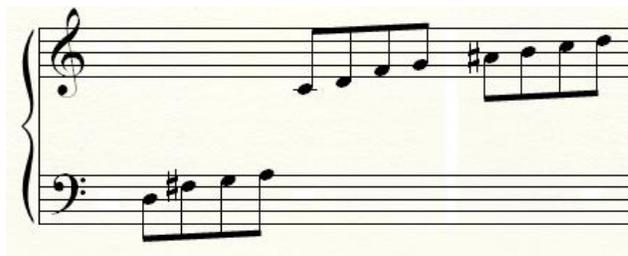


The eight measures of music in Example 4-1, played by two *di* musicians, are iconic to similar musical characters of Xinjiang music. Xinjiang is an autonomous region of northwest China whose society and culture have been influenced by the neighboring countries of the Middle East. The music is different than the music in southern China and Taiwan. Li Li Sa (2007)²³ describes that many of Xinjiang musical scales contain a similar structure.

²² According to the New Grove Online Dictionary, the Pentatonic Scale means the musical scale divided octave into five steps. In Chinese music, the basic scale is 1, 2, 3, 5, 6. If 1=C, then the scale would be C, D, E, G, A. The pitch intervals presents as follow: tone, tone, 3rd, tone, 3rd.

²³ Li Sa, Li, "Wang Jian Min's Creation of Compositional Technique in Zheng Music" In *Journal of Fuyang Teachers College (Social Science)* No. 4 (2007):114-16.

Example 4-2. The Xinjiang Musical Scale from the article of Li Li Sa. The musical scale of *Ten-side Ambush* is similar to the Xinjiang scale and is not found in Taiwanese music.



First, it is not a pentatonic scale but rather a heptatonic scale - C, D#, E, F#, G, A#, B. Second, the F# and A# within the scale make this musical scale like Xinjiang musical scale. Although there are D#s in this music, they are placed mostly on the weak beats (see Example 4-1, measure 109 and 114, the sixteen note in second half of first beat) and used as passing tones (see Example 4-1, measure 114, the last note). The Xinjiang musical characteristic also appears in *The Journey of Monkey King* (See Example 4-3). It also contains a scale similar to the one in example 4-2, C, D, E, F#, G, A.

Example 4-3. Act 2 "Edurance" of *The Journey of Monkey King*.



The Xinjiang musical characteristics in Huang's compositions are likely the result of his Chinese center musical training. Many standard *erhu* compositions are based on Xinjiang music. For example, Wang Jian Min's "The Scene of Tian Shan," Zhou Wei's "Ripe Grapes," and the piece that will mention later, Chen Gang's "Sunlight over Tachkurgan." Those pieces are performed many times by *erhu* musicians and heard by many people. Huang learned many of these pieces and used similar musical elements in his compositions.

The type of intervals used is additional evidence that in both *Ten-side Ambush* and

The Journey of Monkey King, the music contains many characteristics that are derived from Chinese music. Taiwanese music, such as *nanguan* and *beiguan* normally do not have obvious intervals between melodies of different instruments. Lu Chui Kuan (2007)²⁴ describes the characteristics of melodic performing styles in *nanguan* and *beiguan* music. They mostly use melodies in a major scale and all instruments play the same major notes but embellished them in various ways. For example, the melody in Example 4-4 is played by the *erhu*, and the similar melody in the Example 4-5 by the *pipa*. If the *erhu* melody presents the major notes, then the *pipa* player would playing a more ornamented version of the melody to differentiate between them, but he would not adding a parallel note above the major note in order to create a interval between different instruments.

Example 4-4. Erhu



different intervals, which make them distinct from Taiwanese traditional music. Example 4-7 is played by two *suona*²⁵ musicians as they walk onto the stage. If we separate the different lines, they mostly employ a pentatonic scale from the first measure to measure 25. Measure 26 contains the characteristics, F# and Bb, drawn from another Xinjiang musical scale. Example 4-9 shows Chen Gang’s “Sunlight over Tashkurgan.” Here the F# and Bb appear frequently in this Xinjiang musical piece.

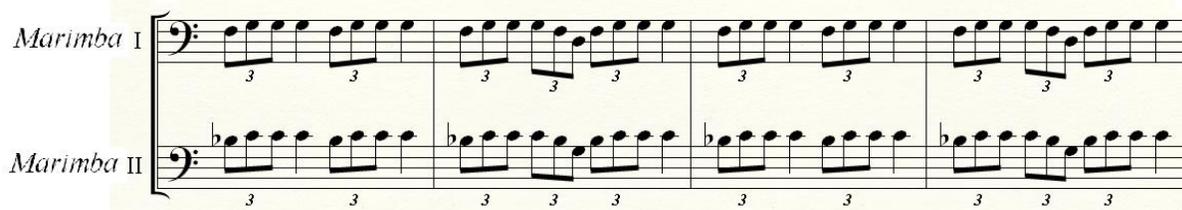
Example 4-6. Act 1 “Brooding” of *The Journey of Monkey King*

²⁵ This is a Chinese wind instrument with loud and high pitch sound. It is often used in different theater production and Chinese orchestra.

Example 4-7. Overture: *Ten-side Ambush*



Example 4-8, Act 4 “Havoc” of *The Journey of Monkey King*



Example 4-9. “Sunlight over Tashkurgan”

This piece was edited by Chen Gang, he used two Xinjiang folks song, “The Beauty of Tashkurgan” and “The Spring of Pamir Mountain.” The first version was for violin, but he later edit for erhu. These four measures is the beginning of the presto part of this piece.



However, except for these two notes, the rest of notes in example 4-6 can be analyzed as a pentatonic scale. The upper line uses the notes F, G, A, D, C; the lower line uses C, D, E, G, A, F natural. Therefore, if we only look at the single melody, each one is not distinguishable enough to establish a difference between Taiwanese and Chinese music, because mostly, the music in these two areas are pentatonic. Southern China and Taiwan share similar musical characteristics (the use of pentatonic is an example) but have a slightly different set of instruments and musical repertoires. Second, if we only look that the pitch intervals within a single melody we cannot identify

where this music is from. Hung Hung Min (2003)²⁶ describes the geographical effects on the musical style. He mentions that in the north of China, the climate is harsh, and the range of temperature difference is drastic. This affects the tone of language, of which the range is also big, and consequently influences the musical melody. If this melody contains disjunctive intervals, this would be evidence to link this music to northern of China. However, this melody remains primarily conjunct.

The consistency of the interval of a fourth is critical in identifying the examples as Taiwanese or Chinese music. The characteristic of Chinese instrumental music makes this melodic line more indicative of Chinese musical style. Take the *pipa* as example, the tuning of the notes of the four strings are based on two intervals of a fourth, A d e a (Example 4-10). In performance, this instrument uses a technique called *sao*, which involves rapidly strumming the four strings with four fingers. When a musician plays *sao*, commonly the “a” string performs the main melodic line and the other three strings are used as background drone in order to strengthen the harmonic texture. That means the music will commonly include the interval of a fourth in the lowest two strings (A and d). Another Chinese instrument used is the *sheng*, the only traditional wind instrument that can play harmony in Chinese musical system. There are two notational ways that are used to indicate harmony on the *sheng*. The first one is to notate down every note performed, and second is to write the main melody and indicate that it should be performed in “traditional style.” This indicates that the performer should add the intervals of a fourth and a sixth below the main melody as in Example 4-11. Therefore, Examples 4-7 and 4-8 show that both theater works contain the music with a continued interval of

²⁶ Hung Min, Hung, *The Inherited of Traditional*.

a fourth in the musical composition. This musical element would have a strongly iconic connection to the Xinjiang music of Mainland China, not to the Taiwanese traditional pentatonic music.

Example 4-10. *Pipa* tuning.



Example 4-11. *Sheng*, Performing style, The left part is the notation style, the right part is the actual playing content.



The Use of Chinese Characters in *Ten-side Ambush*

The written text in traditional Chinese characters, in the back scene of *Ten-Side Ambush* reveal that this instrumental theater work was composed by a Taiwanese composer, not a Chinese composer. Those characters present the title and names of the major sections of the work (Figure 4-7)



Figure 4-7. Act I “Overture: Desolation” of *Ten-side Ambush*

From the right of the scene to the left

蕭索 (Act 1, Overture: Desolation)

懷春 (Act 2, Yu Ji: Cherishing Spring)

霸王 (*Bà Wáng*, When Xiang Yu lost the battle of Chu-Han Contention, he dominated the west side of Chu, then people called him *Xī Chǔ Bà Wáng*, which means the King of the west side)

劉邦 (Liu Bang, one of the three main people, the King of *Han*)

雷火 (The one that is under the Liu Bang, it is the name of Act 7 “Xiang Yu’s Anger: Fire and Thunder”)

十面埋伏 (The name of the instrumental theater work and it is also the name of Act 9: The Battle Field: Ambush from Ten Sides)

Because the writing system is different in Taiwan and China, the use of “traditional Chinese” characters allows the audiences to link this musical work to Taiwan instead of contemporary communist China, where the use of simple Chinese characters is required by policy. The text also indicates that Huang Chen Ming’s background and his main education were in Taiwan.

Before 1956, Taiwan and China used the same writing system, but communist China simplified the Chinese characters in order to reduce illiteracy in the country. “Traditional Chinese” refers to Chinese characters those had been used since Han Dynasty and have not been simplified in any way or that do not contain newly created characters. Today, the only country that still uses traditional Chinese as its official system of writing is Taiwan. The Taiwanese decided to maintain this old pre-communist Chinese heritage. On the other hand, the “simplified Chinese” has been spread over the entire world, and adopted in Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Singapore, American, Europe, and elsewhere.²⁷

²⁷ The Chinese character referred in this thesis only concern in Mandarin speaking area mentioned above. In the early 20th century, Mainland China still used the traditional Chinese as their official language. However, there were already some scholars advocating that the written system shouldn’t be too difficult, including “Classical Chinese” (A written language based on the grammar and vocabulary of ancient Chinese.) and “traditional Chinese.” Until the period around 1950-60, the “simple Chinese” policy was finally established by the government of the People’s Republic of China. The methodology was to

Taiwan is different. Both the educational system and governmental documents still use the traditional Chinese as its official writing system. One reason, which was announced by the Taiwanese Ministry of Education, is that the Taiwanese government insisted on using traditional Chinese because it is originally from the Chinese ancestors, and they assert that there is no reason to change the characters. The other reason is that Taiwanese want to separate themselves from Mainland China. Based on these two reasons, simple Chinese is prohibited in official documents from the Taiwanese government and in the country's educational system. However, private citizens are not forbidden from using simple Chinese, but it is a clearly issue of national identity that the Taiwanese government supports the use of traditional Chinese. Even advertising slogans in Taiwan do not use simple Chinese. This is unique that Taiwan is the only country that still uses the traditional Chinese as an official language and it becomes a clear aspect to distinguish the difference between Taiwan and China.

The back scene of *Ten-side Ambush* is an example that it provides semiotic links (iconic, indexical, and symbolic) to a Taiwanese national identity distinct from contemporary communist China. In this theater production, there is no a dialogue or text that could distinguish the work by the accent of speaking or vernacular phrase of speaking content. Therefore, Huang put the written characters in the back scene, which is used like a billboard, to tell the audiences about the story and the main protagonists. At the symbolic level, the story and names are well known in Taiwan as well as in China. Audiences can identify those characters and link the meaning of those words, because

decrease the number of strokes and to shape the Chinese characters based on the cursive style and phonetic pronunciation from traditional Chinese. In Mainland China, only the people who live in rural area still use traditional Chinese written system. Others followed the official simple Chinese written system.

they appear commonly in the Taiwanese educational system and throughout the culture, such as in TV series, textbooks, and even in modern video games. At the iconic level, those traditional Chinese characters directly connect to the audience's daily reading of newspapers, books, magazines, and textbooks. Even if audience members do not pay attention to the specific meaning of the Chinese characters; they still can recognize that characters belong to traditional Chinese written system, not to simple Chinese. At the indexical level, from the Chinese characters, audiences connect not only the story presented through the Chinese characters but also link this to the context of their education and experiences of their daily life. For instance, the use of traditional Chinese serves as indexical sign that *Ten-side Ambush* was most likely composed by a Taiwanese composer, who was educated and grew up in Taiwan. If he were educated in China, the Chinese characters used in this instrumental theater might be simple Chinese. Below is the comparison of this word between the traditional one and the simple one. The first example is from the figure 4-8, the word 蕭 on the right corner above side of figure 4-8. This is a traditional Chinese character. Another example is from the left side above 劉, and these two words could prove that the symbolism of language used in this work shows the Taiwanese national identity by using the traditional Chinese instead of using simple Chinese.

Table 4-1. Comparison of traditional and simple Chinese.

Traditional Chinese		Simple Chinese
蕭	→	萧
劉	→	刘



Figure 4-8. Act 7 “Xiang Yu’s Anger: Fire and Thunder” of *Ten-side Ambush*

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

As this research has revealed, these two instrumental theater works *Ten-side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King* illustrate the semiotic presentation in traditional Taiwanese music and link the meanings of musical and theatrical signs to the Taiwanese national identity. Furthermore, it also has shown that not everyone, including presenters and audiences, has the same understanding of the staging materials presented on the stage. Different presenters and audiences with varied backgrounds contain diverse interpretations and perceptions to the meaning of staging materials. Therefore, I presented the semiotic analysis of these two theatrical works to display the meaning of signs and the interpretation in Taiwanese traditional music in the context of international flows, educational system and development of political historical background.

There are three different periods of political history that have affected people's national identity of musical elements. Each of those different governments used their political power to control how music was performed, perceived, and taught. In the Japanese colonization period, they occupied Taiwan and put "Japanization" into practice to the Taiwanese society for fifty years. This law suppressed the Taiwanese not only in the aspect of daily life and language, but also the aspect of artistic activities. They mandated that Taiwanese composers add Japanese lyrics into preexisting local indigenous folksong and combine Japanese musical characteristics with the Taiwanese musical compositions. This action implicitly and explicitly affected the Taiwanese musical identity toward Japan. As revealed in this thesis, the Taiwanese people who lived in this period do not repel the Japanese national and cultural identities, but they

actually regarded these Japanese identities as their own.

After the Japanese colonization, Taiwanese history separated into two political periods – Two President Chiangs, and the period after the “end of the Material Laws Order.” In the period of Two President Chiangs (1949 to 1980s), the R.O.C. government directly came from Mainland China, which brought their political behavior and cultural artistic performances to Taiwan, because the government still regarded Taiwan as a temporary settlement before they reunited the China. Therefore, they forced the Taiwanese people to accept Chinese politics and cultures as their own national culture. For example, the government restricted the usage of language, only allowing Mandarin Chinese in the official documents and in the education system. Moreover, government suppressed the local indigenous Taiwanese music and supported forms of music that came from the Mainland. These policies and actions caused confusion of Taiwanese national identity, because the Taiwanese people did not know whether they were Taiwanese or Chinese, both in politics and artistic performances. During the 1980s, there were many political incidents, which affected the Taiwanese people’ national and cultural identity, such as the “End of the Material Laws Orders,” “Withdrawal from United Nations” and the “sever diplomatic relations between R.O.C. and USA.” The government rescinded the law suppressing local indigenous Taiwanese artistic performance. In addition, because the government intended to revive local performance styles, they gave funding to the groups, clubs, and school that have the performances or education programs of Taiwanese traditional music, such as *nanguan*, *beigaun*, Taiwanese aboriginal music, and Taiwanese opera music. Chai-Found Workshop was one example of this.

Chai-Found Workshop was founded after the End of the Material Laws Order. The purpose of founding this performance group was to present their idea of Taiwanese music and to spread it to Taiwanese audiences. In this workshop, the musicians' musical training was initially based on Chinese music, but after they had been asked to perform Taiwanese music from a Chinese conductor and foreigners, they began to learn and to present Taiwanese local indigenous music. *Ten-side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King* were two instrumental theater works that attempted to present their ideas of Taiwanese musical identity to audiences.

In chapter 4 I presented four examples to illustrate the idea of musical national identity displayed in these two instrumental theater works *Ten-side Ambush* and *The Journey of Monkey King*. I first address the words in the program of *Ten-side Ambush*. The intention of using the term “unify” to introduce the audiences about Chu-Han Contention can be interpreted as linking with the notion of unification of China and Taiwan and reveals the national identity of composers and creators. Second, the stage set up also implies that Taiwanese musical identity had been influenced by both Chinese and Japanese heritages as well as the Western elements. The instruments they play are Chinese instruments. It reveals the former Chinese political power effects. The *taiko* drum in these two works is also the same circumstance that former countries had great effect to people's perception of music of national identity. In addition, the performing stage is the first thing that audiences' would see before the performance. In these two instrumental theater works both are performed in Proscenium Arch, which was not a usual stage for Taiwanese traditional music. Hence, the indexical connection to traditional Taiwanese musical heritage was questioned. Third, I reveal the Taiwanese

musical characteristic that contains the Chinese style more than the Taiwanese. The intervals and musical scales in *Ten-side Ambush* disclose the effect from the Chinese musical heritage. The interval fourth is not common in Taiwanese musical interval setting. Mostly, Taiwanese music is played with the same melody and embellished based on the main notes, not an interval above or below the main note. The final one is the written system. The “traditional Chinese” in the back scene create an indexical connection to the Taiwanese national identity in performance. Because communist China had already changed their written system to “simple Chinese,” the sign of “traditional Chinese” separate the musical work from the Chinese national connection.

The Taiwanese musical identity combined the former Japanese, Chinese, and Taiwanese all together. Performing groups or governmental departments tended to use their own perspective to interpret their idea of Taiwanese music. The governments normally built their identity based on their own ideas of nationalism while forbidding selected elements of previous national identity. For performing groups and artists, they usually follow the governmental standard in order to get funding or support. However, in the political aspect, it can be clearer to say whether you are Japanese or you are Taiwanese based on your last generation or even your ancestor. But in the musical aspect, it is more ambiguous, once music has been performed or been listened to, it will remain as a memory in a person’s mind. That is the iconic or indexical connection. Therefore, when people listen to or compose music, former musical experiences come out and are recognized. Normally we can not separate the former and present musical experience unless you’re analyzing into the musical elements carefully.

Today, the governmental standard reveals that Taiwanese music is exclusive from

the music of Japanese and Mainland China, such as Beijing opera music or Guangdong music. As revealed in this thesis, the Taiwanese government funds those performing groups that contain *nangaun*, *beigaun*, and Taiwanese opera music because they regard these styles as Taiwanese. The rest of music such as Beijing opera music, Japanese Shinto music, and even Westernized music are excluded from funding. However, all those styles of music are important to the formulation of traditional Taiwanese music.

From the time line of different historical periods, Chinese, Japanese, and even the Western musical identity all contributed to the formation and construction of national identity of traditional Taiwanese music. The examples, which are given in chapter 2, show that for Taiwanese people who lived in the Japanese colonization period, Japanese *taiko* performance present in the two instrumental theatrical works of Huang can be interpreted as part of their “Taiwanese national identity.” This is an indexical meaning for them to link to their life back before 1945. For those people who came from Mainland China, Beijing opera music is their homeland music. Those musical identities are more like accumulation, but not clearly separation layers.

To conclude, different people from different backgrounds can interpret the meaning of signs on the stage differently. In Taiwan, because of the complicity of historical reasons, the local indigenous music as well as Japanese and Chinese music all can possibly connect to diverse Taiwanese people. As I present the analysis of musical characteristics, program notes, and the stage set up, it shows that the audiences can interpret the meaning of musical signs differently. These interpretations cannot actually be divided into each different unity identity, such as excluding the Japanese *taiko* drum

out of Taiwanese music. But those former and present identities are to be gathered as formation of Taiwanese musical identity as whole in the present day.

APPENDIX A
THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
FOR THE DIRECTOR OF CHAI-FOUND WORKSHOP
HUANG CHEN MING

1. What is your position in Chai-Found Workshop? And what is the major work of you?
2. Can you tell me a little bit about your musical training? For example, when you started to learn music? Did you learn Western music first or Chinese music? And why you choose erhu as a major?
3. What is your purpose of funding Chai-Found Workshop?
4. What is the special key pint of Chai-Found Workshop than the other Chinese orchestra?
5. Did you think that the music of Chai-Found is totally different than the music of Chinese Broadcast Orchestra (CBO 中廣國樂團)?
6. Can you tell me why you leaved CBO?
7. Can you musical development and musical style of Chai-Found Workshop?
8. Did you trying to find something that different from other Chinese musical groups?
9. What is the motivation of creating the instrumental theater?
10. Why you want to create such a different musical work than other Chai-Found musical work?
11. What you want the audience to see from these two works?
12. I saw many advertisements and news said that you want to promote the traditional music through these instrumental theaters, how you make it work?
13. Does these works comprise traditional Taiwanese music?
14. What is your idea of Taiwanese music? Does erhu music count as Taiwanese music?
15. What perspective you expect your audiences to see in these two works? Chinese music? Taiwanese music? Or modern musical performance?
16. Lin Hui Kuan mentions that your father is a *beiguan* musician; does that affect your musical training process?
17. Does the past musical training affect the composition of these two instrumental theaters?
18. Can you tell me what is the different between these two works and the rest of former musical performance of Chai-Found?
19. Do you thing that the dance and acting affected the musical expression? Or affected what you want to present to audience?
20. Do you think that these two works have any drawback?
21. What is the possible musical work you will create for next performance?

APPENDIX B
THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
FOR THE MUSICAL DIRECTOR OF CHAI-FOUND WORKSHOP
WU TSUNG HSIEN

1. What is your position in Chai-Found Workshop? And what is the major work of you?
2. Can you tell me about your musical training? When you started to learn music? Did you learn Western music first or Chinese music? And why you choose di as a major?
3. Do you have any reason to join the Chai-Found Workshop?
4. Why did you leave Chinese Broadcast Orchestra (CBO 中廣國樂團)?
5. Did you think that the music of Chai-Found is totally different than the music of CBO?
6. What do think about the music of Chai-Found and the other Chinese orchestra or ensemble music?
7. Can you musical development and musical style of Chai-Found Workshop?
8. Do you think that the music of Chai-Found change over time? Is there any different periods of that?
9. Did you know what is the reason that causing the change of musical direction or performance repertoire of Chai-Found?
10. Do you think that the music of Chai-Found is Taiwanese music?
11. What kind of music you would count as Taiwanese music?
12. What was your feeling about performed these two instrumental theater works?
13. Did you feeling anything different about these two works than other repertoires you performed before?
14. As a performer, what kind of the information you got when the director asked you to perform these two works?
15. From your perspective, what did you think about the music of these two works? Do you think that is Taiwanese music or Chinese music?
16. Does the former musical training affects your concept or performing style of music in these two works?
17. What do you think about the music after these two works? Will change to other direction? Or will combine more other elements?
18. Do you think that combine theatrical elements into musical work will affect audience's perception of the music you guys presented?

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Chia Jui, Chiang, is a Taiwanese who is very interested in the presentation of interdisciplinary performance and the study of the Asian music with their social context. He holds his Bachelor of Chinese Musical Performance from National Tainan University of the Arts in Taiwan, majored in Chinese bowed instrument-Erhu. He was also a Drill Sergeant for “Combined Logistics Command Military Band”, in charge of developing training courses and training soldiers. Chiang is actively erhu performer in Taiwan and also performed many concerts around world. Beside the music, he also attended many other types of performance, such as dance and film. With a master’s degree of ethnomusicology from the University of Florida, he wants to pursue deeper and broader knowledge of Asian performance with their historical and social background that links their national and cultural identity.