since, as we have seen, the musical text is often merely a documentary or mnemonic sketch, or represents an intermediate stage or plan (though sometimes quite precisely formulated) for execution. In addition, both composers very consciously and in a complex way manipulate cultural codes and meanings that can be deduced only through a correspondingly culturally "informed" hearing from the sounding result. For this music, new techniques of a "contextual analysis" must be found. There is no question that the works and conceptions of Takemitsu, Ge, Maceda, or Takahashi, and many other composers working on similar interfaces of cultural categorization, are decisive touchstones for alternative music historiographies.

5. Intercultural Narrativity in East Asian Art Music since the 1990s

Can art music actually create such a high degree of differentiation between questions of recognition, alterity, or hybridity, as outlined in the first chapter (→ I.3)? Caution is generally advised when applying social, political, and literary concepts to musical contexts. The increasing difficulty for art music to claim social relevance was already mentioned at the beginning of this book (→ I.2). In contrast to more semantically and semiotically constricted literature and the symbolic reception processes instigated by visual arts, the communication of multi-coded messages seems fundamental to the medium of music and sound. Lawrence Kramer once described this quality of music as a "semantic chameleon."[247] Even more recent tendencies of topic theory or research into musical metaphoricism rarely posit unambiguous principles of musical communication.[248] Such ambiguity initially seems an advantage in the field of interculturality. In the sense of a conception of music (prominently described by Kramer) as a "cultural practice" (→ I.2), it should be emphasized that this ambiguity is limited through reception history and other mechanisms by a wealth of "meta-musical" dimensions such as genre conventions, their topoi, and connotation. These contexts may allow a construction of musical narrativity, which of course is always to be weighed critically against alternative cognitive processes and cultures of hearing, since they are profoundly socioculturally and historically encoded.

Robert Samuels – following Jean-Jacques Nattiez – distinguished between two basic assumptions that allow, or even require, speaking of musical narrativity: on the one hand, a musical process must describe a continuous, irreversible change over time, and on the other hand, it must bring together identifiable musical characters to create an overarching meaning. This meaning cannot be reduced to individual components.[249] In this chapter, I will present some striking case studies of works by East Asian composers since the 1990s for whom these criteria of musical narrativity undoubtedly apply. By focusing on works that combine Asian and European instruments, the following analyses to some degree reinforce associations of these instruments

247 Kramer, "Hercules' Hautboys," 149.

248 Zbikowski, *Conceptualizing Music*, Thorau, *Vom Klang zur Metapher*, and Mirka, *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*.

249 Samuels, "When Must One Speak of Narrativity in Music?" with reference to Nattiez, "Can One Speak of Narrativity in Music?" and Abbate, *Unsung Voices*. Narratological concepts have received a great deal of attention in recent years, particularly in the interpretation of music from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, though hardly ever in reference to newer music, with the exception of the remarkable dissertation Meelberg, *New Sounds, New Stories*. Foundational studies from the past years include Maus, "Narratology, Narrativity," Samuels, "Narrative Form and Mahler's Musical Thinking," Imberty, "Narrative, Splintered Temporalities and the Unconscious in 20th Century Music," and Almén, *A Theory Of Musical Narrative*.

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with "characters." This should not be understood in the sense of a naïve programmatic dramaturgy, but instead in such a way that the semantic connotations of the "acting" instruments or instrumental groups are not only accepted by the composers, but often also reinforced by compositional decisions. Most of these examples introduce the separation, rapprochement, or even indistinguishability of "Western" and "Asian" instruments or sounds in a more nuanced manner than the works discussed in the preceding chapters. This increasing differentiation of narrative threads probably has to do with how these works are less tied to specific genres in European or Asian music, such as the solo concerto or symphony. This work emerged from significant activities among the younger generation of Asian instrumental soloists from the 1980s onward, which aligned with a continuously pursued traditional practice. Their activities were aimed specifically at a collaboration with composers of contemporary music, not least with the intention of developing a new repertoire for their instruments and thus aiming to avoid falling into an overly small niche in the economically oriented East Asian societies. These soloists have a high degree of specialization in, and familiarity with, the techniques of contemporary music, yet the collaboration with composers, who are usually educated exclusively in Western music, comes into – more or less productive – conflict in the structure and sonority of the works produced. Although some of the following examples have been composed, performed, and discussed outside of Asia, and may thus only indirectly be relevant for analyzing processes of music history in the respective East Asian countries of the composers,[250] the following discussion is organized around national music discourses, providing to some extent an opposing perspective on the transnational entanglements discussed in many other parts of this book.

New Chinese Music Between Essentialism and Cultural Conflict

The Tiananmen square massacre on 4 June 1989 and the already worsening political atmosphere before that proved a decisive turning point, following tentative signs of political liberalization in China during the post-Maoist period and the renewed efforts at an internationalization of Chinese music that this development implied. [251] Although more attention has commonly been paid to expatriates such as Tan Dun (b. 1957) or Chen Yi (b. 1953), several composers deliberately chose to remain in or, from the late 1990s, return to China. Certainly, as elsewhere, there may be talk of increasing aesthetic pluralism among Chinese composers. The problems created by China's state-controlled capitalism, however, and the aggressive nature of the market economy in general certainly have not only been advantageous for independent Chinese art forms. Art music is considered a "luxury item," the composer's situation is largely one of isolation and often limited to activities within the academy.[252] It may also be this partial isolation from international trends that, during the late 1990s and early 2000s, encouraged certain tendencies to-

250 It would surely be inadequate to continue claiming composers such as Tan Dun, Chen Yi, or Chen Qigang exclusively as "Chinese" composers, with their music considered in the framework of a (national) "Chinese music history" some thirty or more years after they have permanently left China for the United States or France. Rather, their unique contributions to North American or European music histories should be acknowledged. As they retain a prominent influence and exemplary function for both the more official cultural policies and the younger generations of composers in China, however, their cases evidently enforce a transnational approach as outlined in Chapter II.1.

251 A comprehensive historical overview of recent music history in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong can be found in Utz, "China/Taiwan/Hongkong."

252 Guo Wenjing, e-mail to the author, 03/01/2002. See also Guo, "Traditional Music as Material."

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ward a radicalized emphasis on cultural difference. To be sure, in many of these newer Chinese works, there is a sharp distinction from the aesthetic requirements of the Western avant-garde, but without necessarily lapsing back into the Romanticism of the older generation, as Tan Dun did in his *Symphony 1997* (→ III.3). Characteristic features in these more recent works include a replacement of polyphony with heterophony, a focused use of microtones and inflections, the deployment of Chinese texts and textures, structural references to Chinese or Asian genres, and, not least, the innovative use of Chinese instruments. This plurality of approaches is not synthesized into an affirmative unity of the music, but rather made audible as a coexistence of distinct qualities. Musical identities are self-reflexive here as a refracted experience, and not forced into the mold of violent cultural optimism.

Polarizing Essentialism: Tan Dun

The simplistic recourse to culturalist stereotypes of an imaginary China in Tan Dun's *Symphony 1997* (→ III.3) seems particularly precarious and symptomatic of a broader societal tendency of a resurgence of nationalist currents in the People's Republic of China. As a result of targeted party politics, since the early 1990s, this nationalism has provided a welcome distraction from every kind of looming social conflict.[253]

Of course, not every turn toward issues of Chinese identity should be interpreted as the result of this neo-nationalism, especially since many composers began to engage with culturally coded idioms as early as the late 1970s. In the case of Tan Dun, however, in a work such as *Ghost Opera* (1994) for *pipa* and string quartet, one can clearly identify a "tamed" idiom compared to the enhanced modernist manifestations of localism in his works of the 1980s (→ II.3): here, both European and Chinese culture become a sort of soft souvenir. Quotations from Johann Sebastian Bach's Prelude in C♯ minor BWV 849 (*The Well-Tempered Clavier*, vol. 1), reduced to a three-part skeleton, and from Shakespeare's *The Tempest* stand for European traditions, while the folk song *Xiao bai cai* (Little white cabbage, a *xiaodiao* folk song from the province of Hebei) and the ritualistic, folk-Daoist "ghost opera" stand for Chinese traditions.[254] But the juxtaposition of Western complexity (polyphony, linguistic imagery) and Chinese simplicity (simple unanimity) or corporeality (ritual spirituality) seems to overly oblige culturalist stereotypes.

Even more problematically, the musical materials are deprived in their very first appearance of precisely those components that are undoubtedly crucial for the formation of their "cultural identity": owing to the three-part texture of the originally four-part Bach prelude, harmony notes are omitted several times, and the ornaments written out in the original, which give shape to the imitative polyphony, also disappear in Tan's rendering.[255] The melody *Xiao bai*

253 Especially symptomatic of this is the publication of the book *China Can Say NO!* (*Zhongguo keyi shuo bu!* 1996); the more recent anti-Western nationalism goes back, among others, to the CCP's 1991 campaign of patriotic education (*Aiguozhuyi Jiaoyu Yundong*), which portrayed China's situation as a result of Western oppression: "The official Maoist 'victory narrative,' which was superseded by a new 'victimization narrative' that blames the West for China's suffering" (Wang, "National Humiliation, History Education, and the Politics of Historical Memory," 792). See also Barmé, "To Screw Foreigners Is Patriotic." In particular, this new nationalism had a significant impact on pop music in the form of waves of nostalgia and popularization of "revolutionary" songs ("Red Songs"), see Steen, "Voices of the Mainstream."

254 This example is also discussed in Utz, *Neue Musik und Interkulturalität*, 449–452. See also Young, "Reconsidering Cultural Politics in the Analysis of Contemporary Chinese Music" and the extensive analysis in Gooi, "Making an Identity," 115–139.

255 The Kronos Quartet plays the Bach passages on the CD recording (Nonesuch 7559-79445-2, 1997) and in live concerts with a Romantic emphasis that lacks any historical sensitivity.

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cai, in turn, loses the harmonic ambiguity of the pentatonic scale through the added drone in the viola; the characteristic inflections of the singing voice in Chinese vocal practice are hardly taken into account. Instead, string *portamenti* producing conventional sighing motifs are added in the instrumental repetition of the melody (third movement, rehearsal number B, first violin) that have nothing in common with traditional Chinese vocal or instrumental practice. Tan Dun's narrative of opposing materials, which enter into a dialogue in a supposedly "natural" manner, is therefore hindered from the very beginning by his failure to recognize precisely those delicate asymmetries between these materials on which his conception claims to rely.

Pluralistic Essentialism: Qin Wenchen and Guo Wenjing

Many other composers by no means discarded cultural essentialism, but the concept has become more nuanced and pluralized through the more diverse experiences of younger generations. An example of this extension of the idea can be found in Qin Wenchen's (b. 1966) *He-Yi* (Merging, 1999) for the Chinese arched zither *zheng*, six Western instruments, and percussion. Qin's "pluralistic essentialism" is characterized by an ethnographically consciously "imprecise" hybridity that merges source elements from different genres of Chinese traditional music with a sufficiently abstract atonal pitch structure. Like many other Chinese composers since the early 1990s, Qin draws on the mnemonic syllables of *luogu dianzi*, the "gong and drum patterns" of the Beijing Opera percussion music *wuchang*,[256] but here combines the resulting evocation of Chinese opera with the withdrawn literary world of the *zheng* and the quasi-shamanistic singing of the *zheng* soloist (Ex. 3.21). This purposefully inaccurate form of intermingled reference to different Chinese genres and aesthetics seeks to find a general "Chinese tone":

> The vocal lines […] [at rehearsal number 14] all resemble the speech voice of Chinese opera. The different vocal parts all follow different lines, and every part is enhanced with different ornaments and slides that are characteristic of operatic singing style. The cellist here strikes a Chinese opera gong (*jingluo*) and changes between soft and hard strokes. All this conveys the atmosphere of Chinese opera without actually quoting or imitating a certain piece of music.[257]

Qin's work also places special emphasis on a feature that characterizes much of newer East Asian music, described by Barbara Mittler as "radicalization"[258]: certain aspects of traditional East Asian musical practice are driven to extremes with the intention of highlighting their specific characteristics (Tan Dun explained that Chinese folk music often appeared insufficiently harsh to him, not "folky" enough, so he must exaggerate it all the time[259]). In *He-Yi*, for example, the sound-syllables of the *luogu dianzi* are structurally condensed in a way that would never happen in traditional *wuchang* ensembles.

While Qin Wenchen takes a middle position between abstraction and concretion, Tan Dun (b. 1957) and Guo Wenjing (b. 1956) can certainly be considered the two Chinese composers most explicitly associated with traditional non-Western, not necessarily exclusively Chinese material, with Tan Dun producing a particularly broad variety of compositional techniques

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256 See Rao, "The Tradition of *Luogu Dianzi*," Rao, "Chinese Opera Percussion from Model Opera to Tan Dun," and Utz, *Neue Musik und Interkulturalität*, 468–470 for further examples of the use of *luogu dianzi* in contemporary Chinese music.

257 Qin, "On Diversity," 145.

258 Mittler, *Dangerous Tunes*, 323–357.

259 See Tan and Utz, "Tan Dun's Art for a New Generation," 148–149, Utz, *Neue Musik und Interkulturalität*, 490.

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Example 3.21: Qin Wenchen, ***He-Yi****, rehearsal number 5*

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Example 3.22: Guo Wenjing, ***Ye Yan****, Scene 1, entrance aria of Hong Zhu (soprano), accompanied by the pipa*

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dedicated to such combinations until 1996.[260] An important one is the aforementioned use of "non-original" material instead of quotations, where a quite deliberate effect is to lure the listener onto the "wrong track": the idea of the idiomatic is removed from an affirmative character to an ambiguous, sometimes ironic context.

Guo Wenjing, in his second opera *Ye Yan* (Night banquet, 1998), took the treatment of such "quasi-traditional" Chinese material to extremes.[261] With long stretches of only one unaccompanied musical line and the sound of the four-string lute *pipa*, the music is based on interlocking pentatonic modes. Thereby Guo creates an almost unbroken "Chineseness" idiomatically characterized by a special simplicity and economy (Ex. 3.22) and only temporarily broken up by sharply contrasting percussive *tutti* ensembles. This deliberately "Chinese" character is, of course, a construction that can only be justified with reference to a very restricted selection of Chinese musical forms, in particular the literary *wenren* aesthetic associated with the *pipa*, related to an idyllic concept of nature from which Guo has explicitly distanced himself.[262] Yet, in addition to this strong identification with a Chinese musical language different from Western music, we can also see a degree of self-reflexive irony in the work, which at times seems to create a necessary distance from its apparent essentialism. This tendency can be identified, for example, in the slight, barely perceptible, shifts in pentatonic modes, or from a ubiquitous "grotesque" instrumentation that reminds us of Dmitri Shostakovich's writing for wind instruments. These piercing sounds aptly communicate with the constant presence of percussion ensembles that here, as in Qin's *He-Yi* and many earlier pieces by Guo (→ II.3), emerge from the percussion patterns of *jingju* (Beijing Opera) and *chuanju* (Sichuan Opera).

260 See Utz, *Neue Musik und Interkulturalität*, 323–481.

261 See Guo, "Traditional Music as Material."

262 See ibid.

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Interaction: Chen Xiaoyong

For many East Asian composers whose music was originally more strongly based on the compositional techniques of European modernism, the encounter and longer-term cooperation with Chinese instrumentalists led to an intensive examination of the problems associated with culturally hybrid ensembles. Works such as *The Prospect of Colored Desert* (*Mo motu*, 2000) by Jia Daqun (b. 1956) for *sheng* (mouth organ), *pipa*, violin, violoncello, and percussion, written for Yo Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble, or *Vacuité/Consistance* (1996) by Xu Shuya (b. 1961) for *zheng*, *pipa*, and chamber ensemble prove that such works do not necessarily have to represent "traditional" or essentialist aesthetics, but that the East Asian instruments are at once more than merely unusual sound generators for otherwise "Western" structures. This polarity is broken up in particular by the considerable influence the performers usually exercise on the sounding result. For example, Chen Qigang's (b. 1951) famous *Poème Lyrique II* (1991) for baritone and chamber ensemble,[263] an important work for the international recognition of the *xinchao* generation, would be difficult to imagine without Shi Kelong's "performative" realization of the highly precisely notated vocal part. Chen Xiaoyong's (b. 1955) *zheng* solo *Circuit* (1996), in turn, was developed in close collaboration with the soloist Xu Fengxia, who contributed not only a wide range of vocal colors but also experiences of free improvisation – qualities that are also clearly manifest in the *zheng* part of Qin Wenchen's *He-Yi*, which was also written for Xu.

This is all the more remarkable in the case of Chen Xiaoyong, who studied with György Ligeti after graduating in Beijing in 1989, as Chen originally distanced himself from explicit references to Chinese traditions. A tendency toward abstraction and play with abstracted "cultural" colors is certainly still recognizable in a later work such as *Invisible Landscapes* (1998): in the final cadenza, the three solo instruments *zheng*, piano, and percussion, facing a small chamber ensemble of six instruments, attempt almost systematically to continue the piano's line along with drumming and *zheng* harmonics. These parts are only partially synchronized at first, and the passage takes on the character of an experimental arrangement through the alternation of different types of Western and Chinese drums and ever-changing, "evasive" rhythmic figures. As in Chen's earlier works, the focus is less on culturally specific musical idioms than on a persistent attempt to fathom the closeness and distance between the various instrumental timbres (Ex. 3.23).

Chen's works from the turn of the millennium show an increasing "looseness," motivated not least, by an intensified collaboration with Chinese improvising musicians including, besides Xu Fengxia, the *sheng* soloist Wu Wei (→ II.6). In addition, there is an increased conceptual orientation toward the enigmatic and often paradoxical formulations of archaic Daoist traditions of Chinese thought. *Yang Shen* for soprano, *zheng*, *sheng/xun* (Chinese ocarina), and small chamber ensemble from 2002, for example, develops a reading of the poem *Bei feng bo zhou* from the *Shijing* (Book of Songs, c. 600 BCE). The poem's linguistic sounds are mixed with fragments of texts by the "classical" philosophers Laozi, Liezi, and Confucius in German translation, as well as instrumental sounds colored with unpitched noise. The Chinese and German speech sounds (all instrumentalists also act as vocalists) as well as Chinese and European instrumental sounds approach one another.

This concept continues to develop in Chen's *Speechlessness, Clearness and Ease* (*Yin, xi, yi*, 2004) for a larger ensemble of seven Chinese, eight European instruments, and percussion. The ensemble forms a multi-layered sound field that, by adjusting the positions, playing techniques, and articulations, minimizes the tonal, gestural, and cultural differences of the instruments; a dense

263 See particularly Rao, "The Role of Language in Music Integration in Chen Qigang's *Poème Lyrique II*."

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Example 3.23: Chen Xiaoyong, ***Invisible Landscapes*** *for zheng, piano, percussion and ensemble, m. 42*

269

Perc.
Piano
Chg.

♩ = 126 From here, mute the strings (approx. 1 cm) with fingers of the left hand until end of the piece.

sempre right pedal until end of the piece.

275

♩ = 126 (only for percussion)

Chinese drums
small

* The Chêng must be start to play exactly on the note indicated by the arrow,
After this synchronised beginning, the both musicians are rhythmically unrestricted.

279

small

283

big chinese drum

287

small chinese drum
big chinese drum

292

small
big

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sequence of identifiable pitches and characteristic noise sonorities creates a complex overall system. Frequently, Chinese and Western instruments intermingle to form hybrid timbres (flute/*sheng* mm. 28/35, double bass/*erhu* mm. 36–39, piano/*yangqin* m. 36, *ruan*/trombone/violin m. 39, etc., see Ex. 3.24). Toward the end of the first section, the contours are increasingly resolved by the hissing noises already heard at the beginning (mm. 1–27); instrument-specific sound effects accelerate this process (*col legno*, rubbing of the *zheng* strings, *jiaoxian*: overlapping of three *pipa* strings with a metallic-sounding result, muted piano strings). In keeping with the quotation from the thirty-fifth chapter of Laozi's Daoist classic *Daodejing*: "One looks for it and does not see it" (*shi zhi bu zu jian*[264]), the composer wants to place the listener in a paradoxical situation "between delusion and reality, between sounds and noises, between real and artificial worlds of sound."[265] The "cultural identities" of instrumental sounds in this interactive area are reduced to a minimum, if not abandoned at all. To some degree, however, such a potential leveling of identities seems to diminish the intelligibility of Chen's narrative of a paradoxical world experience.

Stratification and Conflict: Zhu Jian'er

Zhu Jian'er impressive symphonic œuvre, introduced earlier (→ III.1), only corresponds to the *xinchao* generation's achievements in some ways, but retains a distinct position in which a more pronounced independence from Western modes of reception is apparent. While the claim was put forward in Chapter II.5 that composers since the 1950s have increasingly addressed their work toward a potentially global public, the very real process of creating a particular work for a premiere at a specific location for a specific local audience surely has implications for many of the narratives addressed so far. Zhu's Sixth (1992–94) and Tenth (1998) Symphonies juxtapose field and studio recordings of traditional Chinese music with the symphony orchestra, played through loudspeakers.[266] The Tenth Symphony features a free chant, recalling the stage styles of Beijing Opera, and recorded fragments of the literati zither *qin*, mostly in *senza tempo* sections that alternate with metrically stable orchestral sections. The three-movement Sixth Symphony, by contrast, creates a complex combination of orchestral sounds and a plethora of different regional styles played back as recordings, primarily of minorities from South-Western China.[267] The third movement is initially dominated by a monophonic dance

264 The complete passage quoted from Chapter 35 reads: [道之出口，淡乎其無味，] 視之不足見，聽之不足聞，用之不足既 ([*dao zhe chu kou, tan he qi wu wei,*] *shi zhi bu zu jian, ting zhi bu zu wen, yong zhi bu zu ji*); "[But though the Dao as it comes from the mouth, seems insipid and has no flavour,] though it seems not worth being looked at or listened to, the use of it is inexhaustible." (Laozi, *The Tao Te Ching*; the bracketed part was not used in Chen's work). Chen also quotes the two basic concepts of the *Daodejing ziran* (nature) and *wuwei* (non-doing) as well as the first sentence of the sixteenth chapter: 致虛極，守靜篤 (*zhi xu ji, shou jing du*), "The (state of) vacancy should be brought to the utmost degree, and that of stillness guarded with unwearying vigour." (Ibid.) Throughout the piece, only the initials of syllables without mid-vowels or final sounds are used.

265 Chen, "Speechlessness, Clearness and Ease," 285 ("zwischen Täuschung und Wirklichkeit, zwischen Klängen und Geräuschen, zwischen realen und künstlichen Klangwelten").

266 See Mao, "Jianxi Zhongguo xinan diqu minzu yinyue sucai" and Yi, "National Cultural Memory in Late-Twentieth-Century East Asian Composition."

267 A starting point similar to Zhu's symphony is found in Tan Dun's *The Map* (2002) for violoncello, orchestra and video playback. The work juxtaposes video field recordings of minority music in Hunan Province with the cello soloist and the Western symphony orchestra. In the fifth movement *Feige*, for example, a girl from the Miao minority appears on the video and the cellist imitates her singing. To be sure, Tan Dun's concept, unlike Zhu's symphony, strives for a conflict-free complementation and an effective, virtuosic interaction and integration of opposites, which places the composer in the paradoxical double role of both keeper of local tradition and

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Example 3.24: Chen Xiaoyong, ***Speechlessness, Clearness and Ease****, mm. 32–39*

32

Di
Shg
Pipa
Ruan
Zhg.
Yq.
Erhu
Fl.
C.fg.
Trbn
I Perc. II
Pf.
Vl.
Vla
Vc.
Cb.

move the left finger along the string during the playing

tone → more air than tone → air

mute string with finger ca. 8 cm from the steg

ord. → s.p.

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D

♩ = 112

36

Di
Shg
Pipa
Ruan
Zhg.
Yq.
Erhu
Fl.
C.fg.
Trbn
Perc. I II
Pf.
Vl.
Vla
Vc.
Cb.

D. D. D. D. D. D.

tone → air

ca. 8 cm

ca. 10 cm or more

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*Example 3.25: Zhu Jian'er, **Sixth Symphony**, third movement, left: after rehearsal number 15; right: before rehearsal number 19; Tape I: upper system: song of the Yi girls; lower system: Naxi song (above: women, below: men)*

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74

Picc.
Fl.
3 Ob.
Cl. I II III
2 Fag. C-fag.
4 Cor. I II III IV
4 Tr. I II III IV
3 Trb. e Tuba
Timp.
Perc. I II III IV
T-tom
Paigu
Tape I
Vl. I
Vl. II
Vle
Vc. Cb.

Lunga
5''

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song of Yi minority girls[268] whose simple 6/8-metered singing is accompanied or answered in an imitative manner by the orchestra. Toward the end of the movement, however, we experience a considerable compression and complication of the structure. At the movement's turning point, the layer of Yi vocals is complemented by a recording of the well-known *Worere* song of the Naxi minority (also from South-Western China).[269] It is superimposed on the Yi girls' dance song, which has meanwhile been placed in 4/4 meter, and triggers an orchestral texture that rapidly increases in dynamics and density (Ex. 3.25, left). These recorded Naxi songs are usually sung at funerals, with the female voices mimicking the bleating of sheep while the part of the male voices consists of loud, rhythmically free exclamations.[270] The previously unambiguous metric structure collapses, and ultimately the recordings are crudely drowned out by a violent orchestral *tutti* (Ex. 3.25, right).

In the context of Zhu's symphonies, analogous to the Second and Fourth Symphonies (→ III.1), an interpretation in the sense of an oppressive force of the collective toward the individual or the minority is indeed obvious in this "anti-finale." The overall sound is stratified from the beginning: despite attempts at a careful structural incorporation of tape recordings and orchestral writing, the different sound qualities of orchestra and field recordings never really merge (this stratification is not only due to the poor sound quality of the recordings), with these two layers breaking apart in a moment of final crisis. The idyllic glorification of the alleged closeness to nature in the music of China's minorities has long been idealized among Han Chinese (especially among composers[271]). The "nationalist" aspirations of bringing minority music into a symphonic work, as in Ding Shande's prototypical *Long March Symphony* (→ III.1), are counteracted not only by the "artificiality" of the recordings, but also by the failure of the synthesis with the orchestra. Characteristically, some Chinese researchers largely overlook this musical-narratological collapse, interpreting the symphony as a "search for roots" and as an affirmative adherence to the ethnic character of cultural identity:

> The concepts in Zhu Jian'er's work are a necessary result of an awareness of the current deep crisis of people's culture. Precisely because Zhu senses the "loss" of traditional value systems and the metaphysical world, he wants all the more to seek the roots [*xungen*], to claim the identity of the traditional culture, and in doing so he especially emphasizes the national character [*minzuxing*] and the cultural heritage. As an outstanding representative of Chinese symphonism, he is fundamentally guided by the mission to heighten national self-esteem all the more, the greater this general crisis of people's culture becomes.[272]

Such a visualization or making audible of cultural conflict through the heterogeneity of sound layers is often viewed with suspicion as taking a superficial approach to musical phenomena, while conversely, coherent musical surfaces are presumed to contain an "internal struc-

symphonic innovator. See Young, "The Voicing of the Voiceless in Tan Dun's *The Map*" and Yang, "Musical Phantasmagoria in the Globalized Age."

268 Rees, "China, §IV: Living traditions 5 (i) (a)."

269 Rees, *Echoes of History*.

270 See ibid., 59. The dance song is called *O ssei sseil* in the Naxi language and is also known as *Remeicuo*.

271 See Utz, *Neue Musik und Interkulturalität*, 352. The highly politicized context of Chinese music between 1949 and 1989 may have sustained the idea of the "purity" and nativeness of minority musics.

272 Mao, "Jianxi Zhongguo xinan diqu minzu yinyue," 28 (translation by the author).

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ture" that should guide the reception process.[273] It is obvious that this is an overly crude and, in many ways, questionable dichotomy. After all, there are probably two tendencies in almost every interculturally oriented musical concept: the desire for audible, comprehensible connecting threads, for elements that allow linking disparities as well as searching for the incompatible, incommensurable, different, for the residue that cannot be forced into synthesis. Perhaps Zhu's symphony is in some ways also a proof that – especially against the ambivalent background of nationalist tendencies in recent Chinese music – only a confrontation between heterogeneous, largely incommensurable elements can oppose the affirmative phrases of (national or artistic) unity, without having to abandon references to specific sounds from Chinese music.

New Korean Music: New Exemptions

In South Korea, in the late 1950s, after the turmoil of the Korean War and under the restrictions of an autocratic military government, the internationalization of musical life was only gradually beginning. In 1960 the western-trained composer Hoegap Chŏng (1923–2013) was commissioned by the Korean Air Force Orchestra to write a first concert for the Korean arched zither *kayagŭm* and orchestra. [274] This "Theme and Variations" (*Chujewa Pyŏnjugok*) for *kayagŭm* and orchestra (1960–61) largely resulted from the impetus of the then 24-year-old *kayagŭm* player Byungki Hwang (b. 1936), who performed the solo part and subsequently became a key figure in Korean new music history.[275] The following year, Hwang assisted the American composer Alan Hovhaness (1911–2000) in his remarkable Symphony no. 16 for *kayagŭm*, an ensemble of Korean instruments, and string orchestra (1962), as well as playing the solo part in the Seoul premiere. Hovhaness, who undertook extensive research trips to Asia from 1959 to 1963, had already encouraged young Japanese colleagues in Tokyo in 1960 to keep East Asian music away from the "violence and destruction" of Western music[276] and was now celebrating traditional Korean music in Korea as "the most expressive, sublime and free in the world."[277] In addition to Henry Cowell (→ II.4, II.5), the idealization of Asian music as an "antidote" to European influences was mainly spread by Dane Rudhyar (1895–1985) from France, who had lived in the USA since 1916 and had considerable influence on his composer colleagues.[278] In any case, such impulses were decisive for the young *kayagŭm* innovator Hwang, and he subsequently emerged with increasingly confident pieces for Korean instruments, developing the movement of *ch'angjak kugak* in analogy to contemporary tendencies in Japan ("Traditional Korean Contemporary Music," see *gendai hōgaku* → III.1).

During the same period, Isang Yun's life situation as a migrant (since 1956 in Europe, since 1957 in the Federal Republic of Germany) meant that he was much more directly confronted with Western tendencies. Yun had already gained recognition as a composer in his adopted home (→ III.4) when he was kidnapped by the South Korean secret service from Germany in 1967 and accused of acting as an agent, following a trip to North Korea in 1963 and his contacts with North Koreans in East Berlin. After torture and a life sentence, Yun was released under pres-

273 Utz, *Neue Musik und Interkulturalität*, 43–44, 58–62.

274 A detailed and updated historical overview on Korean new music can be found in Lee, "Korea."

275 See Killick, *Hwang Byungki*.

276 Quoted in Fukunaka, "Re-situating Japan's Post-War Musical Avant-Garde through Re-situating Cage," 192.

277 Hovhaness, "Korean Music is the Most Expressive, Sublime and Free in the World," 29.

278 See Ertan, *Dane Rudhyar* and Utz, "Klang als Energie in der Musik seit 1900."

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sure from the German and American public in 1969 and was able to return to Germany.[279] From 1973, Yun was actively involved in Korean exile organizations for the democratization of South Korea and Korean reunification, which also had an effect on his music. While he had previously oriented his work toward traditional Korean music and the latest European trends such as serial music and sound composition, the search for political statements from the mid-1970s led to a clear realignment of models of (late) Romantic tonal language and the force of orchestral sound. One may observe these tendencies in works such as *Exemplum in memoriam Kwangju* for large orchestra (1981), a memorial composition to the victims of the massacre committed by government troops in South Korean Kwangju in May 1980,[280] or in *Naui dang, naui minjokiyo* (My country, my people!) for soloists, choir, and large orchestra (1986–87), which Yun saw as an indictment of the persecution and oppression of South Korean dissidents. These two works in particular subsequently became welcome tools of propaganda against the South through multiple performances in North Korea from 1982 as part of the annual Isang Yun Music Festival,[281] sometimes with Yun present. Even though Yun certainly did not follow "socialist realism" in the narrower sense in these works, his stylistic "willingness to compromise" and in some cases his highly illustrative idiom made such instrumentalization considerably easier: "Yun [...] under-estimated the veracity of state policy."[282]

The specifically strained political situation in divided Korea increased the profound skepticism toward (neo-)nationalist tendencies in some of the outstanding compositional positions of (South) Korean music from the 1990s onward. In particular, this skepticism opposed composers such as Lee Geon-Yong (b. 1947) and Yoo Byung-Eun (b. 1952), leading members of the "Third Generation" (*Che Sam Sedae*), a composers' group founded in 1981. This group newly discovered traditional Korean music as source material for their affirmative patriotic style but still committed to a Western Romantic idiom. Political-historical topics in this context were often explicitly taken up. Lee's cantata *The Song of the Plain* (1994), written for the hundredth anniversary of the Tonghak peasant rebellion (Joseon period, 1894–95), quotes the famous children's song *Saeya, saeya, pahrang saeya* ("Bird, bird, blue bird"), which served as a secret identifying signal within the Tonghak movement (see also the section on Koo below and the section on Takahashi in III.4).[283] Similarly, Yoo Byung-Eun uses the "Song of May" in his orchestral work *Shinawi no. 5* (1989) to commemorate the victims of the Kwangju massacre. In these works, the incorporation of traditional elements was not least a critique of the fact that the manifestations of Korea's traditional culture as a whole had been largely isolated from current social processes and considered museum artefacts from the 1960s to the '80s. This implied that traditional genres and idioms were not conceived as obvious or "natural" resources for composing, and had to be appropriated by composers on the basis of often inadequate secondary sources.[284]

279 See the extensive documentation in Sparrer, *Ssi-ol. Almanach 2000/01 der Internationalen Isang Yun Gesellschaft*, 139–248.

280 See Yi, "National Cultural Memory in Late-Twentieth-Century East Asian Composition" and Heister, "Kollektivität und Körperlichkeit." The massacre was committed under General Chun Doo-Hwan, who came to power through a military coup d'etat in December 1979 following the assassination of dictator Park Chung-Hee on 26 October 1979.

281 Choi, "Zur Rezeption des Œuvres von Isang Yun in der Republik Korea," 162.

282 Howard, "Korean Tradition in Isang Yun's Composition Style," 98.

283 Already in 1958, Isang Yun had incorporated this melody in a related sense in his *Fünf Stücke für Klavier.* See Lim, "Identity Performance and Performing Identity," 213–214.

284 See Lee, "Reconsidering Traditional Vocal Practices in Contemporary Korean Music," 136–137.

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As in other cultural contexts, it was above all "multiculturally" competent performers, such as the singer Sin-Cha Hong (b. 1940), who nonetheless enabled substantial forms of intercultural hybrid-ity at an early stage.[285]

Sublation of Traditional Practice: Eun-Hye Kim, Jin-Hi Kim

An explicit focus on the idioms of traditional Korean music since the 1990s could refer to nuanced scholarly investigations and publications and, at the same time, increasingly rely on a circle of younger musicians of Korean instruments open to collaboration with composers. These musicians most notably came from the school of Byungki Hwang.[286]

Eun-Hye Kim's (b. 1956) composition *Kayagum* (2000) for soprano, 17-string *kayagŭm* and *changgo* (Korean hourglass drum) could hardly have been created without this context. Kim uses the vocal technique of the aristocratic genre *kagok* (sung by a soprano trained in European vocal technique) as well as two rhythmic models *changdan* from the well-known improvisation genre *sanjo*, where the patterns are further developed and varied in density and tempo as in the original *sanjo*, but in a complex way that is only possible through (Western) compositional and notational practice (Ex. 3.26).The composer, however, changes the rhythmic structure so much that only the basic character but not the shape of the *changdan* remains recognizable. For example, the strong accent at the beginning of a cycle (*hap changdan*) largely disappears in Kim's score, so that the sonic result has a high degree of idiomatic resemblance to *sanjo* and *kagok*, yet remains clearly recognizable as an independent compositional articulation. The precise and complex notation, which limits the dramatic emphasis of traditional *kagok* singing and draws more attention to structural detail compared to the improvised *sanjo*, also contributes to this feature of the music.

Kim's approach shows a focus on "fake traditions" that she shares with several composers of her generation. There is a demonstrative distancing from musical nationalism of any kind. At the same time, it remains unmistakable that we are dealing here with an intense examination of idioms that differ sharply from all facets of European music. Of course, it is only through compositional models from European modernism that one can reach a position from which the decades-old pitfalls of the discourse on "Koreanness"[287] can be avoided.

Musicians such as the *kayagŭm* soloist Ji-Young Yi[288] or the *taegŭm* (bamboo flute) soloist Jeong-Seung Kim have made a decisive contribution to shaping such a journey beyond polarizing extremes with the Contemporary Music Ensemble of Korea. The most renowned composer-performer in this field is the New York-based *kŏmun'go* (six-string arched zither) player Jin-Hi Kim (b. 1957). In contrast to the aforementioned composers, Kim has undergone extensive training in traditional Korean music and has made a basic principle of East Asian music – albeit in a specifically Korean accentuation – a "trademark" of her playing and composing: "Living Tones,"[289] the detailed design of melodic lines in traditional Korean/East Asian music through techniques summarized as *ssigimsae*:

285 See ibid., 143.

286 See especially Killick, *Hwang Byungki* and Han, *Interkulturalität in der neuen Musik Koreas*.

287 See, among others, Lee, "Korean Music Culture" and Howard, "Different Spheres: Perceptions of Traditional Music and Western Music in Korea."

288 Yi Ji-Young has proven her exceptional position not least through her systematic study *Contemporary Gayageum Notation for Composers*, Seoul 2011.

289 See above all Howard, *Creating Korean Music*, 143–147.

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*Example 3.26: Eun-Hye Kim, **Kayagum**, III, mm. 14–19*

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> My bi-cultural compositional concept "Living Tones" is based on a sense of timing which is different from Western music. "Living Tones" function best in a slow tempo where enough space is available to shape notes, which does not work well in a strict time frame, such as in Western classical music. Therefore, I do not compose pieces with bars; rather, I finish the whole piece without counting the beats and then I add bars to facilitate performance. The ensemble sound flows horizontally within a heterophonic melody in which each individual instrument creates its own nuances and specific articulation. All this is happening slowly and within a calm space. "Living Tones" need time to take shape. During the rehearsals of my pieces I recommend that the performers use the score, not the parts. Every performer should listen carefully to the other parts.[290]

Although Kim's concept has many essentialist traits and is in some ways reminiscent of the musical conceptualization of Korea by Isang Yun three decades earlier (→ III.4), and even though one of Kim's most important methods is the use of traditional Korean performance practice on European instruments – a concept explicitly criticized by other composers of the same generation such as Bonu Koo (see below) – her approach creates independent musical narratives that elude any form of stereotyping. The key work implementing Kim's "Living Tones" is her *Nong Rock* (1992) for *kŏmun'go* and string quartet, which was realized with the Kronos Quartet. The structures of the *kagok* genre in the first part (*Nong*, mm. 1–40) are transferred relatively precisely to the hybrid instrumentation (Ex. 3.27), where "Nong" refers to the characteristic vibrato *nonghyŏn* (vibrating or sliding by depressing the string with the left hand after plucking with the right hand). In the second section (*Rock*, mm. 41–129), this basic structure is developed

290 Kim, "Living Tones," 127–128.

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Example 3.27: Jin-Hi Kim, ***Nong Rock*** *for kŏmun'go and string quartet, I.* ***Nong****, mm. 1–5*

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into a more improvisational and energetic situation, with individual instruments, especially the *kŏmun'go*, now increasingly appearing as soloists. The starting point for the conception of this work were Kim's observations while she participated in a traditional *kagok* performance:

> In a *kagok* song the *kŏmun'go* is a leading instrument and accompanies the vocal line together with other instruments, such as the *se-piri* (double-reed instrument), *taegŭm* (horizontal bamboo flute), *tanso* (vertical bamboo flute), *haegŭm* (fiddle) and *changgo* (hour-glass shaped drum). When I played a *kagok* suite, I had the feeling that the instrumental ensemble and the singer sounded separately. The instrumental parts have their own characteristic and function beyond accompanying the voice, and I thought that it would be wonderful to listen to the instrumental ensemble without the singer. Also, at first I had difficulties in counting the beats, because the *kŏmun'go* somehow does not directly follow the singer's beats. However, once I had memorized both the rhythmic cycle and the vocal part, I was able to play with the singer. I also heard that the *changgo* drummer did not keep absolute tempo. He was following the singer, so that the overall time was very flexible. These experiences were an important motivation to compose *Nong Rock*.[291]

Not all types of *ssigimsae* are recorded in traditional music sources, and Kim's score can therefore be understood to some degree as the translation of an aural practice into a largely fixed form of notation. Naturally, a complementary aspect is even more significant: the performers are repeatedly called upon to listen to one another and to react in the course of the piece, and the imitation of the *kŏmun'go* techniques regularly extends the conventional string sounds.

The tendency to idiomatically "imitate" a traditionalism reduced to the supposedly "essential" is certainly most evident in Kim's approach. It may also be the distance from the home culture and its politically charged discussions, as in the case of some Chinese immigrant composers, that fosters such fundamental cultural essentialism – at the risk of simplification and stereotyping. Kim's performance experience and practice, however, convincingly counters such skepticism on stage. In addition, the example of Eun-Hye Kim shows that even in today's

291 Jin-Hi Kim, e-mail to the author, 8/1/2003.

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Korea, with sufficient skill and nuance, a “Korean” idiomaticism can be sublated (in the Hegelian dialectical sense) in new music without evoking any form of nationalist pathos.

Liberation from Culturalism: Bonu Koo, Kunsu Shim

The incorporation of Korean traditions into works of the “Third Generation,” which in part appears naïve when compared to later generations, was criticized in particular by Bonu Koo (b. 1958). Koo rejected a “cheap imitation” of Korean musical idioms and techniques, as he put it, and was equally skeptical of the (widespread) tendency toward timbral and technical imitation of Korean instruments by European instruments (or vice versa).[292] Koo, who studied with Erhard Karkoschka at the Stuttgart Academy of Music from 1984 to 1990 and worked at the Institute for Psychoacoustics and Electronic Music (IPEM) in Ghent in 1990, opposes such tendencies with a psychoacoustically informed structuralism that avoids culturally encoded musical vocabulary by concentrating on the acoustic properties of the sounds employed and their compositionally structured convergence and/or divergence. A vivid example of this is offered by his work *nah/fern* for *kayagŭm* and string trio (1998):

> What I then took as a point of departure for composing this work was *sound*. I tried to analyze and compare the quality of sound production by the *kayagŭm* and the Western strings. I found that a pizzicato of the strings and a plucked tone of the *kayagŭm* most differ in their release phase and therefore a muted tone (that has no or only a very short release) makes it possible to let them sound more alike. This was how I conceived the title “nah/fern” (close/far): it is possible to let the instruments come close to each other, but it is also possible for either side to retain its identity. Later in the piece this happens when the *kayagŭm* “emancipates” itself from the Western strings with the result of something like a “faked tradition.”[293]

The difference in the decay phase between the two instrument types is explored by Koo in a systematic, almost deterministic, manner at the beginning of the work (Ex. 3.28): the *kayagŭm* and the pizzicato plucked strings perform dyads from which individual notes are gradually prolonged, first almost imperceptibly by the *kayagŭm* (mm. 3–5) and then by the *kayagŭm* (mm. 7–9) and strings (cello m. 10, other strings from m. 11). Koo’s intention to erase the differences in the timbre of the two instrument types at the beginning is apparent, the “identities” of the instruments only gradually surfacing.

At a key point later in the work, as described by Koo, the *kayagŭm* abruptly falls into an idiomatic playing style, identifiable by the characteristic strong vibrato *nonghyŏn*, which evokes associations with the *shinawi* genre. At the same time, the three string instruments play an almost pitchless pizzicato, hinting at a percussion pattern in the style of the Korean hourglass drum *changgo*, so that a “fake tradition” can indeed be experienced for a few seconds (Ex. 3.29). Immediately after that, however, the *kayagŭm* reintroduces a kind of sonic “hide-and-seek” with the three strings in which the instruments tend to mask one another.

One might argue that coherence and dissociation meet here on a micro-level. What dominates is a rationalized, “psychoacoustic” approach (sound production and acoustic envelope, plucked vs. bowed notes, focus on single notes and minimal frequency deviations, etc.) that aims to avoid any “cultural” association. With this approach, Koo resolves the dilemma of trying to explore a musical position relevant to contemporary Korean society without making

292 Koo, “Beyond ‘Cheap Imitations,’” 134.

293 Ibid.

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Example 3.28: Bonu Koo, ***nah/fern*** *for kayagŭm (upper system) and string trio, mm. 1–14*

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Example 3.29: Bonu Koo, ***nah/fern*** *for kayagŭm (upper system) and string trio, mm. 154–160*

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use of an affirmative "traditionalism." The "illumination" of the traditional idiom is perhaps comparable to the role played by marches or folk songs in Gustav Mahler's symphonies, or to the German national anthem in Helmut Lachenmann's *Tanzsuite mit Deutschlandlied* (1979–80): the presence of the traditional material is perceived, on the one hand, as "foreign matter," as incompatible with the basic tone of the work, but, on the other hand, appears as a result of a consistently developed structural-narrative gesture.

A radicalized variant of this structuralist strategy is the conception of "synthesis by nothing," which may be described as a basis of John Cage's concept of musical interculturality (→ II.6).[294] On the basis of a sound-silence continuum, the attempt is made here to arrive at a hierarchy-free and "culture-free" form of music by turning to individual sounds and silences as basic elements – an attempt at liberation from conventional concepts of culture as a whole,

294 Utz, *Neue Musik und Interkulturalität*, 112, 115.

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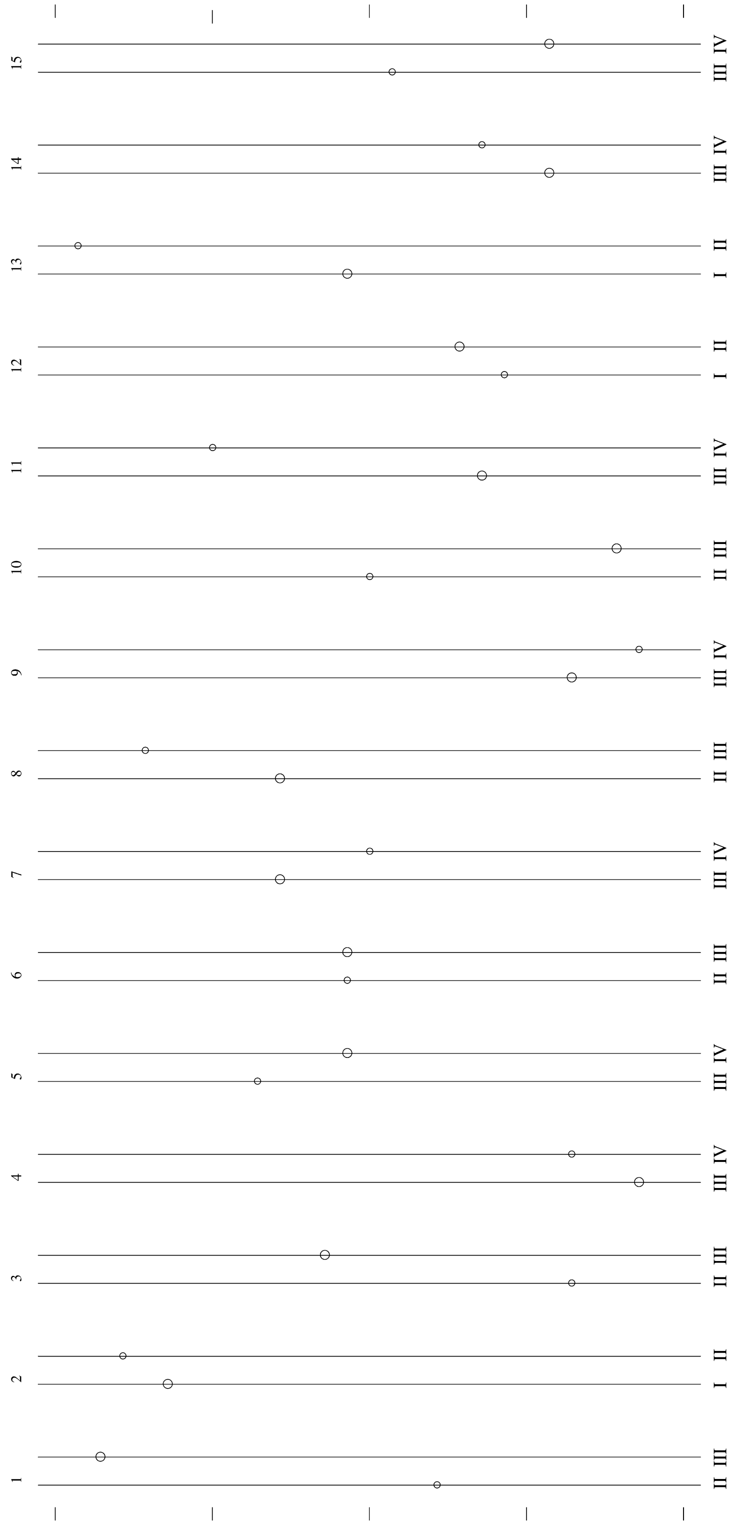
*Example 3.30: Kunsu Shim, **cello/hören** (I), excerpt*

cello/hören I

8" (2": 6")



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where "sounds are nothing but sounds." Undoubtedly, this project brings to the fore the paradoxes that are already apparent in structuralism, as they are only understandable in the light of specific tropes in North American cultural history of the twentieth century.[295] The massive implied skepticism toward culturally encoded musical idiomatics, however, has been influential for a great diversity of artistic approaches beyond the immediate American context.

The scores of Kunsu Shim (b. 1958) surely endorse this principle most rigorously. *Cello/hören* for solo cello (1997), for example, consists of two sets of 45 minimal actions on two cello strings, each lasting two seconds, followed by six seconds of silence (Ex. 3.30). The player adopts the attitude of a listener; their movements are reduced to the bare essentials and follow an intuitively understandable action notation. In his essay "Richtungslosigkeit oder Denken der unbegrenzten Gegenwart," Shim meanders from Gilles Deleuze to Laozi, from Marina Abramović to the Korean poet Chi-Ha Kim, from Friedrich Nietzsche to John Cage, to outline this presence-focused sound perception.[296]

Shim's *Luftrand* (2000) for string trio (Ex. 3.31), which is to be played "placidly, with inner warmth and lightness,"[297] consists, like most of the works of this period, of shorter sounds in both sections; sounds lasting three seconds each are followed by long silences (lasting for about six seconds in part A). After tuning down the strings by roughly an octave, part B introduces sound actions of flexible duration that the performers should carry out "with the idea that the sounds occur for themselves in a timeless space: one should hear them instead of playing them."[298] Again, the sound events are indicated through action notation, which also specifies fine nuances in the performers' movements.

The strict temporal isolation of sound events stems from Shim's view of the perception of music as analogous to a non-intentional listening to the acoustic environment of the natural world and everyday life. Silence, as the basis of sonority, is particularly important in this respect: it sharpens the perception of the smallest details and can contribute to the experience of the "things of life" beginning to speak. Prerequisites for this are patience, a willingness to play with one's memory and expectation, as well as a curiosity about an "in-between" time-space beyond everyday goal-directed thinking.[299]

Shim repeatedly refers to the traditional Asian, especially Japanese, theory of art. Among other sources, he quotes an anonymous short poem that also plays a prominent role in a standard text of 1930s nationalist Japanese aestheticism, Jun'ichiro Tanizaki's essay *In Praise of Shadows* (*In'ei Raisan*, 1933); Tanizaki quotes the poem in order to illustrate the fascination of the continuous changing of the elements in nature:

295 See ibid., 112–116.

296 See Shim, "Richtungslosigkeit oder Denken der unbegrenzten Gegenwart."

297 Shim, *Luftrand*, score, Edition EarPort 2000, 2 ("gelassen, mit innerer wärme und leichtigkeit").

298 Ibid., 1 ("mit der vorstellung, daß die klänge für sich selbst in einem zeitlosen raum auftauchen: man höre sie, anstatt sie zu spielen").

299 See Leliwa and Stahl, *leise, frei. der komponist kunsu shim.*

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Example 3.31: Kunsu Shim, ***Luftrand*** *for string trio, violin part, part A, no. 16–24*

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> the brushwood
> we gather – stack it together,
> it makes a hut;
> pull it apart,
> a field once more.[300]

To be sure, Shim does not stop at a naïve naturalism, but sees naturalness and artificiality as interdependent; even the idea of the "artificial" is to him, paradoxically, a basic precondition for imagining the natural.

Of course, such a continuum between sound and silence, derived from nature and sound ecology, is strongly oriented toward the legacy of the American avant-garde, as evidenced by Kunsu Shim's performances, which take up elements of Fluxus in a concentrated, ritualistic form. Shim's provocations of perception are constructively condensed with the utmost precision, and in their dramaturgy they pursue precisely conceived experimental arrangements. His works are aimed at a critical moment when the perceptual-narrative modes of hearing, waiting,

300 Tanizaki, *In Praise of Shadows*, 29–30. See Shim, "die kunst – verbunden und auflösen," 51 ("astwerk, / zusammengetragen und verbunden: / eine reisighütte. / aufgelöst: wie zuvor / wieder die wildnis." Shim quotes from the German edition Tanizaki, *Lob des Schattens*, 53–54).

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remembering, and forgetting all come into conflict with one another. His reference to Agnes Martin's structuralist constructivism,[301] which is endowed with extremely subtle subversive elements, describes an essential aspect of Shim's own concept of form. An archetype of his composition, as clearly demonstrated in *Sense of Measure* for four percussionists (1999), is found in a critical moment when the continuum of sounds and silences is abruptly interrupted by a very long pause at a certain point. After this pause, the continuum returns as a reminiscence of earlier material, but now suddenly new sound qualities "come to light." A central theme in Shim's music becomes particularly evident here: waiting and remembering.

Tendencies in Japanese Music Around the Millenium: Affirmation and Critique of the Essentialist Heritage

In Japan, too, the construction of an essentialist Japanese aesthetic, prominently elaborated, for example, in Tōru Takemitsu's middle period, influenced many Japanese composers, sometimes lacking critical (self-) reflection on this essentialism and the associated culturalist polarization (→ III.4). Takemitsu himself thought deeply about this problem, but after a series of works with Japanese instruments between 1966 and 1973, finally became more and more involved in a tonally or modally oriented idiom, which suggested an institutional gravity of a Western-dominated international music business and discourse – the framework in which Takemitsu's works increasingly appeared (in and outside Japan).[302]

It is obvious that new Japanese music from the 1960s to the 80s cannot be reduced to a simplistic culturalist essentialism with national or nationalist resonances. Starting with Mayuzumi, a considerable number of Japanese composers have aimed at a transnational (or pan-) Asian idiom, with sources adopted from Southeast Asian musics (Akira Nishimura, Minoru Miki, Yūji Takahashi), while others have turned to particular variants of minimalism (Jō Kondō, Somei Satoh, Mamoru Fujieda). The internationalization of Japanese music was considerably promoted by transnational performance and ensemble activities that involved composers such as Maki Ishii (1936–2003) or Makoto Shinohara (b. 1931) from the 1960s and 70s onwards. It is also evident that since the 1980s and 90s, younger composers in particular increasingly no longer felt a need to face any issues of "Japaneseness" or employ material from traditional music – a kind of international "normalization" (if not standardization) that can be considered a broader characteristic of younger generations, and was discussed already in Chapter I (→ I.2).

Nevertheless, it should be noted that in Japan, since the beginning of the 1990s, a number of composers have still been very active in facing the challenges of the tension between European and Asian music cultures. The range of possibilities to act within this discourse cannot be addressed at adequate length here, and will instead be outlined in a brief comparison between the approaches of Toshio Hosokawa (b. 1955, → IV.1) and Yūji Takahashi (b. 1938, → III.4), whose work is discussed more comprehensively in other chapters of this book. The approaches of Hosokawa and Takahashi appear as two incompatible approaches to intercultural composition, yet in the sounding materiality of their works may not ultimately differ as dramatically as this conceptual divergence might suggest.

In a work representative of Hosokawa's music, such as *Landscape V* (1993) for *shō* and string quartet (→ IV.1), one can easily make out the essential characteristics of his composing that tend

301 See Shim, "die kunst – verbunden und auflösen."

302 Utz, *Neue Musik und Interkulturalität*, 282–306.

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Example 3.32: Toshio Hosokawa, ***Koto-Uta*** *for singer and* ***koto****, rehearsal number 4*

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to solidify into a "style": the slightly roughened sound surface, for example, is composed with the concept of *sawari* in mind, which Takemitsu already singled out as a particularly cogent element of traditional Japanese music aesthetics,[303] and which can be experienced in the buzzing sounds of the *shamisen* or *biwa*; at the same time, Hosokawa's sound fields recall the sustained *aitake* chords of the *shō* in *gagaku* (→ IV.1). Sharp "vertical" accents are cut into this smooth surface, analogously to the beats of the ōtsuzumi drum in *nō* theater, in which the *ma*, that is, the gap between silence and sound, materializes clearly before the beat.[304] *Ma* exists, as it were, in the space between the hands and the drum surface. In short, therefore, Hosokawa aims to convey an abstraction of principles from different Japanese genres with the implicit claim of conveying a "core" of Japanese aesthetics.

In doing so, Hosokawa's works reveal a concept of time that is clearly derived from Japanese traditional music, involving much "blank" space between sound events, be they in the form of static textures, as in *Landscape V*, or complete silence. In his works for Japanese instruments in particular, this results partly in an overt idiomatic proximity to traditional Japanese genres, which is reinforced through collaboration with Japanese performers. In *Koto-Uta* (1999) for voice and *koto*, for example, Hosokawa explicitly refers to the traditional *koto-kumiuta* (vocal suites with *koto* accompaniment) and tries to imitate their gestures, such as a heterophony be-

303 Takemitsu, "My Perception of Time." See Miyamoto, *Klang im Osten*, 131–132, Burt, *The Music of Tōru Takemitsu*, 238–240, Utz, *Neue Musik und Interkulturalität*, 288–292, and Nuss, "Hearing 'Japanese,' hearing Takemitsu."

304 See Hosokawa's discussion of *ma* quoted in Utz, *Neue Musik und Interkulturalität*, 313–314.

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tween voice and instrument as well as a loosely bound musical form (Ex. 3.32) that the composer compares to a walk in a Japanese garden, picking up another metaphor favored by Takemitsu.[305]

It is striking in Hosokawa's conception how he synthesizes Japanese thinking and contemporary Western aesthetics of composition so easily and without conflict. By contrast, Yūji Takahashi's music, which, as shown in Chapter III.4, has also frequently featured Japanese instruments since the late 1980s, develops more critical and "unruly" methods in order to fundamentally oppose both the essentialist Japanese discourse and the standardizing Western discourse. In his works for reconstructed archaic instruments and for *shamisen*, for example, Takahashi has recreated an imaginary performance practice or imaginary genres by going back to elemental performance movements and instrumental practices (→ III.4; IV.1).[306] In another concept, he has "overlaid" original traditional music, such as the *shamisen* and vocal parts of Yamada Kengyō's (1757–1817) classic *Nasuno* (written around 1800) in *Nasuno kasane* (*Nasuno* overlaid, 1997) for *shamisen*/voice, violin, and piano, which is based on *Nasuno ryōjō* (*Nasuno* surrounded, 1992) for *shamisen*/voice and computer. Takahashi adds extensions, irritations, and inserts around Yamada's original *shamisen* and vocal lines, and creates a dense simultaneity full of unexpected interrelations (Ex. 3.33). In the instrumental version, the computer part is transcribed for violin and piano. The piano and violin parts are sometimes connected to the original layer, but also proceed independently at times. Wave-like emergence and retreat create a wider perspective on the original, simultaneously expressing closeness and distance.

As discussed earlier, the conceptualization of one's own cultural difference and uniqueness, including gross exaggeration and self-exoticization, has a long tradition in Japan,[307] and seems inextricably linked to the speed and perfection in the appropriation and consolidation of Western models of civilization in Japanese society since the Meiji restoration of 1868 (→ I.2, III.1).[308] Japanese composers were often receptive to these conceptualizations of Japanese culture, so much so that many developed a great interest in Tsunoda Tadanobu's abstruse pseudo-physiological theory of a supposedly "Japanese brain" that would be more receptive to noise-suffused sounds, as represented by the *shamisen*'s or *biwa*'s *sawari* timbre.[309] In Japanese modernity, orthodox Japanese aesthetics, with the key concepts of *ma*, *sawari*, *sabi*, or *yugen*, were frequently employed by cultural figures (as in the case of Toshirō Mayuzumi, → II.5) for right-wing nationalist political purposes. Takahashi, in contrast, was strongly committed to the left during the 1970s and 80s. As a consequence, he increasingly made social communication the subject of his composing, and developed a fundamental compositional critique of this new Japanese culturalism (→ III.4). Against this background, we can sense that the way in which Japanese composers contributed to the history and techniques of intercultural composition cannot be reduced to simplistic forms of appropriation, but is rather entangled in a web of cross-relations with political and cultural tropes within and beyond discourses on "Japaneseness."

305 Hosokawa, "*Koto-uta*." See particularly Takemitsu, "Dream and Number."

306 See Takahashi, "Two Statements on Music."

307 See, among others, Hijiya-Kirschnereit, *Das Ende der Exotik*, 13–16.

308 See Shimada, *Grenzgänge – Fremdgänge*.

309 Tsunoda, *The Japanese Brain*. See Nuss, "Hearing 'Japanese,' hearing Takemitsu."

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Example 3.33: Yūji Takahashi, ***Nasuno kasane****, excerpt*

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Conclusion: The Limitations of Musical Narrative in an Intercultural Context

The models of intercultural musical narrativity derived from the analytical snapshots discussed here seem generally plausible at the level of the musical "foreground": we hear "gestural types,"[310] which are combined to form a chain of (pseudo-)causalities and thus narrative threads in an intercultural field of tension: tone color fusion or divergence, balanced dialogues or independent monologues, harmonization, conflict, or even aggression between the instrumental or sound groups are comprehensible, and are extrapolated to more general cultural dimensions, often due to a bi- or multi-cultural instrumentation. We derive these mean-

310 See Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures* and Gritten and King, *Music and Gesture.*

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ings above all from our "extra-opus" experiences with comparable gestural types in other works of Western or Asian music. The extent to which these meanings have to be conveyed or "translated" can hardly be answered in general terms. In our examples, the composers seem to want to ensure that the "gestural" narrative threads that are spun remain largely unequivocal. Yet the objection could be formulated that the semanticizations of musical material through structural abstraction and condensation (Qin Wenchen, Bonu Koo, Eun-Hye Kim), montage (Tan Dun, Zhu Jian'er, Yūji Takahashi), sound-silence enactment (Kunsu Shim, Toshio Hosokawa), or sound-noise boundaries (Chen Xiaoyong) cannot be called interculturally "narrative" to the same extent as purely gestural levels. This is countered by the cognitive principle that listening to music tends to correlate heterogeneous signals in an act of synthesis rather than recognizing a fundamental difference between them. This cognitive reasoning can also be extended to the question of aural-cultural hierarchies: a listening process without the formation of hierarchies between weaker and stronger "signals" is almost unthinkable, a phenomenon that the psychology of music classifies as "salience." While attempts to question cultural hierarchies in most of the works discussed here may be successful at first glance, this cannot prevent the new work, its key events, and its arrangement of sound elements from building new hierarchical environments that obscure the narrative threads of cultural identities to a considerable extent. This raises the question of whether harmonic, tonal, and rhythmic models, which refer to certain listening and intellectual traditions – such as contemporary, classical, traditional or popular Chinese/Korean/Japanese or Western music – do not, in turn, tend to establish new hierarchical discourses of power and exclusion (→ V.3, VI.4).

6. The Impact of Traditional Music on Composition in Taiwan since the Postwar Period

The General Conditions of Contemporary Music in Taiwan and the Implications of its Historical Development since 1950

During the frequently cited "Taiwan Miracle" of the 1970s (called "Ilha Formosa" by Portuguese seafarers in 1583[311] and shaped by a changeable history since then) a huge wave of Westernization hit Taiwan. In light of the previous modernization during Japanese colonial rule (1895–1945) and under the Western-oriented *Guomindang* (*Kuomintang*; Chinese National Party; KMT) since 1945, this "miracle" is mostly described today as a simple consequence of a state-controlled economic infrastructure.[312] Although there was serious conflict after 1945 between new "immigrants" from mainland China and "Taiwanese" (Han Chinese living in Taiwan before 1945 and their descendants) as well as the aboriginal peoples, the pro-Western attitude of the government was never seriously questioned in Taiwan, and was consolidated by Cold War politics in sharp contrast to the mainland's isolationism during the 1960s and early 1970s. As a result, American (pop) culture has been especially influential since the beginning of the postwar pe-

311 Weggel, *Die Geschichte Taiwans*, 5.

312 General representations of Taiwan's history are provided by Weggel, *Die Geschichte Taiwans* and Rubinstein, *Taiwan: A New History*.

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