

MA SI-CONG'S VIOLIN CONCERTO IN F MAJOR: WESTERN TRADITIONS AND
CHINESE ELEMENTS

BY

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To my beloved parents Fu-Min Wang, and Hong-Li Tang, who supported me in each and every step in my life; they work tirelessly and have made everything possible for me to be where I am and who I am today.

In Loving Memory of

My Dear Father

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Chapter 1: Biography

1.1 Introduction

In 1966, a high profile Chinese classical musician named Ma Si-Cong fled to the United States because of the Cultural Revolution. Ma lived in Philadelphia for more than two decades, yet few in the Western world know about him and his music today. In fact, Ma Si-Cong's name has also fallen out of favor in his home country. Although Ma used to be a significant figure in contemporary Chinese music history, his reputation in China gradually disappeared after his escape to the United States. Since the outbreak of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, Ma's name has only been familiar among conservatory teachers and string players who learned his few well-known compositions in China.

As one of the cornerstones of twentieth-century classical music in China, Ma's musical contributions helped build the foundation of Chinese classical music. At the turn of the twentieth century, imperial China came to an end, and the whole nation was experiencing a lot of social reconstruction as Western culture started to have an influence on modern China. Ma was among the first generation of musicians to bring back Western music to China. He was a pioneer in the creation of a new musical realm where Western musical elements and Eastern art forms came together. It is difficult to categorize Ma's musical contribution into one or two specific areas because he was able to impact a wide variety of areas in relation to music. Among other things, he laid the foundation for music education, created musical compositions with Chinese elements, and established classical music in Chinese society. A concert violinist himself, Ma also contributed significantly to the development of violin repertoire, pedagogy, performance, and orchestral performances in China.

Li Lanqing,¹ former Vice-Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, praised Ma in his book of *Biographies & Notes: Chinese Music 20th Century & Beyond*:

Ma Sicong represents a milestone in Chinese violin music. He led the composition and performance of Chinese violin music onto a road of healthy development, and single-handedly earned Chinese music the reputation it deserves in the world arena. In the hearts of music lovers in this nation, his name is synonymous to violin music, but what he did to Chinese music went far beyond. His contributions to musical composition in different genres, professional music education, and the construction of first-rate music institutions were phenomenal and peculiarly his own, and are still having a deeply positive impact on the development of modern Chinese music.²

Even though Li is not a professional musician, he clearly considers Ma a significant musical force. This suggests that even non-musicians value the contributions of Ma to Chinese music. Unfortunately, Ma's significant contributions to the development of Chinese classical music were underappreciated and gradually forgotten. The reason is closely related to political issues at the time and will be mentioned briefly to give a context for Ma's life. However, this document as a whole will not emphasize political issues, for it is ultimately the music itself with which I am most concerned. To help the readers, especially for people who have limited knowledge both of Ma and of modern Chinese history, I have provided a rough timeline of events in China during Ma's lifetime.³

The main intention of this document is to introduce Ma Si-Cong to audiences in the West unfamiliar with his work, and to facilitate understanding of his musical style, particularly as it

¹ Li Lanqing, 李岚清 is a senior Chinese official who has held many prominent official positions within the Chinese government, including Member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, First Vice-Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, and Minister of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade.

² Lanqing Li, *Biographies & Notes: Chinese Music 20th century & Beyond*, trans. Ling Yuan (Singapore: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Publishing Co., Ltd and Cengage Learning Asia Pte Ltd, 2012), 335.

³ Timeline table on pg. 16 explain Ma's life and Chinese social events.

relates to the Violin Concerto in F Major. In bringing Ma to the attention of Western musicians, I hope to provide a better understanding of the development of twentieth-century Chinese classical music.

1.2 Overview of Ma's Life

Ma Si-Cong (Ma Siton, Ma Sicong, Ma Szu-Ts'ung) was born on May 7th, 1912 in Haifeng, Guangdong province, and died on May 20th, 1987 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Ma was raised in an upper-class, open-minded family. His father, Ma Yuhang, was a highly educated intellectual and was one of the few who passed the imperial examinations at the county level in the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). Ma Yuhang later became head of the Guangdong provincial financial department. Ma Sicong's mother, Huang Chuliang, was also a learned person and particularly enjoyed Guangdong folk music.⁴ Ma's parents were very supportive and open-minded about their children's education. Ma and his brothers all had rare opportunities to study abroad. It would seem that Ma derived a great deal from his intellectually, politically and socially active family, who had strong ties to music, even though no one in his family was a professional musician.

In *Ma Si-Cong Nian Pu*, author Jing-Wei Zhang describes some of Ma's early childhood musical influences: he first heard music from the record player at his grandfather's house, he loved to listen to his mother sing folk songs, and he also loved to watch the local musical shows.⁵ Ma grew up surrounded by music from the West and from his neighborhood. In *Biography & Notes: Chinese Music 20th century & Beyond*, Li Lanqing explains that Ma learned to play the organ from a close relative of his family; he also enjoyed the local opera very much. In 1921, his

⁴Li, *Biographies & Notes*, 334.

⁵ Jingwei Zhang, *Ma Si-Cong Nian Pu 1912-1987* (Beijing: China federation of literary & art circles publishing corp., 2004), 3.

father sent him away to the Pui Ching School (predecessor of the Guangdong Peizheng College) in Guangzhou. While attending Pui Ching School, both Western and Chinese music were part of his education. He also learned to play the mouth organ and the yueqin, a four stringed plucked instrument with a moon-shaped sound box.⁶ This was a diverse musical childhood indeed.

The diversity of culture that Ma experienced as a child was a result of an unusual social event that occurred in China at the beginning of the twentieth century. It was the ending point of imperial China, and social structures changed dramatically over that period of time. China was looking to Western society as a model for a new start for the ancient country. As the result of these social changes, the Chinese people had more chances to encounter arts and music from the West. A small but significant portion of the population even became professional Classical musicians. Liang Mingyue, states in his book *Music of the Billion*:

The introduction of democratic ideals leading to the establishment of the Republic of China initiated the first stage of Westernization in China. With it came brass buttoned uniforms, ties, and hats, ballroom dancing, wide-scale public education, Western-styled music conservatories and universities, all new and fresh to the Chinese scene. Talented musicians were going abroad to Japan, Europe and the United States for Western music education.⁷

Ma found his calling in Western music when he held his first violin, a gift from his brother from France, at age eleven. He decided to pursue a professional study of the violin and left home for France with his brother later that same year (1923).

Ma's childhood musical education in both Chinese and classical instruments gave Ma a rich understanding of music which cultivated his musical ideas throughout his life. As a member

⁶ Li, *Biographies & Notes*, 335.

⁷ Mingyue Liang, *The republic Period" Music of the Billion* (Wilhelmshaven: Heinrichshofen's Press, 1985), 136.

of a pivotal generation across the arts and sciences, he brought to China certain Western ideas which allowed their transformation into the twentieth century.

Musical Studies in France

Although Ma had a relatively late start on the violin, he advanced at a great speed. He became a student at the Conservatoire de Paris only six years after he began. He also participated and excelled in many competitions where his musical talent was affirmed by Western standards. While learning how to play the violin, he also developed an interest in music composition. Li Lanqing recalls Ma's apprenticeship in France:

He had four violin tutors in the first six months of his days in France. In 1925, he continued his violin lessons in the Music Conservatory of Nancy, an affiliate to the Conservatoirei [SIC] de Paris. In summer 1926, he met through a friend, his fifth violin teacher, Paul Oberdoerffer, a famed violinist with the Opera national de Paris. Under Oberdoerffer's coaching, Ma came a long way in his violin performing art. In 1928, he was enrolled in the Conservatoire de Paris, where he attended Professor Bouchewrif's violin class and he began dabbling in music composition and, drawing inspirations from the vision and imagery of classical Chinese poetry came up with his maiden work, *Seven Ancient Poems (1929)*.⁸

Ma's interest in composing began in the summer of 1927, after careful study of many masterworks. He felt a special connection to Debussy's music, which is best described in Ma's own words: Debussy was the composer I praised the most at that time. I collected all his compositions, and played them on the piano slowly. Therefore I could appreciate the magical harmony, the atonality, the modulations, and some Oriental melodies.⁹ Debussy became a strong

⁸ Li, *Biographies & Notes*, 335.

⁹ Zhang Jingwei. "Ma Si Cong Nian Pu 1912-1987". China federation of literary & art circles publishing corp. Beijing, 2004: 10

inspiration for Ma, and this inspiration is reflected in many aspects of his compositions, especially the early ones.

In 1929, Ma returned to China because of financial reasons. In 1931, he traveled on a Chinese government grant back to France to resume his musical education. During these years in France, Ma was captivated by musical styles including those from Bach to Debussy to Stravinsky and his interest ranging from Baroque, Classical to French Impressionism and twentieth century contemporary music. At the same time, he tried to discover his own personality in music. The works of the great masters can easily overshadow a young composer's talents, and this is especially true for composers who come from a foreign land. To break through this barrier, Ma had to find elements that were unconventional and create something that Western ears would find different.

From 1931 to 1932, he received intensive training from Turkish composer Janko Binenbaum.¹⁰ Ma studied the composition, harmony, and counterpoint of the Western masters and practiced the fundamentals of classical music. Binenbaum was an important source of guidance in Ma's musical career and helped shape Ma's musicality. Li Lanqin recorded what Ma had to say about his composition teacher:

Ma later said of Binenbaum, [without his guidance] he [Ma] would have gone down the road to vanity and superficiality and wandered between immaturity and incompleteness... Binenbaum broadened Ma Sicong's

¹⁰ There is a lack of credited resource on this composer. From some websites that I have researched, here is the best description of Janko Binenbaum :“He was born on December 28, 1880 in Edirne, Ottoman Empire (formerly Adrianople, a village of European Turkey) and which is today Edirne, Turkey. Around the time of his birth there were about 15,000 Jewish people living in Edirne. This town is very close to the borders with Greece and Bulgaria (only several kilometers away).

He studied in Munich and worked as an opera conductor in Regensburg, Hamburg and Berlin. He composed an opera, a ballet, three symphonies, two overtures, two violin concertos, chamber works and many songs and choruses. He died on February 4, 1956 in Chevreuse (an area south of Paris), France.” Information is from: http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/Turkish_Jews/2008-07/1216094275

horizon from music to arts and philosophy, and told him that a composer could not do without knowledge and attainment in multiple fields of art. Ma not only bore his mentor's admonition in mind, but also passed it on to latecomers.¹¹

Binenbaum encouraged Ma to compose in his own voice. In Ma's case, this resulted in his experimentation with Chinese musical elements in his composition. Binenbaum taught Ma to "learn strictly, but create freely."¹²

During this time, Ma also studied ancient Chinese art and literature in addition to music. As a result, he composed his earliest work based on Chinese poetry. While in France, he was also fascinated by art that shared the same style as Debussy. He was interested in Jean-François Millet and Camille Corot's paintings, Paul Verlaine's poems, and Maurice Maeterlinck's prose.¹³ Upon returning to China, he studied folk music intensively and composed many musical pieces based on regional folk styles. He also drew inspiration from Chinese literature, both ancient and contemporary. Moreover, he worked with contemporary poets who wrote librettos for his choral compositions as shown in the work list in the appendix.

Ma's significance was praised by musicologist Jing Jiang in his article "The Influence of Traditional Chinese Music on Professional Instrumental Composition,"

The outstanding composers of this period are Jiang Wen-ye (1910-1983), Tan Xiao-lin (1911-1948), and Ma Si-Cong (1913-1987)...they began applying twentieth century western composing techniques in their compositions. Although small in number, these composers and their works are actually among the best in the history of Chinese professional composition.¹⁴

¹¹ Li, *Biographies & Notes*, 335-336.

¹² Zhang, *Ma Si Cong Nian Pu*, 21.

¹³ *Ibid*, 10.

¹⁴ Jing Jiang, "The Influence of Traditional Chinese Music on Professional Instrumental Composition." *Asian Music* Vol.22, No. 2, Views of Music in China Today (Spring-Summer, 1991): 85

Ma's musical talent and knowledge allowed him to create music in any form he wished, yet from the early stages of his career, he found his personal preference was working with Chinese elements.

Chinese Violin Virtuoso

In 1932, Ma returned to China from France. Solo recitals were scheduled across the nation and almost every concert was a sold-out event. Although China had seen some great violinists prior to Ma, he was among the first Chinese violinists to give recitals to the Chinese public, beginning in 1929. In the early twentieth century, many world-renowned violinists performed in China, including Fritz Kreisler, Jascha Heifetz, Jacques Thibaud, and Szymon Goldberg. They provided rare opportunities for the Chinese to encounter the beauty of this beloved Western instrument.¹⁵ However, it was Ma who brought violin music closer to the Chinese public.

Ma's live performances had both a direct and indirect impact on the Chinese public. Ma traveled to most of the cities in China to give live performances, even during war-time. Prior to this, many of these regions had never heard a Western instrument performed live. Through Ma's performances, traditional Western repertoires of violin were brought to life in China. Not only did the Chinese public benefit from the great music-making by Ma, they were also educated with violin music from Western traditions. A newspaper article printed in the South-China Morning Post in 1935 provided a sense of what it was like to attend one of Ma's concerts.

The programme was a good and interesting one, and of a nature displays all the facets of a violinist's equipment. A Bach Suite, from No.6, the 1st. Brahms Sonata in G, a

¹⁵ Shen Cheng: "The Characteristics of Violin Arts Developed in China" *Asian Social Science*, Vol.5 No. 12 (January 2009): 113-116

Mozart Concerto in D which was new to me, and finally Wieniavsky's Polonaise and the Hejre Kati 'show piece' of Hubay. Sitson Ma's playing all these works was so good and his interpretations so well in accord with what I feel these varied composers have intended, that there is nothing for the critic to do but to add his appreciation to the enthusiastic applause of the audience...¹⁶

The Chinese public clearly loved Ma's music making and it was of historic significance that China had produced an international-level violin virtuoso.

In addition to the traditional Western repertoire, Ma would sometimes play pieces that he composed during his recitals or concerts. These pieces included a lot of Chinese musical elements, which made this Western-style musical event more approachable to the Chinese people.

In another news report about Ma's recitals in 1935, the reporter said:

Apart from famous Western pieces, his repertoire consisted mostly of his own works of violin and chamber music. From the news dispatches of *Die Brucke*, *North-China Daily News*, *South China Morning Post*, *The China Mail*, *Weekly News* in 1935, we can get glimpses of his performances, characterized by in-depth interpretations of the quintessence of his works, consummate techniques, infatuated audiences, and warm public responses.¹⁷

Through these performances, Ma established his status as an iconic musical figure in China. While still in his teens, Ma was considered the top violinist in the country and often was considered a child prodigy.¹⁸ Ma's performances, compatible to Western standards, set the level for Chinese professional violinists. The press and critics unanimously praised Ma's performances and the quality of Chinese classical music. In 1935, a Hong Kong English newspaper stated:

Sitson Ma is the strongest refutation to the assertion of those scoffers who declare that Chinese have no real

¹⁶ Zhang, *Ma Si Cong Nian Pu*, 3.

¹⁷ Li, *Biographies & Notes*, 337.

¹⁸ Zhang, *Ma Si Cong Nian Pu*, 5-7.

aptitude and appreciation for western music. Without exaggeration it may be said that his playing ranks him among the world's best, young as he still is and his enthusiasm for music knows no bound. Since his return to China, in spite of the fact that he has lacked the musical atmosphere which is to be found in the musical centers of Europe, he was worked assiduously with gratifying results.¹⁹

Ma's contributions to Chinese Music Institutions

Ma was a pioneer in the Chinese musical scene and many of Ma's musical accomplishments were considered the "firsts" in Chinese history. In 1929, Ma co-founded an orchestra in Guangzhou with Cheng Hong, another music scholar who studied in France. They formed and directed the first all-Chinese orchestra in China. Meanwhile, Ma also co-founded the Guangzhou Conservatory of Music and served as the president of the school.²⁰

In the early twentieth century, the music education program in China lagged far behind Western standards. After founding the music school, Ma was extremely involved in improving the quality of music education. He wanted to educate students at a level based on his experiences in the West. He held teaching positions for violin, music theory, ear training, and piano. In addition, he served as concertmaster and conductor of orchestras and choruses. By the time Ma reached his twentieth birthday, his dedication to building the foundation for Chinese music educational system was already tremendous. Aside from co-founding the private Guangzhou Conservatory, he also directed many other musical institutions and musical programs.

From 1937 to 1949, China was involved in the Second World War (Sino-Japanese War) and the Chinese Civil War. Ma's life and music were closely affected by the political issues in

¹⁹ Zhang, *Ma Si Cong Nian Pu*, 31.

²⁰ Kwang Yu, "Unknown master cello concerto by Ma Sitson" (DM diss, The Florida State University, 1995), 20.

China. Although Ma was not one of the soldiers fighting at the front lines, he served his country faithfully through his music.

During this time, Ma worked as a faculty member in many different universities due to the extreme shortage of highly qualified music teachers. He often moved because of his rapid shift of jobs and toured the nation for concerts. Often times, concerts were held at unusual places like soldiers' camps. Li also talked about Ma's contribution as a patriotic musician: "During the war, he performed wherever he was needed to boost morale in the war efforts, often performing without a decent venue or pay."²¹ Even at the most critical period of the war, Ma still taught as a professor at a university, maintained his solo career, and actively produced new compositions.

Compositions with More Folk Influences

Ma's musical life was greatly influenced by being exposed to cultures in different regions of China. Ma expanded his use of various genres and started utilizing more Chinese musical materials. For example, Ma composed an orchestral piece with tenor: *It Is Not Death, but Eternal Life* and the *Inner-Mongolian Suite* for violin and piano in 1937. Later in 1942, he also wrote *Tibet Tone Poem*, music to a Chinese play, as well as string quartets and symphonies.

Ma's increased incorporation of Chinese elements perhaps started as a result of his compositions requested by the government for propaganda and patriotic purposes. For instance, his compositions utilized regional music from Inner-Mongolia and Tibet, etc... Nevertheless, Ma gradually took creative steps to combine different forms of Chinese music, literature, and arts with Western music. As a result, Ma's distinct voice became stronger. The slow movement of the *Inner-Mongolian Suite*, "Nostalgia," became such a beloved tune that millions of people know it by heart even to this day.

²¹ Li, *Biographies & Notes*, 337.

The Violin Concerto in F Major is one of the many compositions during this period in which Ma used Chinese musical elements in Western forms. Although the title itself suggests a typical classical genre, each movement is heavily influenced by Chinese music, and the spirit of this concerto is to bring hope to people during the time of war. These unusual features of the concerto will be discussed in detail in the subsequent chapters of this document.

Before Ma was appointed head of the Central Conservatory in 1950, he served diligently in a series of teaching and administrative appointments at Chinese conservatories and universities.²² After the victory of the Sino-Japanese War in 1949, China was established as a new nation. One year later, Ma was appointed to a prestigious position as the first president of the Central Conservatory of China. His appointment to this position between 1949 and 1966 enabled him to educate the best talents in China, perfect his violin teaching methods, spread classical music throughout the nation, and serve as a musical ambassador to bring Chinese classical music onto the international stage. The new nation of China benefitted tremendously from Ma's enthusiasm and passion towards music, teaching, and his country.²³

Appreciation of classical music in China grew rapidly during the first half of the twentieth century. The state started encouraging a market for classical musicians. Ma was often commissioned by the government to compose for patriotic events or concerts during the war and continued to do so throughout his years as the president of the Central Conservatory of China.

The Outbreak of Cultural Revolution

In 1966, during his tenure as the president of the Central Conservatory of China, Ma's life took an unpleasant turn with the outbreak of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. This document

²² Jonathan P.J. Stock. "Ma Sicong." *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*.
<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/49315> (accessed October 22, 2013).

²³ Li, *Biographies & Notes*, 342.

is not the place for a full discussion of the Cultural Revolution and its implications. Some understanding of these circumstances is necessary, however, because of the profound impact this event had on Ma's life and career. Regardless of what Ma had offered to his home country, he was considered a criminal because of his high profile position and affiliation with Western culture. In June of 1966, Ma and his family, like many intellectuals in China, became targets and victims of the revolution, and they were heavily persecuted. It was a devastating time for Ma and his family.²⁴ All of Ma's property was confiscated, including his violin, and his whole family had no place to go. In addition, Ma's music was banned in his homeland. The intensity of the persecution increased. In 1967, Ma and his family escaped to the United States for survival.

There are many books, autobiographies, and articles written by Ma himself describing the horrors that he and his family had to go through during the time of his persecution. These sources show the emotional torture of an innocent man who loved music and his country, yet was betrayed by his own people.²⁵

Unfortunately, Western classical music took a turn for the worse in China, and Ma experienced unexpected difficulties. It was a dark time in China for the arts and music influenced by Western culture. As Liang stated, "during the ten years of the Cultural Revolution from 1966-1976, many of the former traditional and westernized music activities, and also the religious music activities...were censored. ... Music and the other performing arts were considered to be solely used as expressions for indoctrinating the ideology of proletarian dictatorship and advocating class struggle."²⁶ During this period, Ma hardly composed, and any kind of music-

²⁴ Sitson Ma, "Terror at the Hand of the Red Guard," *Life*, June 1978, 27-29.

²⁵ Partial list of books written by Ma, sicong reflecting on his own life : Ma sicong's accusation 馬思聰的控訴 1972, Ma Ssu-tung Reaches Freedom 馬思聰虎口餘生 1967, How I escaped from the bandits 我怎樣逃出匪區 1967

²⁶ Liang, *Music of the Billion*, 157.

making that had any relation to the West was forbidden. As mentioned earlier, Ma used his music as a service to China, and his compositional style changed according to the needs of the public. Even though the content of his music was patriotic, Ma still suffered political discrimination. Ma and his family were severely persecuted as a result of his profession.

A Musical Foreigner in America

During the winter of 1967, Ma and his family fled through Hong Kong and then to the United States on an illegal boat. After arriving in the U.S., he had to declare his political refugee status in a news conference. In China, his escape became a high profile investigation. Ma was charged as a “counter revolutionary” and a “traitor”. As a result, Ma’s name and his music were banned. Tragically, many of Ma’s direct relatives and close friends were arrested, persecuted, and even killed because of Ma’s escape.²⁷

In America, Ma spent his last two decades living a quiet life in Virginia and Philadelphia. Nonetheless, Ma remained very active musically. Aside from composing and writing books, he continued to perform for Taiwanese and American audiences. Ma traveled to Taiwan many times to give concerts and master classes and to publish books and compositions. He made his debut recital at Lincoln Center in New York in the 1970s and performed many concerts on other occasions in the States.

Ma never had the chance to go back to his homeland after his escape. His last years in America were years of relative isolation, lacking the professional and public recognition of his earlier years. The content of his composition changed and became more reflective and personal. He spent a large amount of time improving his violin technique, studying scores, and challenging

²⁷ Yu, “*Unknown master cello concerto*”, 36.

himself to compose in new genres. Although he gave recitals in the U.S. and Taiwan, Ma was mostly engaged in private activities rather than public ones. For example, the Double Violin Concerto was originally written for Ma and his son. Ma also worked on an opera, *Re Bi Ya*, with his daughter as the librettist.

In 1987, Ma had a heart attack while taking a walk after dinner. He died in the hospital soon after.

Ma	Year	China
Ma was born	1912	Qing dynasty collapsed, end of the Chinese monarchy. Sun Yatsan founded the Kuomintang and offered the Presidency to former head of the Qing armies, Yuan Shikai
	1913	Yuan Shikai dissolved the new government and exiled Sun Yatsan to form a new dynasty.
	1916	Yuan Shikai sudden death led China into civil war and Sun Yatsan and the KMT back in power
Ma went to boarding school in Guangzhou with his father, began his early childhood music education.	1921	Chinese Communist Party founded by Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and Li Dazhao, combined forces with KMT to fight regional warlords.
Ma received a violin as gift in the summer, left in the winter with his brother to study in France	1923	
Ma entered Nancy conservatory on violin	1925	
Ma injured his neck, while resting from violin, he started to study composition.	1927	CCP and KMT started to fight each other after successfully defeated the regional warlords together.
Ma entered Paris Conservatory into Boucherif's studio.	1928	
Ma returned to China due to financial issues, successful solo career in China began.	1929	
Second time study abroad in France on composition.	1931	
Ma returned to China, started music career in performing and teaching.	1932	Japan invaded Northern China
Ma left lecture position in Nanjing University and accepted professor position at Guangzhou Zhongshan University	1937	Sino-Japanese war began, KMT and CCP broken the united front and turned against each other.
Ma's father was assassinated	1939	World War II
	1945	Japan surrendered
	1949	Declaration of the foundation of the People's Republic of China
Central Conservatory of Music established, Ma was the first president of CCM	1950	
Ma and his family was persecuted, escaped to Hong Kong and Ma's mother died in Shanghai	1966	The Cultural Revolution
Ma and his family flee to U.S.	1967	
Debut recital in the U.S.	1969	
	1976	The chaos of the Cultural Revolution ends with the death of Mao.
Ma completed ballet "Wan Xia"	1978	Deng Xiaoping became the leader of CCP and China
Ma died of heart attack	1987	

Chapter 2: Style and Influences

2.1 Introduction

Chinese classical compositions such as Ma's were seen as an example of music that combined many influences. Major influences on Ma's works included Western Classical music, French impressionism (namely Debussy), Russian and Soviet artistic ideas, Chinese folk music,²⁸ and Chinese literature. Each of these influences left imprints in Ma's music at different stages of his life. The Violin Concerto in F major is an excellent example in which most of these influences can be found. My goal in this chapter is to discuss Ma's style and influences in detail before we move to the analysis and particulars of the Concerto.

2.2 Ma's Musical Style

Before analyzing Ma's musical style, I wish to examine the meaning of musical styles in general. According to Leonard Meyer in his book *Style and Music: Theory, History, and Ideology*:

Style is a replication of patterning, whether in human behavior or in the artifacts by human behavior, that results from a series of choices made within some set of constraints. An individual's style of speaking or writing, for instance, results in large part from lexical, grammatical, and syntactic choices made within the constraints of the language and dialect he has learned to use but does not himself create. And so it is in music, painting, and the other arts. More generally, few of the constraints that limit choice are newly invented or devised by those who employ them. Rather they are learned and adopted as part

²⁸ Chinese folk music includes a wide range of variety. There are more than 50 ethnical groups in the land of China. Ma worked with Cantonese musical material, and later he studied many other very distinctive ethnical music exclusively like Tibetan, Mongolian music and used in his compositions.

of the historical/cultural circumstances of individuals or groups.²⁹

Although music is not a spoken language, it is heavily rooted in it. Chinese music has reflected the Chinese language even from ancient days, thus it is natural that Ma's music reflects this language that he was most familiar with. According to John Hazedel Levis, Chinese music has a long tradition of placing emphasis on the melody, and to quote, "Chinese melody is more strongly related to language than is the case with any other melodic system..."³⁰ This relationship to language provided the groundwork for Ma's style.

Another point that Meyer makes about style is that people learn to adopt styles under different circumstances, and that their style is affected by their surroundings. In addition, people also make concise choices of what their style will include. Ma's musical style is strongly connected to his upbringing and the social events that took place during his lifetime. Some of the musical patterns he adopted originated from different places in which he lived, and some of these elements were associated with the circumstances of his life and career. More importantly, Ma chose to compose in the style he ultimately imagined.

2.3 Formative Years from 1923 -1935: Western Classical, French and Russian Influences

Ma's compositional style is built strongly on the education he received as a French-trained violinist and composer. China cultivated his intuition for his native music, and France helped him gain knowledge of Western traditions in music. In Ma's own words: "In studying the piano I began to appreciate Bach, Mozart, Liszt, and Chopin. I learned about French

²⁹ Leonard B. Meyer, *Style and music: theory, history and ideology*, (London: The University of Chicago Press, Ltd., 1996), 3.

³⁰ John Hazedel Levis, *Foundations of Chinese musical art*, (New York: Paragon book reprint Corp. 1963), 4.

contemporary composers such as Debussy, Ravel and Pierne, etc....”³¹ He particularly enjoyed studying late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century composers with Debussy’s treatment of harmony giving him great pleasure. The use of Eastern musical elements by Debussy is perhaps the reason that drew Ma closer to Debussy. Ma also enjoyed Russian composers, from the Russian Five to Stravinsky. They all inspired Ma’s creative process.

Western 18th Century Classical Influence

In Ma’s apprentice period, he composed mostly in traditional genres, such as string quartets, piano trios, and violin sonatas.³² Many of his early works incorporated styles from Western Classical composers. For example, the String Quartet No.1 (1938) reflected some similarities with Beethoven compositions. The rhythmic motif at the beginning of Ma’s first movement of String Quartet No.1 hints at the use of Beethoven’s style (see Figure 1).³³ Many of Beethoven’s compositions start with a motif instead of a melody. Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5 proved that the use of an awakening motif can be as effective as a conventional melody. Ma’s motif in the first movement of this string quartet also recalls the Beethovenian trait of using motivic material over the use of melodic themes in a composition.

³¹ Sitson Ma “Creative Experience,” *New Music* 5, November 1942, 1:3-4.

³² See the work list provided in appendix

³³ Most of the sources that I use dated this string quartet No.1 is composed in 1931, but the international published source dated this composition 1938. I choose this composition because it resembled some characters of Beethoven.

Figure 1 The motivic opening of Ma's string quartet No. 1, mvt. I, mm. 1-8.



One other example of Beethoven's use of motif is the first movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 95. The entire first movement is built on the initial short motif, and the movement is unconventionally short because there is no real second theme (although there is a second key area) before the development section. It is well known that the development sections in many of Beethoven's pieces (such as the *Eroica* Symphony) are lengthy because of the various ways Beethoven unfolds the motifs and because of the use of many key areas. In the first movement of Ma's String Quartet No.1, the main motif goes through a lot of different key areas with variety of modifications. An example is shown in Figure 2 below, in which Ma uses rhythmic transformation of the motif (augmented with modification). Beethoven and Ma both use the initial motif to expand the development section. Typically the music travels through many different keys. This technique is also used in the Violin Concerto in F major, which I will discuss in more detail in the next chapter.

Figure 2 The initial motif developed with rhythmic modification. String Quartet No. 1, mvt. I, mm. 17-24.



French Influence

Ma spent most of his late teenage years in France, which was like his second home. While Ma expressed an interest in French music as a whole, he particularly enjoyed Debussy. Ma collected his compositions and studied them in great detail on the piano, focusing specifically on the technique of harmony. As a result, some of the harmonic treatments in Ma's compositions possess a hint of French character.

While studying Ma's violin concerto, two similarities between the works of Ma and Debussy caught my attention: the harmonic color and timbre of the instrumentation. The sound of Debussy's harmony and Ma's harmony is similar in part because of their use of pentatonic scales and modes. Pentatonicism is a well-known feature of many of Debussy's compositions. These similarities are particularly interesting to observe, because they are reversed influence from French to Chinese. Debussy's music (as well as the music of other French composers) is strongly inspired by the sound of the East. Ma would often use pentatonic scale in a more "organic" way by using folk material that is already pentatonic. The opening theme from the

second movement of the Violin Concerto in F major, a pentatonic Cantonese folk tune, is a superb example of this.

Ma's music does not fall under the category of French impressionism, but there are moments in his music that recall impressionistic characteristics. Impressionistic music often includes unresolved harmonies, augmented intervals and creating color with special orchestrations. At times, impressionistic music can be described as lacking clear form, explicit structure and logical development.³⁴ Vagueness in form and structure can also be found in Ma's music as well as specific treatments of harmony and instrumentation.³⁵ However, there is a critical difference between the two composers: Debussy tries to imitate the sound of Eastern music using Western compositional techniques, whereas Ma tries to use Western traditions to bring Chinese music onto the international music scene. As Chinese music theorist Su Xia summarized in an article:

The technique Ma Sicong used in his compositions for orchestra basically follows the tradition of the Vienna classical-romantic school, a Chinese version of that tradition. But he also was deeply influenced by French impressionistic music in expression. It can be said that his application of harmony in its entirety is more affected by the Vienna school, but his specific applications are drawn more from the harmony of the French impressionist school.³⁶

The last sentence of this quotation has complex implications. Su Xia seems to suggest that Ma's structural tonal harmonies follow Germanic principles while some of the local, specific chords have a more French-influenced treatment of the harmony. For example, the second

³⁴ Jann Pasler. "Impressionism." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/50026> (accessed March 5, 2015).

³⁵ There will be a more detailed analysis of the French influences in the Violin Concerto in F Major in the next chapter.

³⁶ Xia Su, "The music of Ma Sicong," *Abstracts of articles from journals of the central conservatory of music*, (1980-1989): 22.

movement of the Violin Concerto in F major follows the typical aria form of rounded binary. During the B section, the harmonies are all pentatonic. In Figure 3, I have provided a musical example of a segment of the B section of the second movement to show that the harmonies in the accompaniment and the solo passages are all pentatonic.

Figure 3 Segment from Violin Concerto in F major, mvt. II, mm. 57-61.

The image displays a musical score for a segment of the Violin Concerto in F major, second movement, measures 57-61. The score is written for a full orchestra and a solo violin. The key signature is F major (one sharp, F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The instruments and parts shown are:

- Fl. (Flute): Measures 57-61, featuring a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes.
- Ob. (Oboe): Measures 57-61, mirroring the flute's melodic line.
- Solo (Violin): Measures 57-61, featuring a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, starting at measure 60.
- Vl. I (Violin I): Measures 57-61, playing a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.
- Vl. II (Violin II): Measures 57-61, playing a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.
- Vla. (Viola): Measures 57-61, playing a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.
- Vlc. (Violoncello): Measures 57-61, playing a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes, marked "pizz" (pizzicato).
- Cb. (Contrabass): Measures 57-61, playing a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes, marked "pizz" (pizzicato).

The score is written in a standard musical notation style, with measures 57-61 clearly marked. The solo violin part begins at measure 60, marked with a "p" (piano) dynamic. The orchestral accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the lower strings and a more complex melodic line in the upper strings.

Figure 4 Violin Concerto in F major, mvt. II, mm 1-8.

The musical score is for the second movement of a Violin Concerto in F major, measures 1-8. The tempo is Adagio (♩ = 80). The instrumentation includes Flauti, 2 Oboi, 2 Clarinetti in B \flat , 2 Fagotti, and 4 Corni in F 2 . The flute part is marked 'Solo' and begins with a 'p' dynamic. The woodwinds and strings provide harmonic support with various dynamics like 'pp' and 'p'. The score includes first and second endings for several instruments.

The timbre of Ma's orchestration also suggests an impressionistic influence. In the example given in Figure 4, the flute solo plays a leading role in the music and presents the melodic material first. The choice of the solo flute and the combination of the wind instrument sounds reminds us of Debussy's music. An example of this is Debussy's use of the flute solo to narrate the story in *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*.

Russian Culture Influence

I intend to suggest how two kinds of music impacted Ma's compositions: nineteenth-century Russian music and twentieth-century Soviet influence. These musical styles inspired Ma during different periods of his life. I have chosen to explain both Russian and Soviet influences together as they come from the same musical origin.

During Ma's compositional apprenticeship in France, he studied the music of many different styles, genres, composers, and national traditions. In his diary (1927), he specifically mentioned his study of Russian music:

I have encountered some Russian composers, especially Mussorgsky's work... and someone new, who has the most reputation at that time, Stravinsky is the center of the "new music". In Paris I have heard his *Rite of Spring*, I was madly joyful. All the new elements has attracted my attention, the "old" has already pass, what is the "old" anyway? The era of "old" has ended, Beethoven, Mozart, Schumann, Mendelssohn are all in the past. This era is ours; there is a big difference from the past.³⁷

Ma expressed great excitement about the new musical direction led by Stravinsky. Although Ma enjoyed the traditional musical styles, avant-garde musical ideas encouraged him to create something unconventional with the knowledge he gained.

Nineteenth-Century Russian Music

One important aspect of nineteenth-century Russian classical music was to use folk music as a primary source and as a means to establish Russian musical identity. Another noticeable characteristic is the special use of texture and orchestration. Russian romantic music usually possesses very strong melodic lines with an accompaniment-like texture, which is different from the typically complex German polyphonic texture. Although both national traditions used folk music, Russian compositions tended to emphasize the melody, resulting in simpler texture and harmony. This difference between Russian and German music is even more distinct in orchestral works. In general, when compared to German violin concertos, the orchestral texture of Ma's concerto and that of many Russian violin concertos is less symphonic.

³⁷ Jingwei Zhang, *Ma Si Cong Nian Pu 1912-1987* (Beijing: China federation of literary & art circles publishing corp., 2004), 10.

Ma also mentioned that he especially enjoyed Mussorgsky's music. Although it is unknown which pieces Ma may have studied, he must have agreed with and shared some of Mussorgsky's vision. The idea of using substantial folk tunes and village songs can also be seen in a large number of Ma's composition. It has been discussed that folk and Chinese elements became Ma's guiding principle.

While studying Ma's Violin Concerto in F major, a few compositional characteristics remind us of Russian romantic concertos. For instance, the introduction of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto in D major and Ma's Violin Concerto both start with the tutti violin playing an introductory theme, which only appears once in the very beginning (see Figures 5 and 6).

Figure 5 Introduction of the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto in D major, mvmt. I, mm.1-9.

Allegro moderato ♩ = 120

1. Flöte
2. Flöte
2 Oboen
Klarinetten in A
2 Fagotte
1 Hörner in F
II
IV
Trompeten in D
1 Posaune
Trommeln in A, D
Solo-Violine
1. Violine
2. Violine
Bratsche
Violoncell
Kontrabaß

Allegro moderato ♩ = 120

Figure 6 Introduction of Ma Violin Concerto in F major, mvt. I, mm.1-6.

The musical score is for the Introduction of Ma's Violin Concerto in F major, mvt. I, mm. 1-6. The tempo is marked "Allegro moderato 4=12". The key signature is one flat (F major). The score shows the first six measures. The woodwinds (Piccolo, 2 Flutes, 2 Oboes, 2 Clarinets in Bb, 2 Bassoons) and strings (4 Cornets in F, 1 Trombone in Eb, 3 Trombones and Tubas, Timpani, Kettles, Violino Solo) are all present. The strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The solo violin enters in measure 1 with a melodic line. Dynamics include piano (p) and mezzo-forte (mf).

The impact of Stravinsky on Ma is more difficult to determine, despite Ma highly valuing Stravinsky's music. I suggest that the influence of Stravinsky is more indirect—that Stravinsky's modernist musical ideas not only gave a different definition to classical music, but also led artists and musicians to reevaluate existing musical traditions. Stravinsky's influence certainly encouraged Ma to be a Chinese composer with a distinct musical mind, which is more a matter of aesthetic perspective than of specific musical or stylistic features.

Twentieth-Century Soviet State Influence

While nineteenth-century Russian music clearly left a mark in Ma's compositional technique, the twentieth-century Soviet state also helped form the style of Ma's compositions and his choice of genres. To enhance the political relationship between China and the Soviets, China was to follow the Soviet social model. Patriotism was strongly expected in all of the arts by the Communist State of both countries. Ma's list of compositions (provided in Appendix) shows that Ma composed many large choral works with patriotic lyrics (such as Motherland Cantata in 1947 and Spring Cantata in 1948), a popular genre used to serve the state.

As Liu Ching-Chih stated in *A Critical History of New Music in China*:

The May-Forth Movement assisted the birth of the Communist Party in China, and consequently all pure literature and art and academic debate now became political issues. As a result of the League of Left-wing Writers' slogan 'Literature for national defense,' the discussion of differencing viewpoints became more like opposition between political factions. Thus, under the conscious leadership of the Communists, literature and the arts, including music, gradually turned into tools of the Communist Party.³⁸

It seems that the purpose of Ma's music during the two decades 1930 to 1950 was to serve the needs of the government. Ma often used music from different ethnic groups in China to represent the unity of a country with diverse cultures. In the 1940s and 50s, Ma's music was influenced indirectly by the social ideas shared between the Soviet Union and the Chinese government.

³⁸ Ching-Chih Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China* (Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2010), 366.

2.4 Chinese Influences

Ma is the Leader of the First Generation

The compositions from Ma's early years were still apprentice pieces. Mastering the fundamentals appears to be the priority of these compositions. This means that Ma's works imitated models and used familiar patterns, forms, and genres. In general, the first generation of Western classical musicians in China, especially composers, was comprised of amateurs. The difference is noticeable in comparing musicians from the West during the same period. As Mingyue Liang explained in *Music of the Billion*,

Many of these early Western –music oriented composers, however, lacked knowledge in Chinese traditional music and as composers held non-affirming views on Chinese musical instruments. The early attempts at Westernizing or modernizing Chinese music were therefore mainly a superficial imitation of Western styles without traditional elements, a direction which has hindered Chinese music development even into the 1980's. The early modernizing efforts did not win popular support and rather than pursue a deepening knowledge of European music, Westernization led to a broad interest in Chinese folksongs...³⁹

Considering that Western music was completely foreign to first-generation Chinese classical composers, I personally think that the use of “superficial imitation” in Liang's statement is unfair. The best way to learn Western music was perhaps through imitation. Regardless, first-generation Chinese composers were the foundation of twentieth-century music in China. I agree though with Liang's comment that composers in China in the late twentieth century found a balance in creating Westernized music with a Chinese personality. Ma was the pioneer in returning to the rich Chinese traditions for intuitive inspiration decades before the 1980's.

³⁹ Mingyue Liang, *The Republic Period Music of the Billion* (Wilhelmshaven: Heinrichshofen's Press, 1985), 137.

In the 1920's, Ma started using Chinese ancient literature and folk songs as inspirations. Ma used folk melodies and incorporated them very subtly into complex Western forms, which may be difficult to initially identify. Unfortunately, this significance is underappreciated in China as well as in the West. For example, a composition like the Violin Concerto in F Major consists of a very sophisticated structural design, which is challenging to understand without professional music education. Therefore, a lot of compositions like the Violin Concerto in F Major remained unfamiliar to audiences in China. Regardless of the outcome, Ma switched his focus to Chinese folk music and created many pieces utilizing Chinese folk elements after leaving France.

Types of Compositions of Ma from the Title

I have provided an Appendix which is a complete list of Ma's compositions. An examination of titles suggests that there are essentially two types of compositions. There are those with typical Western titles, such as String Quartet No. 1 or Sonata for Violin and Piano. The other type of title suggests a more ethnic or patriotic influence as in the Xin Jiang Rhapsody and Cantonese Songs for Piano. The mere observation of these compositions reveals that pieces with ethnic titles have more substantial Chinese influence than those with classical titles. Often times, the title of the composition alone can present a lot of information about the music. For instance, with Sibelius's *Finlandia*, it can be assumed from the title that the music will include recognizable Finnish characteristics. Likewise, Brahms's Hungarian Dances captured more of the folk-style than Brahms's Violin Concerto in D major, although he also used Hungarian rhythms in the concerto. It is interesting to note that Ma shared that value and it was reflected in the title of his pieces.

Chinese Folk Music

Chinese folk music has rich traditions characterized by significant diversity. Often times, it requires substantial study. In fact, there are 56 ethnic groups in China: the Han population is the biggest, and the other 55 are minorities. Each ethnic group has its own culture, dialogue, songs, and dances.

Chinese musicologist Jin Jie has studied Chinese folk music and describes it as follows in the book *Chinese Music, Echos in Ancient and Modern Times*:

People of all ethnic groups are known for their singing and dancing accompanied by a distinct folk music. Each ethnic group has its own history of development and cultural background. On that basis, folk music with characteristics of each ethnic group was developed into a distinct style... These songs, music types, dances and operas makeup of the brilliant music culture of the Chinese nation and have an important place in Chinese music history.⁴⁰

During the period from 1937-1948, Ma's compositions took a step forward from the conventional Western style of his earlier pieces to a more Chinese folk-influenced style. Some of his compositions during this period were commissioned by the government for propaganda reasons. Whether Ma quotes a complete song or applies Chinese musical elements in the composition, they all share a strong Chinese folk music influence.

Liang also pointed out that “educated musicians were beginning to discover the great wealth of their own folksongs, which could be used as basis for their compositions. The movement of national styles of symphonic works done in 19th century Russia, Czechoslovakia, Finland and Norway provided the idea that folksongs could be the backbone for creative

⁴⁰ Jie Jin, *Chinese music, Echos in Ancient and Modern Times*. Translated by Wang Li and Li Rong, (Beijing: China Intercontinental Press, 2010), 90.

work.”⁴¹ China is rich with folk culture, which means that it is a treasure for artistic inspiration especially for twentieth-century music. It would seem then that Ma had found a precious jewel in his backyard.

Cantonese Music

The folk elements Ma worked with are mostly Cantonese, which was native to him. Folk music had played an important role as intuitive inspiration for Ma at a young age. Cantonese music was a private enjoyment at Ma’s house, as well as popular entertainment for the public (e.g. Cantonese opera). In 1987 when a U.S. periodical described Ma’s childhood, it said: “His favorite music was opera drama in the Guangdong dialect.” At the age of seven, he could already memorize and repeat the Chinese-style melodies his cousin played on the organ.”⁴² A piano composition from 1952, *Three Pieces of Cantonese Music*, was completely dedicated to his native music.

Cantonese, also called Guangdong in Chinese, originated from Guangzhou and the Pearl River Delta region. The music of this region is usually played by a string and wind ensemble. This kind of music mainly focuses on the performances of songs, qupai music, and interlude music in local opera.

Imitation of Chinese Instruments

Ma’s compositions borrow melodies from Cantonese ensemble music, but also rely on an imitation of Chinese instrumental techniques. Guangdong music mainly includes high-bow hair tension and low tension string instruments. The main instruments are the Gaohu (Cantonese high

⁴¹ Liang, *Music of the Billion*, 139.

⁴² “The Chinese Musician Si-cong Ma died of Illness in America on May 20, 1987,” *People’s Daily*, 1 August 2003, Today in the History section.

Erhu), Yangqin, Pipa, vertical flute, Yehu, and Guzheng.⁴³ Indeed, the Violin Concerto in F Major is itself an excellent example of how Ma incorporated Cantonese elements into Western genres. Each movement is based on a famous Cantonese song or melody. Each song has its own rich literature and history which gives the music a profound meaning.

The Cantonese musical instruments mentioned above are also imitated in this concerto. For example, Ma imitated the Chinese instrument *Erhu* on the violin by using slides (Figure 7), and imitated *Pipa*'s alternating fingering on the same note by doing the same on the violin (Figure 8).

Figure 7 Sliding fingering imitating Erhu, mvt. II.



Figure 8 Pipa alternating fingering on violin, mvt. II.



This imitation can also be found in another piece from around the same period, a violin composition composed in 1937. He used Inner Mongolian folk elements in his music. In Inner Mongolia violin suite 绥远组曲, ornamentation notes are sometimes added to imitate Chinese string instruments. For example, some of the ornaments are single note ornaments followed by a long value note (quarter note or longer). When the music is in a slow tempo, these ornaments are

⁴³ Ibid.

played as an upper appoggiatura sliding down to the main note. This is how the performance tradition of Chinese string instruments was translated to the violin. Figure 9 shows there are both single note and multiple note ornaments. The single note ornaments are followed by a quarter note and can be played using the same finger sliding down to the main note.

Figure 9 Violin solo part from Inner Mongolia Suite for violin 1937, mvt. I (*Epic*), mm. 38-49.



Application of Folk Tunes

Melodic material can be used in many different ways. Sometimes a folk tune appears in its entirety. Other times, it appears in segments, or fragments. For example, the second movement of the *Inner Mongolia Suite*, “Nostalgia,” adapts a folk song from Inner Mongolia. The entire song is presented on the violin. Both the lyrics to the folk song and the violin music are expressing a heart which is longing for home. I have provided the Inner Mongolian folk song of “Horse Running on the Wall” in Figure 10 along with the melody from the violin solo part in Figure 11. The folk song melody is used in its entirety.

Figure 10 Inner Mongolian folk song “House Running on the Wall” in Chinese in simplified notation with lyrics.

城墙上跑马掉不回头

内蒙民歌
汉族

1=C $\frac{2}{4}$

2̣. 3̣ 2̣ ị | ị 6̣. | 7̣. 7̣ 5̣ 3̣ 5̣ | 6̣ - |

城 墙 上 跑 马 掉 不 回 (那 个) 头,

南 山(那 个) 顶 上 飘 (呀) 白 云,

6̣ 2̣ 2̣ ị 6̣ | 5̣ 3̣. | 5̣. 3̣ 5̣ 6̣ 3̣. 2̣ | 1̣ 6̣ 1̣ 2̣[^] ||

思 想 起 我 的 包 头, (唉 哟) 我 就 眼 儿 抖。

难 过 (呀 那 个) 不 过 (唉 哟 那 个) 人 想 人。

66

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Figure 11 Violin melody from the Inner Mongolia Suite for violin, *Nostalgia*, mvt. II, mm. 1-8.

Andante cantabile (♩ = 80)

sul D

The first movement of the Inner Mongolia Suite uses a very famous folk tune from the Szechuan region shown in Figure 12. Ma modified the simple melody into a motif which is shared in the rhapsodic opening and the first theme as shown in Figures 13 and 14.

Figure 12 The complete Szechuan folk song of *Kang Ding love song*.

康定情歌

四川民歌
王洛宾编

1=F 3 5 6 6 5 6. 3 2 3 5 6 6 5 6 3.

跑李一世 马家来问 溜溜溜溜 的的的 山大大 上姐上子 一人才我 溜溜溜溜 的的的 云好好爱 哟哟哟

3 5 6 6 5 6. 3 2 5 3 2 3 2 1 2 6.

端张二世 端家来问 溜溜溜溜 的的的 照大看男 在哥上子 康看会任 定上当你 溜溜溜溜 的的的 城她家求 哟哟哟

6 2. 5 3. 2 1 6. 5 3 2 3 2 1 2 6.

月月月 亮亮亮 弯弯弯弯 弯弯弯弯 康看会任 定上当你 溜溜溜溜 的的的 城她家求 哟哟哟

The first line of the folk tune becomes the motif of both the introduction and the first theme. The violin starts with the motif and the piano comes in at measure 5 to respond to the violin with the same motif.

Figure 13 *Inner Mongolia Suite*, first movement, opening section motif modified from the folk tune.

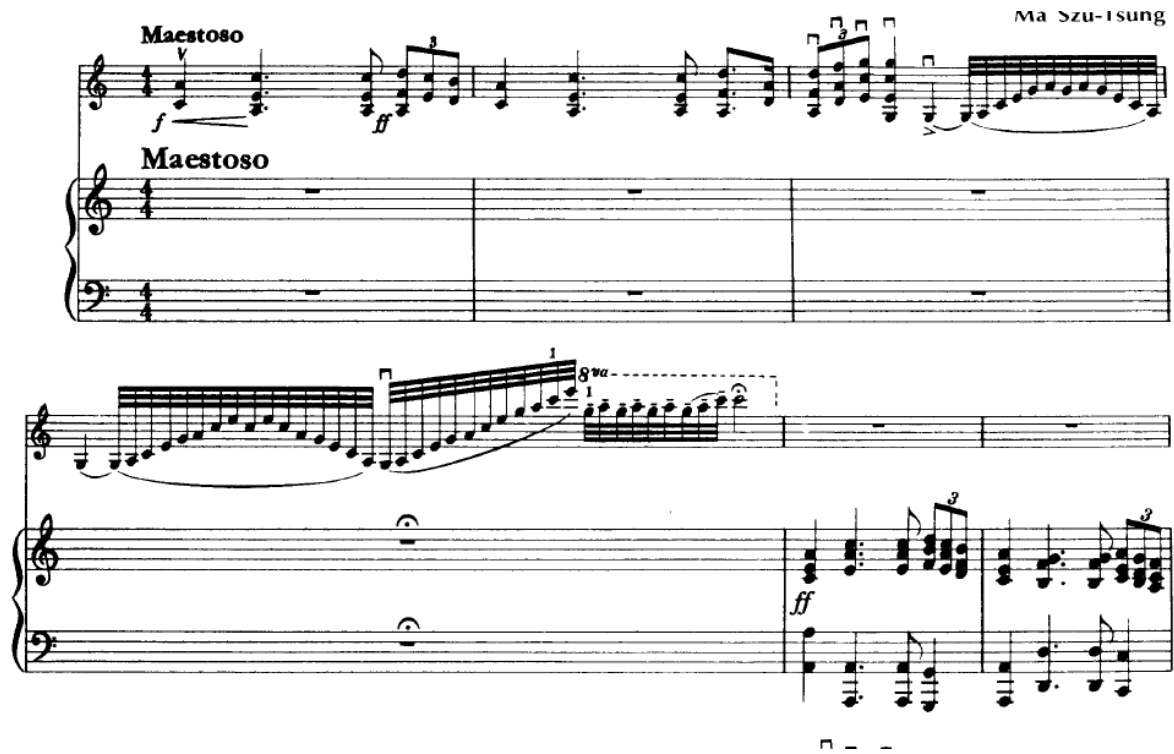


Figure 14 *Inner Mongolian Suite*, first movement, violin theme with a motif from the same folk tune.



From 1949-1966 (pre- Cultural Revolution period), Chinese elements still played a major role in Ma's inspiration. However, he presented them in a slightly different way than during his student years. When Ma shifted his emphasis back to the music materials of his homeland, his audience grew to include almost all of China. Most of Ma's compositions during this time used a simpler structure with an extensive usage of Chinese folk tunes. Often times, Ma would use a

complete song or a complete famous melody as the basis of his composition. For example, the second movement of the Inner-Mongolia Suite for violin engages a complete folk song which was known by millions. (Please see Figure. 10 and Figure 11) Instead of creating a lengthy piece in a sophisticated, complex form like the Violin Concerto in F Major, Ma simplified his approach by using more obvious Chinese elements and more functional harmonies for the accompaniment. Under the new government's guidance, Ma used a wider variety of materials. As a result, his music became better known in other parts of China as well. Liang has described the early twentieth-century musical development in China as follows:

In keeping with the string nationalistic and peasant-worker orientation of Communist China, music from 1949 to 1966 was mainly characterized by the (1) revival of regional instrumental and dramatic music, (2) promotion of professional folk musicians, (3) expanded development of solo instrumental music, (4) establishment of Chinese orchestral music, (5) promotion of narrative music and folk songs, and (6) development of national minority music.⁴⁴

During this period, while serving as the president of the Central Conservatory of Music, Ma's compositions were mostly a response to the government's exhortation to promote Chinese culture and pay tribute to the nation. Although the compositions were still using forms from Western classical music, they were simpler in structure, less ambiguous in harmony, and used very clear, memorable melodic lines.

Imitation of Different Folk Style

Ma often composed using folk songs that were popular to most people in China. For example, the *Rondo No.2* (1950) is based on melodic material inspired by northern country folk tunes which were very popular on the radio during that period. Ma also traveled to different

⁴⁴ Liang, *Music of the Billion*, 153.

regions of China and learned about other ethnic music and cultures, and incorporated various kinds of folk music into Western forms of music. An example of this is *Three Dances* (1950), which consists of three movements: Dance of the Drum, Dance of the Cup, and Dance of the Scarf. These dances were all celebratory from various cultures in China.

As mentioned earlier, different ethnic groups in China each have their own rich and distinctive musical traditions and these always provided great inspirations for Ma. *Tibetan Tone Poem*, *Inner Mongolia Suites*, and *Alisan Tone Poem* for orchestra from the 1940s brought better awareness of minority music to the nation. *Xin Jiang Rhapsody for Violin and Orchestra* (1954) brought the best of Ma's musical abilities together into one composition. Jin Jie describes music from the Xin Jiang region as follows:

The Uygur minority inhabits the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in the northwest part of China. The Uygurs like singing and dancing in festivals and leisure times... The graceful Uygur songs and dances are so popular around world, especially *muqam*, a type of traditional Uygur music is known for its abundant content, colorful melodies and diversified musical structures... It is known for having beautiful melodies, lively tones, and simple but abundant forms of expression worldwide and so it is reputed as the "oriental gem."⁴⁵

Many distinguished Xin Jiang regional musical traits are captured in Ma's composition. For example, the characteristics include extensive use of chromaticism, highly ornamented lines (Figure 15), quick, repeated pick-up rhythms (Figure 16) and characteristics of a rhapsody such as improvisatory, fast, virtuosic passages on the violin.

⁴⁵ Jin, *Chinese music*, 91.

Figure 15 Chromatic and ornamented character of Xia Jiang music. Improvisatory and virtuosic character of the rhapsodic music.



Figure 16 Quick and repeated pick-up in XinJiang music.



Imitation of Folk Rhythms

Folk instruments and melody are not the only key components of folk music. Sometimes rhythm alone has more folk identity than the other components. *The Dragon Lantern Dance*,

composed in 1953, captures the essence of the festive dragon lantern dance rhythm. This dance rhythm is usually played by Chinese percussion instruments and wind instruments. Ma used the rhythm in the violin to imitate this folk style. This rhythm is defined by two-bar groupings, beginning with a dotted rhythm and ending on a longer note, as shown in Figure 17.

Figure 17 Dragon Lantern Dance, the rhythm in the violin part imitates the rhythm of the folk dance.



The use of rhythm can establish different moods and scenic locations. In the second movement of the *Tibetan Suite*, titled “Lamasery,” Ma uses rhythm to paint the scenery of a Buddhist temple. The rhythm (one quarter note, two eighths, a quarter rest, and four sixteenths) imitates the sound of the Tibetan drum, a percussion instrument used in prayer. This rhythmic combination first appears for 15 measures and to set the scene and often comes back throughout this movement.

Figure 18 Second movement of Tibetan Suite, Lamasery, showed the scenery of the Lama temple through the music.



Chinese Harmony

Although Ma successfully captured many folk characteristics through the notation of Western Classical music, Chinese harmony remains challenging to incorporate. This is because Chinese folk music does not share the same approach to harmony as Western classical music. Since Chinese music and folk music are very close to the speaking language of the country, Chinese music has a tendency to emphasize melody rather than harmony.⁴⁶ Levis suggested that because Chinese music is very much dominated by spoken language, Chinese melody and words often share phonetic tones.

“Concerning these tonal movements in all melody and their use in the Chinese language, two vital observations must be made from the very start which immediately

⁴⁶ Levis, *Foundations of Chinese musical art*, 12.

establish the *raison d'être* of the art of melody in China, and which potently affected its whole development: 1, The Chinese language is essentially monosyllabic in its nature. 2. Each monosyllabic word is expressed through one or the other of the three elements (Level, rising, falling speaking tone movements) of melodic movement already mentioned, essentially in one unit of time....⁴⁷

This explains why Chinese melodies are created based on the sound of the language and phrasing of the poetry, rather than for harmonic purposes.

Harmony is also treated very differently in Chinese and Western music. Due to the lack of harmonic development in Chinese music, much of the classical music by Chinese composers of Ma's generation uses a harmonic structure that is weaker than that found in pieces by Western composers.

When Ma uses a folk song as the base material, the harmony is simple and mostly used as an accompaniment to the melody. When he composes a concerto or symphony, melodic material continues to play a more important role than the harmony. The analysis of the violin concerto in the next chapter will be an excellent example of this approach.

For the purpose of incorporating Western harmony into Chinese folk music/songs, Ma composed and collected Chinese folk songs, and set them with Western harmonies. An article from the Central Conservatory summarizes Ma's thoughts on this project:

...he was careful when writing long pieces and daring when writing short ones. In the two-volume collection of *Folksongs in New Colours* 民歌新唱, 43 pieces in all, he went ahead to explore new harmonies. We need not talk about such common methods as the traditional harmony built on major and minor scales and the harmony of modes, and the chords produced by the superimposition of a

⁴⁷ Levis, *Foundations of Chinese musical art*, 16-17.

fourth on a fifth. The “expounding of initial sounds” that Ma mentioned should include both melody and harmony.⁴⁸

In another article from the Central Conservatory, a music theorist writing about Ma’s harmonic language said:

Usually the choice of the tonic and tonic chord is decided according to a principle similar to that of the mode harmony of the Middle Ages, which Ma Sicong used sometimes. But there are many other possibilities. For example, in his *Longing for Home* 思乡曲, the supporting note of the theme is the 7th note of the tonic minor 7th chord in the harmonic structure of this piece. Also, in his arrangement of the Yunnan folk song *The Ten Li Pavilion* 十里亭, he applies the harmony of *Yu* mode 羽调式 for the melody in what is commonly known as *Zhigong* mode 徵 宫调. Thus the supporting note in this melody is also the 7th note of the tonic minor 7th chord. This is an arrangement characterized by bitonality. Generally, the initial and the final notes in melodies of what are called alternating modes are disposed in tonic chords of different pitches, but sometimes Ma puts them all in the tonic chord of the initial mode.⁴⁹

The next chapter will present a detailed analysis of the Violin Concerto in F Major and will explain the highly individual harmonic language of Ma’s music.

2.5 Style of Ma’s Late Music

The music from the last twenty years of Ma’s life is of a very simple quality. Also much of the music from this period is very personal and reflects Ma’s life experiences. Compositions from this period were not written under any political pressure so they are truly a musical expression from his heart. For example, his vocal composition *Homeland* (1972) is an expression of his nostalgic emotions. In this period, Ma often used his composition to express his

⁴⁸ Su, *The music of Ma Sicong*, 24.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 24-25.

unfortunate life experiences. Ma was also unrestricted to explore different kind of compositional techniques, genres, and musical materials.

Ma's political status prohibited him from traveling back to China, but Taiwan welcomed him warmly. While residing in the U.S, Ma had many concert appearances and musical events in Taiwan. He also composed two suites related to the minority ethnic groups in Taiwan, *Amei Suite* and *Gaosan Suite*, 1973. These compositions about Taiwan were also a celebration of his political freedom from China. The Taiwanese government considered these compositions, which use Taiwanese folk elements, to be great gifts from Ma.

Immigration to the U.S not only gained Ma political freedom but it also gave Ma independence in his music making. This meant that he had the ability to choose freely between composing a Taiwanese folk song or in a piece in the style of a French composer. The repertoire list provided in Chapter 1 shows that in his two decades in America, Ma composed many more violin works such as violin sonatas, a concerto for double violin and rondos for violin. It seemed like the compositions were beneficial both to himself and his family, allowing them to perform their own instruments. The violin sonata composed in 1984 shows French influences. The sonata has two movements, the first of which is set in triple meter (9/8) and often alternates between 6/8 and 12/8 shown below in Figure 19. In most of his Chinese-influenced compositions, it is rare to see this alternation of meter. Many first movements of French violin sonata such as those by Franck, Ravel, and Faure are solely in triple meter. In this movement, we can also see that it is technically challenging for both instruments and in the ensemble work. The constant continuation of sixteenth notes in both parts requires both rhythmic and technical accuracy in order to execute the music at a high level (Figure 20).

Figure 19 Violin Sonata No. 3, mvt. I, mm. 1-11.

Sonata No.3

作于1984年

moderato

The musical score is written for Violin and Piano. It is in 3/8 time and the key signature has two sharps (D major). The tempo is marked "moderato". The score consists of six systems. The first system shows the piano accompaniment with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second system shows the violin melody with a crescendo (*cresc.*) dynamic. The third system shows the piano accompaniment with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The fourth system shows the violin melody with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The fifth system shows the piano accompaniment with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The sixth system shows the violin melody with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Figure 20 Ma's Violin Sonata No. 3, mvt.I, mm. 19-27.



The compositions from his years in America were varied. As he continued to compose in an unrestricted environment, he also developed an interest in writing for other instruments such as cello and piano and in writing dramatic music. His choices of genres and styles were less connected to Chinese ethnic music, and the Chinese musical elements seem to be less obvious than before.

In Ma's late years, he focused on completing a full ballet and working on an opera. Unfortunately, a lot of compositions from his American years remain unpublished. Though some were discovered after his death, his printed music is still difficult to obtain.

Ma's musical influences cover a wide spectrum, from German Classical music traditions to Chinese folk music to Russian and French inspirations in styles, texture, and harmony. Ma's

own distinguished character was illustrated from the very beginning of his compositional career. He always had a vision of combining Chinese artistic elements with Western musical structures.

Chapter 3: Violin Concerto in F Major Movement I

3. 1 Introduction

The Violin Concerto in F Major (1943) by Ma Si-Cong has three movements: Allegro moderato, Adagio, and Allegro giocoso. Ma adapted musical elements from both Western and Chinese traditions in his concerto, and yet his composition is unlike either tradition, setting itself apart as an example of Ma's own style.

As described in the previous two chapters, Ma's fusion of Western and Chinese elements made him a pioneer in Chinese contemporary music. At the beginning of the twentieth century, only a few composers in China understood Western music as well as Ma. According to musicologist Jing Jiang, Ma was one of the few advanced Chinese classical composers in the early twentieth century who applied Western compositional techniques to modern Chinese music.⁵⁰

Before moving on to the details of each movement, I would like to discuss the Concerto's key of F major. Even though there are symphonies composed in F major, (i.e. Beethoven's Sixth Symphony "Pastoral"), F major is not a common key used for violin concertos. Both Ma's violin concerto in F major and Beethoven's "Pastoral" Symphony share the same pastoral elements. The first movement of Ma's violin concerto is based on a poem/song "Niao Jing Xuan 鸟惊喧", which describes and praises the beautiful land of China. In addition to sharing the same key as Beethoven's Sixth Symphony, both works also praise nature.

⁵⁰ Jiang, Jing. "The Influence of Traditional Chinese Music on Professional Instrumental Composition." *Asian Music* Vol. 22, No. 2, Views of Music in China Today (Spring-Summer 1991): 85

Like most of Ma's music, this concerto is strongly rooted in Western classical paradigms. The concerto genre itself is fundamental in Western classical traditions. Ma's choice of composing for a standard Western orchestra setting with soloist and his use of a three-movement structure (fast-slow-fast) also demonstrates his strong connection to Western classical music. Moreover, the concerto's expression, tempo, and dynamics in all three movements follow the typical format of the concerto. The forms for each of the concerto's individual movements are also based on classical models. In matters of tonal design and harmonic language, we find both traditional German features and French influences. Overall, this composition showcases Ma's vast knowledge of different musical styles, his diverse musical influences, and his passion for Chinese music.

Form of Each Movement

Rich, complex musical forms are an essential aspect of Western classical music. Therefore, it is highly useful to consider how these forms inform the individual movements of Ma's concerto. The first movement is very closely related to sonata form and draws heavily upon the ritornello principle. The second movement is a songful aria in ternary form and the finale is a clear rondo form with a characteristic lively quality. All in all, this concerto is a good example of Dai JiaFang's claim that "Ma believed that on that (Western classical music) basis, Chinese musicians would be able to create a 'new stream' which had Chinese characteristics and which would be inferior to none as it merged with the mainstream of world music."⁵¹

Ma integrated elements from traditional Cantonese music with conventional Western forms. Each movement is associated with a specific traditional song. Not only do these songs affect melodic material and stylistic tone, the specific content of the songs (their meanings and

⁵¹ JiaFang Dai, *An Independent Choice: On Ma Sicong's Musical Thought During the 1930s and the 1940s*. (Beijing: Central Conservatory of Music: 1992), 57.

cultural context, and also their own musical forms) adds a profound level of expression to Ma's work.

As the concerto genre flourished, composers added multiple new elements. A concerto like Ma's, which is full of both Western and Chinese characteristics, presents a broad analytical perspective in which these characteristics can cross-pollinate. Dai Jiafang claimed that "On the development of Chinese music, Ma Sicong was for 'using the Western system to serve China,' which meant modifying Chinese traditional music by making the system of Western music and culture its mainstay."⁵² Since the core structures of Ma's concerto (e.g. genre, individual musical forms) are essentially Western in origin, an analysis should begin by seeking to understand these aspects in conventional terms. Having done this, the elements that are fundamentally Chinese, a strikingly different musical culture, may then be described in more detail. The following paragraphs and chapters will present a detailed analysis of each movement, where the forms and structures of the concerto will be broken down according to Western principles. These chapters will also allow the reader to understand the rich infusion of Chinese elements in the music.

3.2: Analysis of Movement I

The first movement has the most complex structure of the three. Three principles of form apply: ritornello form, sonata form, and the form influenced by Chinese music. This music possesses characteristics of all three forms, but does not follow any of them strictly. The actual form of the movement is a rather unique hybrid. Therefore, it is necessary for us to examine the typical structures of each form and also the unusual features that do not fit neatly into any of the forms. In the next section, I will examine how "traditional" ritornello and sonata principles apply

⁵² Dai, *An independent choice*, 57.

in the basic formal structure of the movement. In later sections, I will examine unusual features and the influence of Chinese folk music on the movement.

Basic Formal and Tonal Characteristics: Combination of Ritornello and Sonata Principles

It is difficult to separate ritornello form and sonata form in a concerto because historically speaking sonata form was gradually integrated into ritornello form, and the two forms came together into one unified element. Due to the nature of the combination of ritornello and sonata form in a concerto, we should look into both identities simultaneously. I have provided a reference of music theorist William Caplin's 18th century model on Ma's first movement form. Caplin's view is not the only way to interpret Ma's first movement form and merely serves as a starting point of the analysis process. That being said, Caplin's model bears close resemblance to my own interpretation of Ma's first movement form. Caplin writes:

This view of the concerto sonata has its attractions but is misleading in a number of respects. In particular, it ignores the historical development of the classical concerto out of sources distinct from those of the sonata. Moreover, it fails to take into account a number of compositional procedures that clearly are vestiges of the older ritornello form. Thus an alternative view of concerto form sees it as composed of six principal sections: (1) an opening ritornello for orchestra alone, (2) a solo section (with orchestral accompaniment) that functions like a sonata exposition by modulating from the home to the subordinate key, (3) a subordinate-key ritornello for orchestra that reinforces the modulation, (4) a solo section functioning as a sonata development, (5) a solo section functioning as a sonata recapitulation and (6) a closing ritornello for orchestra (usually interrupted by a solo cadenza) that completes the structural frame.⁵³

⁵³William E. Caplin, *Classical Forms, a theory of formal functions for the instrumental music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (New York: Oxford University Press: New York, 1998), 243.

I have provided a chart based on Caplin's model in Figure 1, and also a diagram of my analysis of the first movement form in Figure 2. Together, these figures provide a good framework for understanding how both sonata principles and ritornello features are involved in the formal structure of the first movement.

Section:	1	2	3	4	5	6(w/cad.)
Feature:	Ritornello	Solo (acc.)	R	S	S	R
Function:	Exposition			Development	Recapitulation	
Keys:	I (i)	I-V(i-III,v)	V	V(III,v)	I (i)	I (i)

1(R) 2(S) 3(R)4(S) 5(S)6(R)

Exposition Development Recapitulation

Intro M M PT PT Transition M ST:A ST:B M PT DT:A DT:B DT:C Bridge PT PT M ST:B

14 33 42 51 75 87 100 121 141 155 173 180 194 222 226 242 254 262 263

tutti solo tutti solo solo tutti solo solo tutti solo solo solo tutti solo tutti cad.

FM: FM: V/DM DM: CM: AbM: BbM: CM: (FM:) FM:
| | V bIII bIV V IV/FM | V |

54

insufficient since his view describes eighteenth-century concertos, not concertos from the Romantic or post-Romantic eras. And concertos in the twentieth-century can be very innovative while still clearly drawing from the Classical concerto form. Composers always look for new ways to recreate. Many features of Ma's first movement preserve the essential outline of concerto form. As shown in Figure 2, I have divided the first movement of Ma's violin concerto into six sections of alternation between tutti and solo, which corresponds fairly well to Caplin's sonata-ritornello model fairly well. However, there are unusual tonal and melodic treatments in this movement that do not match the model well. Therefore, Caplin's six principal sections can provide only a general idea of the movement—a starting point.

Since the structure of the first-movement of Ma's concerto is a combination of ritornello and sonata form, I have also looked at the music using the principal ideas of a sonata form: exposition, development, and recapitulation. The exposition is mm. 1-140, the development is mm. 141-241, and the recapitulation is from mm. 242 to the end. The tonal structure is very unusual, but still follows the basic I-V-I procedure. And since the melodic material is heavily influenced by Chinese characteristics, it is even more difficult to place Western labels on it.

Analysis Based on 6-Sections Model

Ritornello 1+ Solo 2 mm.1-141, Exposition

The first ritornello tutti (1R) is from mm. 1-33. This introductory melody is four measures long (mm. 1-4 as shown in Figure 3) and followed by 10 measures prolonging the tonic, which leads into the first statement of the motif at m. 14. Mm. 1–14 may be understood as essentially introductory (material that never returns in the piece), while mm. 15–33 is the first statement of a significant piece of motivic material, which I will call “the motif.”

Figure 3 Opening tutti introduction, mvt. I, mm. 1-6.

The first solo section (2S; mm. 33–141 in Figure 2) also has an interesting musical structure. 2S features the motif (M), the primary theme (PT), and multiple secondary themes (ST). As Caplin describes, the first solo section usually exposes the important melodic materials with orchestral accompaniment, as well as takes the music to a new key area closely related to the tonic, most likely the dominant.⁵⁴ In Ma’s movement, the melodic materials of the first solo section (2S) are difficult to identify at first. This is because upon first hearing, one may be tempted to hear the motif (m. 33) and the primary theme (m. 51) as first and second themes of an exposition respectively. However, the motif at m. 33 does not contain essential characteristics of a “theme.” Usually, a theme has a longer duration and a more songful nature than the melodic material beginning in m. 33. If the motif were to be interpreted as PT, and m. 42 as another theme, this would create the illusion that the section from mm. 33-87 is the exposition, but harmonically it makes more sense to see m. 42 as PT and m. 100 as ST.

Many ambiguous events exist between the PT area (m. 42) and the ST area (m. 100). After the PT, the soloist is preoccupied with difficult passage-work that builds up to the orchestral entrance, which presents the motif in the key of D major at m. 87. The music from m.

⁵⁴ Caplin, *Classical Forms*, 243.

87 sounds like the start of a second ritornello section (3R), because the full orchestra is playing the motif here. However, m. 87 is in the “wrong” key. D major is not the dominant of F major, but rather, the submediant. Particularly by the late nineteenth century, this key relationship is not completely unseen in Western compositions. The function of mm. 87–100 is essentially a thematic restatement of the motif. Harmonically, the passage does not move forward in a traditional way and does not seem like tonal “progression.” With the understanding that mm. 33–87 is, properly speaking, the PT area, and that the expected dominant key arrives later in m. 121, it becomes clear that this miniature ritornello section (mm. 87–100) is a kind of interlude between the PT and ST areas.

ST:A does not restore a sense of functional tonal progression to the structural dominant. Instead, it continues to linger on D major, like the orchestral statement of the motif in the preceding section. The change at m. 100 is not one of harmony but of material—the key remains the same but the character of the melodic material changes from the original motif to a new melodic theme. Finally, at m. 121, the tonality falls into the “right” key, and a new subordinate theme is introduced. ST:B is more significant than ST:A, because it is in the key of the dominant. The melodic material returns in the home key of F at the very end of the movement (m. 263), as expected in a recapitulation, whereas ST:A does not return in the recapitulation. It is ST:B, not ST:A that is developed and restated along with the motif as the movement unfolds.

The ST area also has its twists and turns. As shown in Figure 2, there are two different subordinate themes from m. 100 to m. 121, the first one (ST:A) in D major and the second (ST:B) in the dominant key of C major. A dominant arrival at the end of the exposition is typical. The interesting thing is that neither thematic element has a strong function like a closing passage to the exposition or a transitional passage to the development. Instead, they sound rather

improvisatory. The abundance of themes and the short transitions that connect them set them apart from the Western concertos with which we are more familiar. The transitions of the melodic materials are less refined. For instance, there is a statement of a melodic theme followed immediately by a passage leading to the next theme. Ma also uses this technique between large sections of the movement as well.

Even in the exposition, there are several ways that thematic events and tonal events do not line up as in typical first-movement concerto form. There are also some techniques in the exposition that appear throughout the whole movement. Short modulations, abrupt section changes, and multiple themes in the first solo section are features that make Ma's first movement unorthodox. The abrupt section changes usually happen at an intersection of a new tonal segment, such as m. 87 (see Figure 4). This is supported visually by a new key signature as a part of the new section.

Figure 4 mvt. I, mm. 83-87.

This abrupt section change, along with the other unique features, is stylistic features in many of Ma's compositions. They are closely related to the character of Chinese music, which will be referred to and explained later in this chapter.

Ritornello 3 + Solo 4 mm. 141-242, Development

The next section, mm. 141-226, the development section, combines Caplin's third and fourth sections (3R and 4S) as shown in Figure 2. One reason to mark the start of the development at m. 141 is the appearance of the "motif". As mentioned previously, the initial motif in the first movement has an anchoring quality, marking the start of a section. Although there are many ambiguities in this section, the initial motif serves as a clear guide.

In the development section, a full-length second ritornello section is missing. It appears that Ma has shortened the traditional closing section by bridging the exposition to the

development. A second ritornello section usually closes the exposition in the key of dominant, and then prepares the music for development. According to Caplin's model, the development section should start at the second solo section (4S). However, my analysis shows that the development starts at m. 141 where the orchestra plays the motif alone. At that moment, the music is heard as the second ritornello, but the result is a kind of formal ambiguity. The motif itself may appear to be a closing or reinforcement of the previous section, but tonally the melodic and harmonic events do not agree with each other.

At m. 141, Ma changes the key abruptly from the dominant key (C major, established in m. 121) to A-flat major (a key that is not closely related to either C major or to the overall tonic key of F major). The solo violin is usually tacet during the second ritornello in a concerto as the orchestra prepares for the solo violin entrance of the development section. In this section, the second ritornello is surprisingly short (the solo violin joins eight measures into it at m. 149) with no structural function. Therefore, I chose to include this second ritornello as part of the development.

The tonal structure goes through many key areas. The motif is in the key of A-flat major, the soloist plays PT in the key of A-flat major in m. 155, and then the soloist plays one theme after another from m. 173 in the key of B-flat major. It is difficult to tell whether the formal function of this music is in "Classical" terms, but one thing is clear: the music is moving away from the tonic. The idea of a "development" has already begun (m. 141) in the harmonic events, but not in the melodic material.

The development section itself seems unusual by Classical standards. Instead of hearing previous material developed and elaborated extensively, Ma again presents multiple new themes.

The idea of digressing from the home key is the function of a development, and Ma achieved the same goal by traveling through many keys. The key areas in the developmental section appear in the following order: A-flat major, B-flat major, C major, and B-flat major. The developmental theme from m. 172 is in B-flat major, the bVI key. Perhaps this key is preparing us for the return of the dominant at m. 194, but the bVI key happens more often in a minor key than in a major key. After a long journey of traveling through foreign keys and three themes, one expects the recapitulation by the time the primary theme appears again at m. 226. However, the primary theme material turns out to be in the key of B-flat major and not in the tonic. Ma has created a false return of the primary theme.

Solo 5 + Ritornello 6 mm. 242-293, Recapitulation

After this false return, the solo violin part builds up with passage work to the real recapitulation at m. 242. There are also a few unusual features in the recapitulation section, but it is close to our expectation of tradition. According to Caplin, this section (5S) should be a solo section functioning as a recapitulation in a first-movement sonata form. Indeed, it does recapitulate the primary theme and the motif. However, this third solo section from m. 242-254 is rather short and features the returned thematic materials in an unexpected order. Ma recapitulated the primary theme first, followed by the initial motif, and, after the cadenza, the secondary theme. In the exposition, the order of the appearance is motif first, followed by the primary and secondary themes. In Ma's recapitulation, he perhaps wanted the primary theme to be heard immediately after the false return, contrasting the "wrong" key of B-flat major and the "right" key, which is the home key of F major. Since the initial motif has such a prominent place in this movement, even a reversed order in the recapitulation will still make the motif very significant.

The last part of the first movement of a concerto is typically a large closing section. This section includes a solo cadenza which shows off the soloist's virtuosity while prolonging the dominant to create tension before the end of this movement. From m. 254 to the end, the harmonic rhythm slows down and the changes occur approximately every 4 measures, compared to the faster harmonic rhythm of changes every 1-2 measures earlier in the movement.

Following the cadenza, the orchestra does not repeat the motif nor the primary theme to finish this movement. Instead, ST:B becomes the closing theme for the entire movement (mm. 263-293). The reappearance of the ST:B is rather surprising since this melody was heard only once in this movement in the exposition. It is also interesting because the very last melodic material that Ma chose to close this movement creates a rather tranquil mood. Often times, the return of the full orchestra after the solo cadenza is filled with excitement and energy. In m. 263, the tutti comes in at a slower tempo and in a calm mood.

3.3 Unusual Formal and Tonal Characteristics

Thematic Material, Motivic Characteristics

In the previous portion of this chapter, the first movement of Ma's violin concerto is analyzed section by section in detail. Many unusual features can be found in this movement, and these specific unusual features have a great deal to do with the character of this concerto and Ma's compositional style in general. I would like to explain them further in order to lay the groundwork for understanding the concerto as a whole.

The dramatic contrast between the big orchestral force and solo instrument is fully demonstrated in the first movement of Ma's Violin Concerto in F major. The ritornello tutti sections are tonally stable, whereas the active solo part frequently modulates throughout the

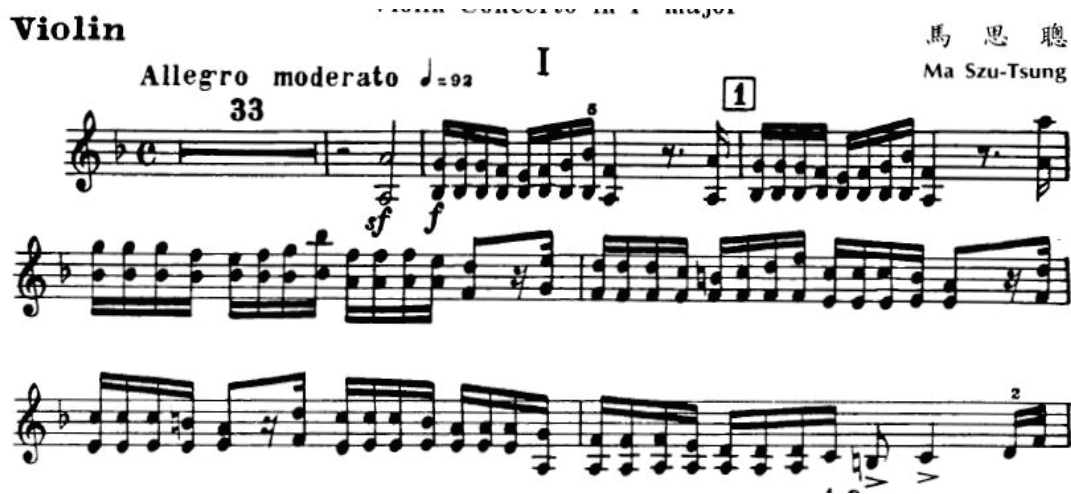
movement. The melodic materials in a concerto always contain contrasts in character or texture, and they are usually harmonically connected at a deeper level. However, the lack of harmonic connection of the melodic materials in this concerto makes the contrast seems unusual.

There are two obvious kinds of thematic material in the first movement: motivic (m. 33, as shown in Figure 7) and melodic (m. 51, as shown in Figure 8). Ma has borrowed a distinct Chinese motif and incorporated it into the concerto structure. A rhythmic and interesting motif plays a very important role in this movement which appears for the first time in measure 14 (Figure 5). It is also used at the first entrance of the solo violin (Figure 6). Ma took this material from the song “Niao Jing Xuan” and uses it as a recurring motif. In the original song, this motif only appears in the beginning with ornamentations. Ma has transformed this into a short motif that is stated by the soloist (mm. 33-43, Fig 6) and tutti orchestra (mm. 14-19, Figure 5). This motif also serves as an announcement of significant key areas, appearing in the home key of F major, then D major, into the middle section of A-flat major, and finally back to F major before the solo violin cadenza.

Figure 5 Motif played by orchestra, mvt. I, mm. 14-19.



Figure 6 Motif played by solo violin, mvt. I, mm. 33-43.



Perhaps influenced by Chinese folk music, the thematic materials have an improvisatory quality. The contrast between the percussive and rhythmic motif and the songful, expressive melody is very distinct though it is difficult to determine how they relate harmonically. Similar harmonic relationships between the consecutive melodies happen in this movement (mm. 100-141 and mm. 172-222 in Figure 2). The frail harmonic connection is illustrated in the transitions as well, which are short with quick modulations. Therefore, the contrasts that we hear are usually created by sudden changes in the music.

Figure 7 Motivic thematic material in solo violin part, m. 33.



Figure 8 Melodic thematic material in solo violin part, m. 51.



Abrupt Section Changes

There are two sections of this movement with multiple themes: mm. 101-41 and mm. 172-222. These themes seem quite separated because they don't connect in obvious ways with

what comes before or after. Moreover, almost every individual theme comes with an abrupt key change. This characteristic is also reflected in the connections of large sections in this movement as a whole. If there is a process of modulation then it tends to be very short before the key change, leaving a very abrupt feeling when the new key comes. A great example of this is the closing/beginning ritornello section which serves as a bridge between the exposition and development and is quite a bit shorter than expected.

Harmonic and Melodic Misalignment

Because of the short transitions and abrupt changes, harmonic and thematic materials often do not line up in expected ways. Therefore, some of the important harmonic arrivals may fall in places that are unusual. The best way to understand this situation is to look at the harmonic and thematic materials separately. Several cases were mentioned in the analysis above. However, I would like to point out a structurally important harmony, the dominant, to fully demonstrate this unusual characteristic of Ma's composition.

The Placement of the Structural Dominant

The dominant arrives at m. 121, a “weak” place with unfamiliar melodic materials. A “weak” place is a point in the music that does not reflect a structural function with significant melodic material (e.g. the second theme or the beginning of the development section).

This lack of a strong arrival of the dominant is also a result of harmonic and melodic misalignment (see Figure 2). For example in m. 87, the initial motif appears in the less expected key of VI instead of V. However, the dominant key does appear in m. 121, but with ST:B, which is not a very significant structural point. A similar event takes place at m. 194, where the key is in the dominant with “weak” thematic material DT:C. Later, in m. 226, there is a false return of the first theme, before the real return of the first theme takes place in m. 242. Ma did not use the

dominant to prepare the recapitulation, but rather to entice us by including the first theme once (in Bb major, the subdominant of F) before the home key returns. From these examples we may assume that this movement is “weak” in structure, but Ma uses the initial motif as an anchor point that marks the structural points of this movement instead.

The misplacement of the harmony may be strange in typical Classical form, though it is explainable with some understanding of Chinese musical characteristics. Maochun Liang stated that: “Melody is the soul of Chinese traditional and folk music, as it is the soul of contemporary music compositions. Melody is perhaps more important to Chinese music than Western music due to China’s long and unique cultural tradition.”⁵⁵ Chinese songs tend to be melodically oriented, often with very little harmonic structure, and very improvisational. The ambiguity of harmony, form, and tonal structure in the first movement is very much influenced by this Chinese musical character.

3.4 First Movement in Comparison with Other Familiar Violin Concertos

Ma’s Violin Concerto in F major has its own individual place in the violin repertoire. Although the concerto has many influences (French, Russian, Chinese), it does not sound like anything we have heard before. Ma has blended traditions from the West and elements from the East to create a violin concerto that has its own character and style. As mentioned numerous times, Ma was a classically trained musician and knew the Western tradition well. By comparing the first movement to other familiar violin concertos, I hope to support my point that Ma knows the repertoire particularly well, especially on the violin. The purpose of this comparison is not to make Ma’s violin concerto less special, but to let the readers know that Ma’s concerto has its

⁵⁵ Maochun Liang, *Chinese traditional tunes in music compositions*. (Beijing: Central conservatory press, 1992).

own place even after drawing many similarities from previous concertos. The focus below will draw on specific movements of nineteenth and twentieth-century violin concertos and how they are similar to the first movement of Ma's Violin Concerto in F major.

Ma and the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto in D major:

The orchestral introduction from the beginning of Ma's concerto (measure 1 to 14) is very similar to the beginning of the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto (as shown in Figure 9 and Figure 10). The opening material never appears again in the movement, and only serves as an introduction to the ritornello material. The distinct structures of the second ritornello in both concertos also share a few common ideas. In both concertos, this ritornello concludes the exposition at the same time it becomes the development: instead of the soloist introducing the development material in a digression from the home key, the second tutti ritornello introduces the development before the solo.

Figure 9 Fragment of opening statement of Ma's violin concerto, mvt. I, mm. 1-6.

Allegro moderato $\text{♩} = 92$

Violino I. *p*

Violino II. *p* pizz

Viola *p* pizz

Violoncello *p* pizz

Contrabasso *p* pizz

5

Figure 10 Fragment of opening statement of Tchaikovsky's violin concerto, mvt. I, mm. 1-9.

Figure 11 Violin solo entrance in Ma's violin concerto, mvt. I, mm. 30-34.

Figure 11 shows the musical score for the Violin solo entrance in Ma's violin concerto, mvt. I, mm. 30-34. The score includes staves for Trb, Timp, Solo, VI. I, VI. II, Vla, Vlc, and Cb. The Soloist enters with a solo line, while the Violin sections play a rhythmic accompaniment. Dynamics include *f*, *sf*, and *p*.

Figure 21 Violin solo entrance of the Brahms violin concerto, mvt. I, mm. 86-92.

Figure 21 shows the musical score for the Violin solo entrance of the Brahms violin concerto, mvt. I, mm. 86-92. The score includes staves for Fl., Ob., Klar., Fag., Hr., Trpt., Br., Vcl., K.B., 1.Viol., 2.Viol., and Solo. The Soloist enters with a solo line, while the Violin sections play a rhythmic accompaniment. Dynamics include *f*, *sf*, and *p*.

In Ma's concerto, the ritornello after the violin solo cadenza also goes against typical Classical traditions. Instead of an epic and grand ritornello statement with the ritornello theme, the orchestra enters with a *tranquillo* section and the solo theme returns, just like in the first

movement of Brahms's violin concerto (see Figure 13 and Figure 14). These themes then gradually build up to the spectacular finish at the end of the movement. Both concertos share the approach of recapitulating a theme after the virtuosic cadenza. Brahms restates the PT in a tranquil manner, which matches the first solo appearance of the PT, and Ma recaptures the calm ST after his cadenza to conclude the first movement.

Figure 13 Brahms violin concerto, Tranquillo ritornello after cadenza, mvt. I.

The image displays a page of a musical score for the first movement of Brahms's Violin Concerto, specifically the tranquil ritornello following the cadenza. The score is written for a full orchestra and a solo violin. The tempo is marked *tranquillo* and the dynamics are *pp* (pianissimo). The score includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in A (Klar. (A)), Bassoon (Fag.), Horns (Hr. (D) and (E)), Trumpet in D (Trpt. (D)), Percussion (Pk.), Solo Violin (Solo), Violins (Viol.), Viola (Viola), Brass (Br.), Violoncello (Vcl.), and Double Bass (K.-B.). The score is numbered 522 at the beginning. The tempo *tranquillo* is indicated above the Flute part. The dynamics *pp* are indicated below the Solo Violin part. The Solo Violin part includes a cadenza marked "Cadenz" and a *p dolce* section. The Solo Violin part also includes a section marked "8....". The Solo Violin part ends with a *pp* section. The Solo Violin part is marked *tranquillo* at the bottom.

Figure 14 Ma's violin concerto, Tranquillo ritornello after cadenza, mvt. I.

Ob. *p* *tranquillo* 265

Cl. *p* *tranquillo* 1.

Timp. *pp*

Solo *rit molto* *Quasi Andantino J=80* *p* *tranquillo*

VI. I *pp* *Quasi Andantino J=80*

VI. II *pp*

Vla. *pp* *div.*

Vlc. *pp*

Cb. *pp*

Ma and Bartok:

The use of folk music in a concerto is not a new idea. Folk music always has been an important part of classical music tradition, more so in secular music. During Ma's generation, classical music composers all around the world composed with folk elements, emphasizing rhythm and melody. Ma may have been the pioneer of using Chinese folk elements in a violin concerto, but he was certainly not the first composer to use folk music as an extensive inspiration. Bartok is well-known for his creative use of native Hungarian folk melody and rhythm. Bartok's music incorporated many different types of folk tunes on the violin after he studied them thoroughly. The first and third movements of Bartok's *Contrast* (titled *Verbunkos* and *Sebes*, respectively) are similar to Ma's violin piece *Dragon Lantern Dance*. Both composers incorporate a particular type of folk music by using characteristic rhythms, intervals, and

harmonies. Among all the violin compositions that Bartok has given to us, the violin rhapsodies (with orchestra or piano) and *Duo for two violins* are particularly reliant on folk tunes and their characteristics. In the *Duos for two violins*, the folk influence goes beyond the use of Hungarian music to include Arabian and Romanian influences.

Bartok's Violin Concerto No.2 (1937-1938) was only composed a few years before Ma's Violin Concerto in F Major. The first movement of Bartok's Violin Concerto No. 2 features a rhapsodic style (Figure 15) with unpredictable changes of mood and tempos (Figure 16). I believe both composers share the similarity of making a conscious decision to compose in a style heavily influenced by folk music. Unlike Bartok, Ma was not as established in the Western music world. However, Ma's attempt to insinuate Chinese folk elements into Western compositional forms prompts a close comparison to Bartok's music.

Figure 15 Bartok Violin Concerto No. 2, mvt. I, mm. 11-17.



Figure 16 Bartok Violin Concerto No. 2, mvt. I, mm. 51-56.

This image shows a musical score for the first movement of Bartok's Violin Concerto No. 2, measures 51 through 56. It is a score for Harp and Solo Violin (S. Viol.). The Harp part is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and includes a 'perdendo' (diminishing) marking. The Violin part is written in a single staff and includes a 'Tranquillo, ♩ = ca. 94' tempo marking at measure 51. At measure 56, there is a 'Rialento, ♩ = 120' marking. Dynamics include piano (p), fortissimo (f), and a glissando (gliss.) marked with 'pp' and 'mf'. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 4/4.

Ma and the Vieuxtemps Violin Concerto No. 5:

Since Ma was educated and trained as a violinist in France, the influence of French school of violin playing and composition was inevitable. While Debussy's impressionistic works were a strong influence, the French school of violin playing and composition were also dominant forces. The French school developed a pedagogical system and produced a lot of études and exercises for violin. Vieuxtemps, one of the leading teachers in French school, was a violin virtuoso and a composer, much like Ma himself. Hence, it is not surprising that many passages in Vieuxtemps's and Ma's violin concertos are highly technical and showcase a particular kind of violin technique. For example, the coda section of the first movement of the Vieuxtemps Violin Concerto No. 5 is a virtuosic passage with continuous triplets, double stops, and rapid string crossings while maintaining an even martele bow stroke throughout (see Figure 17). Similarly, there are many spots in the first movement of Ma's concerto which require a similar violin technique. For example, the section from mm. 76-84 (shown in Figure 18) requires excellent intonation of the double stops while maintaining the rhythmical steadiness of slurred triplets. The even distribution of single and slurred notes is also needed to keep the flow of the music reliable. Another section which requires a challenging bow technique is shown in Figure 19 which includes slurred four sixteenth notes into even groups of two that require constant string crossing and octaves.

Figure 17 Fragment of Vieuxtemps violin concerto No. 5 coda, mvt. I, mm. 255-264.

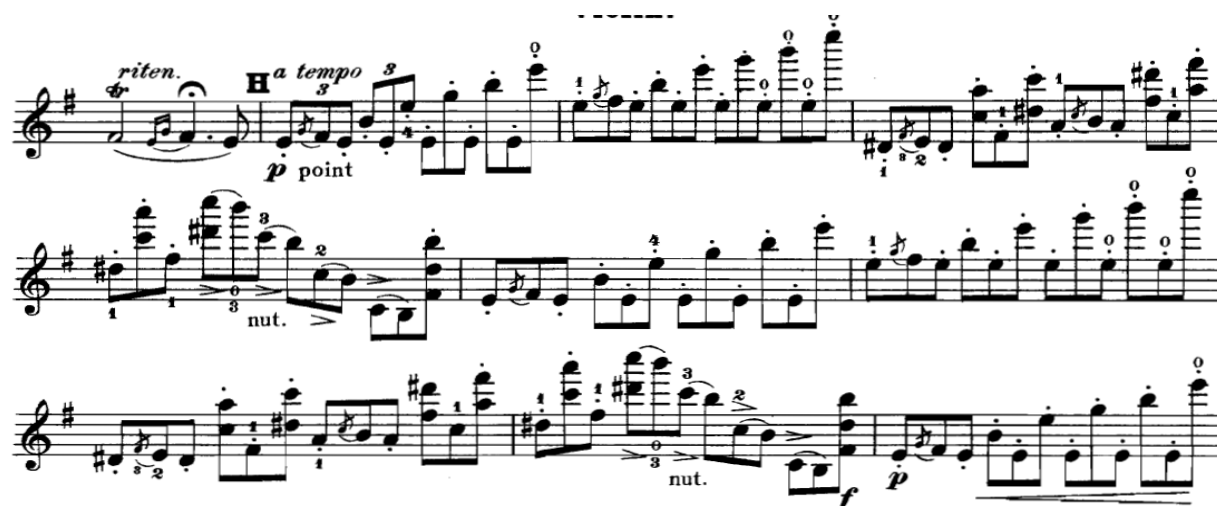


Figure 18 Ma's violin concerto, mvt. I, mm. 76-84.

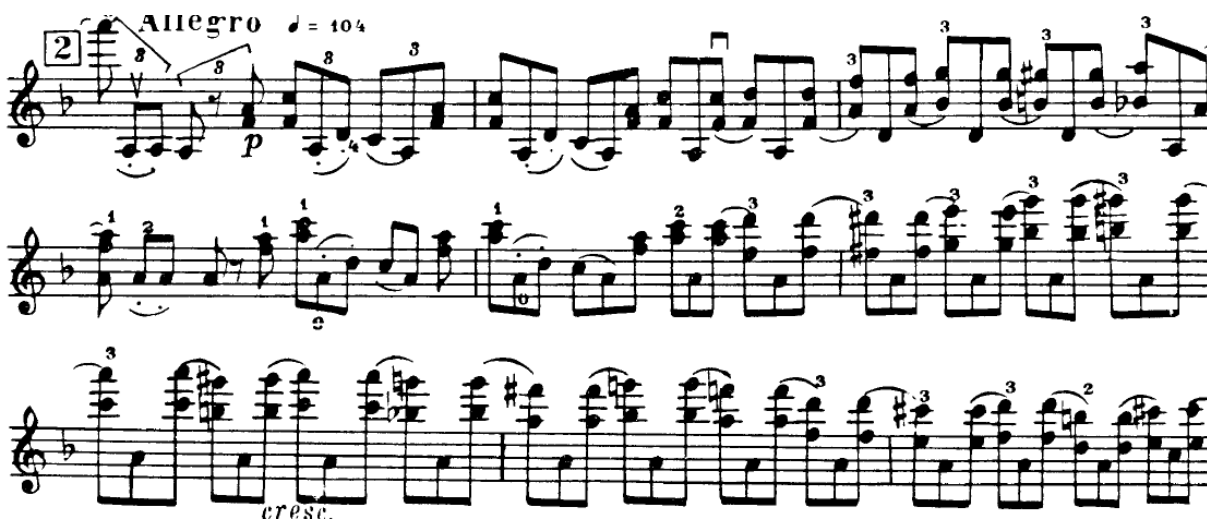


Figure 19 Ma's violin concerto, mvt. I, mm. 110-115.



Through these comparisons, we can understand that Ma knew the Western traditions well, especially the violin repertoire. I would also like to clarify that Ma could have composed in any style he desired, but he composed in an unconventional manner by choice. A good analogy is Pablo Picasso. Picasso was a classically trained painter, and his talent allowed him to create beautiful conventional paintings. However, Picasso chose a new way to express himself as a painter through unconventional shapes and spaces. On that same note, Ma utilized the musical skills and knowledge that he gained to create something new.

Chapter 4: Violin Concerto in F major, Movement II

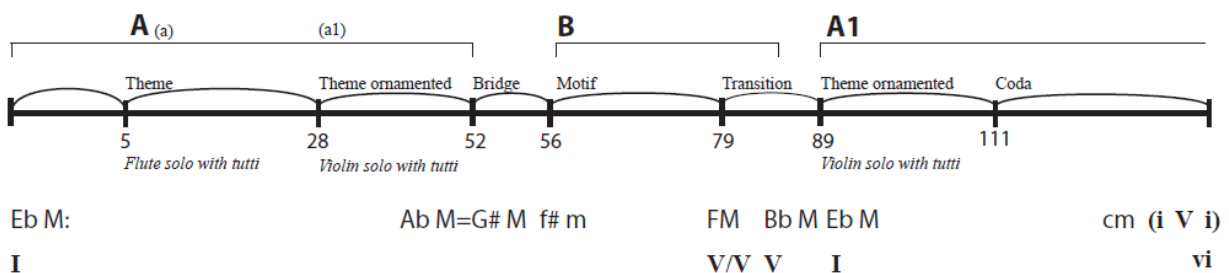
4.1 Analysis of Movement II

The second movement of Ma's violin concerto is slow and songful middle movement. Although the second movement is structurally simpler than the first movement, the two movements still share some important characteristics: short transitions between sections, distant chromatic key relationships, and contrasts between longer melodic statements and shorter, rhythmic motivic materials.

This movement is in a ternary form featuring a Cantonese melody called "Zhao Jun Yuan 昭君怨." It demonstrates Ma's interesting harmonic language where he combines French-influenced harmonic treatment with a Chinese folk song. It is fascinating to hear music created by an Eastern composer that sounds quite similar to both French impressionism and "orientalism". The idea of "orientalism" draws inspiration from emulating Eastern sounds. Also, pentatonic harmonic structures are used to complement a sound that is from the East.

The following diagram shows the formal structure and important key areas of the movement and it includes information about thematic materials and orchestration.

Figure 1 Diagram of formal and harmonic structure of mvt. II.



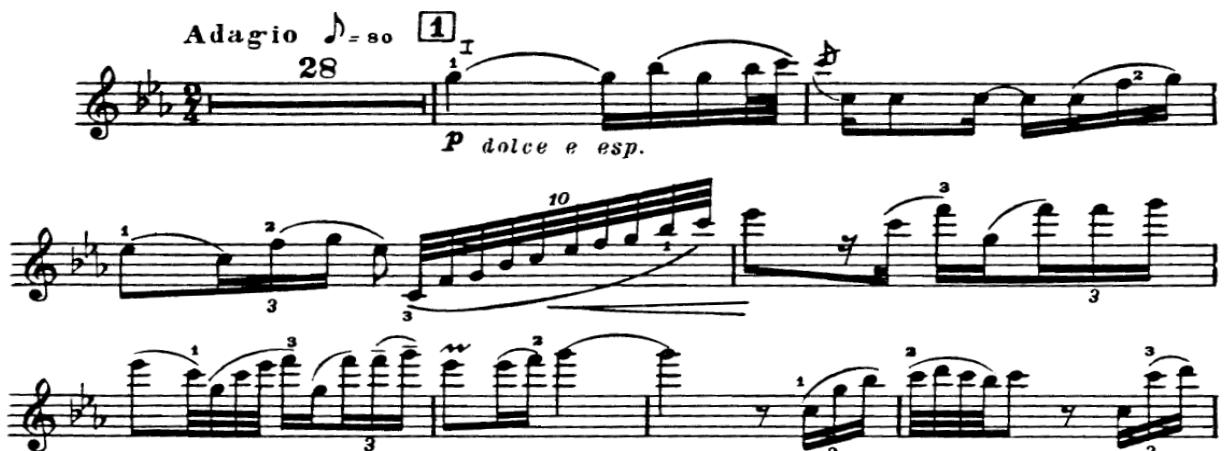
A Section

The whole movement mostly features one theme. The flute plays the Chinese melody from mm. 5-28 (Figure 2), and then the violin takes over that melody with ornamentation from mm. 28-52. Ma transcribed the melody using a pentatonic scale in E-flat major (E-flat, F, G, B-flat, and C). Later statements of the melody are highly ornamented with mostly pentatonic notes (Figure 3). The movement is clearly based on this E-flat pentatonic scale.

Figure 2 Flute solo melody, mvt. II, mm. 1-11.



Figure 3 Violin solo melody with ornamentation, mvt. II, mm. 29-34.



Mm. 52-56 is a short, four-measure transition. It is moving from an E-flat major imperfect authentic cadence to A-flat major. This transition connects to the beginning of the B section, which is in a pentatonic F# minor/A major. These four measures of music have a lot of harmonic activity. As in the first movement, transitional passages in the second movement are concise and short. They usually happen very quickly to fulfill the purpose of modulating to a new key. Modulations in the second movement are in some places even more abrupt than those

in the first movement. As Figure 4 shows, Ma uses an enharmonic modulation in mm. 55–56: E-flat, F-flat, G-flat, A-flat, C-flat, and D-flat at the end of m. 55 are understood enharmonically as D-sharp, E, F-sharp, G-sharp, B, and C-sharp, which are all diatonic in the new key of F-sharp minor. This enharmonic technique allows the transition into the B section to be especially short and compact.

Figure 4 Enharmonic key change, mvt. II, mm. 55-56.

B Section

The B section (mm. 56-89) features an alternation between a short motif in the orchestra and quasi-improvisatory passagework from the solo violin. The motif and the beginning of the first solo phrase are shown in Figure 5. This four-note, staccato motif (three sixteenths, ascending, followed by an eighth note) is repeated in the accompaniment throughout the B section, and it is also closely related to the material in the solo line. Beginning in m. 60, the solo

violin plays a highly embellished melody that emerges from an ornamented statement of the motif. The following phrases in the solo part also begin with statements of this motif.

Figure 5 B section, mvt. II, mm. 57-61.

In fact, this B section motif resembles a small passage from the first movement, suggesting a subtle integration of material between the movements. The figure shown in Figure 5 (in the orchestra, again staccato) resembles the second movement motif in several ways. The rhythms are twice as long in the first movement figure (eighth notes rather than sixteenth notes), and in the first movement, the figure begins on the beat rather than off the beat. But like the second movement motif, it is essentially a pick-up figure (three eighth notes followed by a longer quarter note), and the ascending contour of the anacrusis is also similar. In the first movement (Figure 6), the motif is also repeated several times and is related to the violin melody. The orchestration is also similar as the orchestra plays the accompaniment motif while the solo violin plays ornamented melodic material.

Figure 6 Motivic parallel from mvt. I, mm. 231-233.

The image shows a musical score for measures 231-233. The woodwind section (Flute, Clarinet, Bassoon) is playing a rhythmic accompaniment of sixteenth notes. The string section (Violins I & II, Viola, Violoncello, Double Bass) is playing a melodic line with eighth notes. The tempo is marked 'Tempo I'. The score is in 2/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat).

Although the four note motif is an accompaniment to the melody, it is a very significant musical element throughout the B section. The transitional passage from mm. 79-88 is also based on this accompaniment motif. The three sixteenth pick-up notes to m. 79 (solo violin) has the same gesture as the accompaniment. This gesture serves as a bridge from the B section music into the transition passage (Figure 7). The pick-up gesture (B section accompaniment motif) then becomes a dialogue between the tutti and solo in this transition.

During the transition, the B section motif is contrapuntally transferred from one instrument to another. At m. 83, the accompaniment motif is rhythmically augmented in the woodwinds (eighth notes now, rather than sixteenth notes as shown in Figure 8). The strings follow the lead of the woodwinds; starting from the end of m. 86, the strings play eighth notes like the winds. This amounts to a written-out *ritardando* involving the motif, beginning in m. 83—a kind of tapering-off that appropriately closes this section of music and paves the way for the return of the theme.

Figure 7 Transition from section A to B using the four-note motif, mvt. II, mm.78-79.

Figure 7 is a musical score snippet showing the transition from section A to B using a four-note motif. The score includes parts for Cl., Fg., Cor., Solo, Vl.I, Vl.II, Vla., Vlc., and Cb. The Solo part features a prominent four-note motif. The score is marked with 'p' and 'esp.' (espressivo) and includes a measure number 80.

Figure 8 Augmented motif in winds, mvt. II, mm. 83-85.

Figure 8 is a musical score snippet showing the augmented motif in winds. The score includes parts for Fl., Cl., and Fg. The Fl. part features a prominent augmented motif. The score is marked with 'p' and includes a measure number 85.

The repeat of the same accompaniment motif throughout this section is similar to the idea of an ostinato which occurs often in folk music. Ma's concerto is heavily rooted in folk music, using many specific technical and stylistic elements of folk music. The use of ostinato serves as a guide to performance in many folk styles, providing a structural framework for improvisation and elaboration.⁵⁶

In addition to the transition using the same motif from the B section, mm. 79–88 also prepares the return of the A theme harmonically while continuing the quasi-improvisatory solo line and rhythms of the B section. Before the start of the passage, there is a tonal shift downward

⁵⁶As described, for example, in Richard Taruskin's work *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions*, ostinato is often used to evoke the folk style music. In this book, Taruskin discusses Stravinsky and how his innovative music tightly connects to folk music, and the use of ostinato demonstrates this idea.

from F-sharp major to F major, reflected in an actual change of key signature at m. 79 (Figure 6). Both the B section and the transition are essentially pentatonic—the B section in F-sharp major pentatonic (with some emphasis on D) and the transition in F major pentatonic (with melodic emphasis on non-pentatonic tone E). Although the key change at the transition appears to be abrupt, the key of F major is in fact V of V in relation to the home key. As described at other locations in the concerto (especially the first movement—see again, for example, comments on the development key areas), many transitions and modulations in the piece are remarkably sudden and do not involve expected conventional tonal relationships. In this specific case however Ma actually prepares the recapitulation of the A section in a conventional harmonic fashion. Starting with the pick-up to m. 85, the music has changed to B-flat major (again pentatonic), which is the dominant of the home key; two measures before the return of the A theme, the music is already in the key of E-flat.

In this movement, the boundaries of key changes can be vague because of the way that pentatonicism lacks a single strong tonal center, and Ma often uses the common notes shared by two keys as a way to modulate. This transition into the return of the A theme (mm. 79–89) is one of many examples of this harmonic pattern. The majority of the five notes from one key overlap with the next key and with a single changed note, the tonality has switched to a different key. The F major pentatonic scale contains F, G, A, C, D (E) and B-flat major has Bb, C, D, F, and G, with four notes in common between the two pentatonic scales. From B-flat major to E-flat major (Eb, F, G, Bb, C) there are also four notes in common. Although it is difficult to determine harmonic implications from the quasi-improvisatory melodic line, the harmonic implications of the bass line are quite clear as they are in most classical compositions.

A1 Section

The A1 section returns at m. 89. At the beginning of the movement, the solo flute and the solo violin were featured individually with the theme. At the return, the violin and flute alternate with the melody starting from m. 95, and the violin's melody is highly ornamented. The ambiguity of harmony and form occurs from m. 111 to the end. The melody has already ended in a cadence-like harmony in E-flat major at m. 111. And, in a classical tonal context, the music from there to the end would essentially prolong the same harmony. This is indeed the classical function of a coda. However, the cadence at the very end does not match the expectation. The music has merged into C minor at the end. Although there are some precedents in nineteenth-century music for ending a piece on a different tonic than it begins, such events are rare.⁵⁷ In this case, the fusion of E-flat major and C minor relates to the pentatonic melody itself. As mentioned before, the entire movement is dominated by the pentatonicism. The melodies of both A and B sections are pentatonic, and the general harmonic structure is also based on five notes, which can emphasize the key of the relative major or minor (at the end of the second movement, E-flat major and C minor).

4.2 Harmonic Language: French Influence and Pentatonicism

As the diagram (Figure 1) shows earlier, the ternary form outline of the movement is quite clear. In this movement, the ambiguity lies more in the tonality rather than in the form. The second movement is essentially in the key of E-flat major, with sections that are in E-flat pentatonic. The melody in the A and A1 sections is set in this key, while the B section is highly modulatory. However, there are some unusual harmonic events in this movement, some of which stem from the fact that the main melody and the B section melody are pentatonic. As discussed

⁵⁷ They are, however, more common in early modal music (Renaissance, etc.)

in more detail below, the pentatonic scale dominates the tonality of the entire movement, and the movement's tonal ambiguity is related to the way Ma treats the pentatonic notes.

The harmonic language in the second movement has many interesting aspects. Many of Ma's harmonic influences are evident in this middle movement: fundamental German harmonic progressions, French impressionism, and Chinese folk music. Similar to the fusion of forms in the first movement, Ma has blended many harmonic ideas in this movement.

The pentatonic harmonic treatment was used extensively by twentieth-century French composer who were influenced by impressionistic trends in composition. As Miguel Roig-Francoli has explained, "because there are no half-step tendencies in this scale, however it is tonally ambiguous: any of its pitches can function as a tonal center."⁵⁸ The lack of clear tonality is one characteristic of the pentatonic scale. Because of the five note scale, two tonal centers can exist at the same time. For example, in this movement, the five notes used are E-flat, F, G B-flat, and C. E-flat major or C minor can both be heard as the tonic chord because they share so many of the same notes. The tonality juxtaposes E-flat major and C minor. In the A section from the beginning, the tonality leans more on the E-flat, while at the end of this movement, the music falls on the C minor. At m. 111, the music cadences in E-flat major. In the coda, the solo violin is still emphasizing and lingering on the note E-flat, and the bass is absent which normally confirm the strong tonal center (mm. 110-120). However, in the last four bars, the music clearly cadences in the key of C minor with the C minor seventh chord (C, E-flat, G, B-flat). This sudden change of key is surprising, yet effortless, because Ma just rearranges the common notes that E-flat major and C minor share and switches the bass note. This way the music can "modulate" with no harmonic transitions.

⁵⁸ Miguel A. Roig-Francoli, *understanding post-tonal music*, (Boston: McGraw-Hill, cop. 2008),

The B section starts with a melody played by the violin and is also pentatonic in A major/F-sharp minor. The pentatonic scale of F-sharp, A, B, C-sharp, E, has both tonic chords from A major and F-sharp minor. In the beginning of the B section at m. 56, the music seems to be in the key of A major but in the bass an F-sharp sounds continuously until the modulation at m. 75. Here again, the pentatonic scale and juxtaposition of two related keys make the tonality more vague.

This juxtaposing and pentatonic technique is often associated with Debussy. Jann Pansler has described many of Debussy's innovative musical ideas as follows:

“Like the Impressionist painters, who responded to Haussmann's transformation of Paris and sought to disguise the banality of its forms, Debussy gave the musical line a decorative function. Eschewing conventional melodies, he fragmented themes into short motives and used repetitive figurations resembling those of Liszt and in Russia, The Five. Quickly moving passages wherein overall direction and texture are more audible than individual notes and rhythms give the effect of quasi-improvisation.”⁵⁹

In the same article Pansler mentions that Debussy often used folk music material for his compositions. Many characteristics of Ma's second movement have close connections to Debussy's music. From the analysis, we have seen that this movement is dominated by pentatonicism. Ma uses the pentatonic system to control modulations, key changes, and the overall tonality. From the B section, the short and repetitive accompaniment motif resembles the short motivic material often found in Debussy's work. The free flowing gesture of the melodic lines of the flute and the violin might also derived from the imitation of folk music, as well as Debussy's quasi-improvisational gesture of melodic material.

⁵⁹ Jann Pansler, "Impressionism." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/50026> (accessed March 5, 2015)

Another noticeable similarity between the compositional styles of Ma and Debussy (evident in the second movement) is the instrumentation of the beginning of the movement. The choice of a solo flute with light accompaniment reminds us of the flute solo, which opens Debussy's "*Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (The prelude to the afternoon of a Faune)." The mellow sound of the solo flute sets a scene of wonderland corresponding to the poem. The second movement of Ma's concerto is also based on an ancient poem that describes the sadness of Princess Zhao Jun who had to leave her beloved home for a foreign country because of her arranged political marriage. Like Debussy, Ma chose the sound of the flute to paint the mood of the poem.

Chapter 5: Violin Concerto in F major, Movement III

5.1 General View of Movement III

The lively and fast finale of Ma's concerto is in a rondo form. The typical rondo form features a recurring theme that connects the entire movement and contrasting melodic material that alternates in between the recurring theme. The diagram below (Figure1) outlines a typical classical period rondo form.

Figure 1 A typical Rondo form.

A	B	A	C	A	B'	A
Major key: I	V	I	VI, IV or parallel minor	I	I	I
Minor key: I	III or V	I	VI or IV	I	I	I

Figure 2 provides a diagram of this movement. A separate diagram (Figure 3) demonstrates details of the overall structure. As one might expect, every piece that is in rondo form has its own variations of the basic form, and Ma's finale has its own approach to this form as well. In the following paragraphs, I will clarify a few characteristic features that appear throughout this movement and explain each section, highlighting particular details that are unusual.

Figure 2 Diagram of general formal, mvt. III.

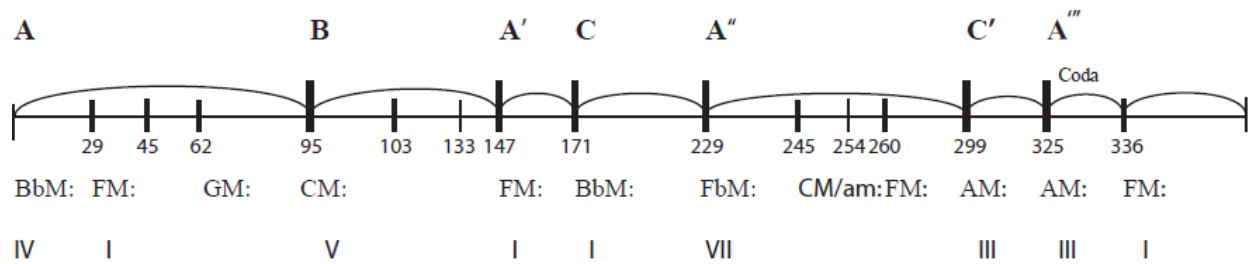
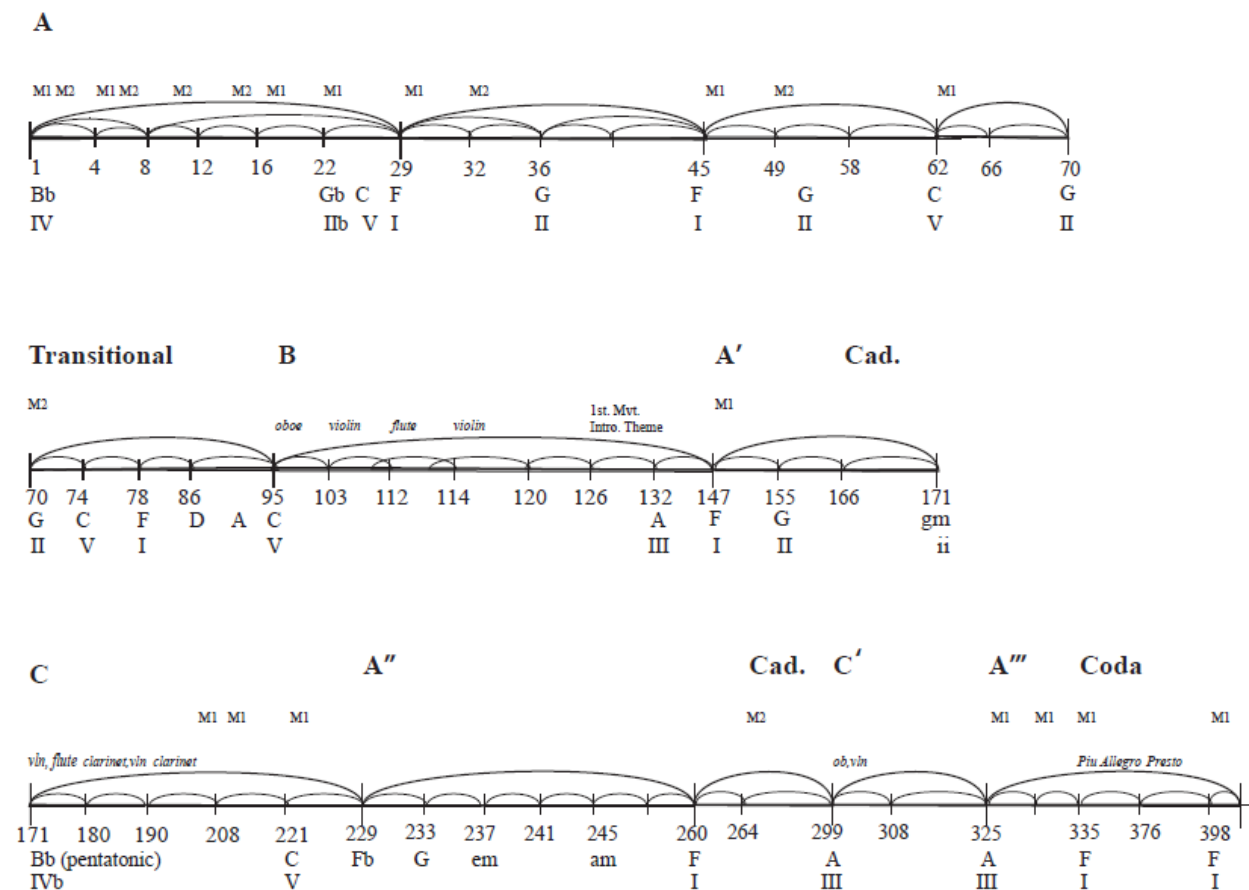


Figure 3 Diagram of detailed formal, harmonic structure, mvt. III.



Sentence-Like Organization of Phrases

Most of the musical phrases are built on repetitions, especially those in the A sections. I think that this is related to the phrase structure of the first A section from mm.1-29. The first A

section is in a sentence-like organization.⁶⁰ The presentation contains two repeated basic ideas, mm.1-4 and mm.5-8. The continuation that follows lasts about 20 measures with a clear cadence in the tonic. Within the presentation part of the structure, each idea contains two motifs: mm. 1-2 (Motif 1) and mm.3-4 (Motif 2). This particular phrase structure of the last movement matches what William Caplin presents in his book *Classical Form*, where he describes this kind of musical scenario as a “compound basic idea.”⁶¹ This sentence-like structure would appear as follows:

[compound basic idea] + [compound basic idea] + [continuation leading to cadence]

As we examine each section individually, we will notice that the continuation of a phrase does not always share the same length. As Caplin suggests, the cadence will define the end of a phrase.

Motifs in the Basic Idea

Within each compound idea there are two important motifs. Motif 1 (M1) and Motif 2 (M2), mentioned above, are both significant to this movement. Figure 4 shows the two motifs in the compound basic idea. M1 is mm.1-2 and M2 is mm.3-4. They are significant in this movement because many melodic materials are derived from them. These motifs are both rhythmic but M1 has a more melodic quality than M2. On the other hand, M2 has simpler rhythmic and melodic elements. M1 is important because every time it is played, one could recognize that the A section has returned. M2 is important due to the simple rhythm in mm.3-5 that helps shape much of the music. The rhythm of three pick-up eighth notes to a quarter note becomes significant throughout this movement.

⁶⁰William E. Caplin, *Classical Forms, a theory of formal functions for the instrumental music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven*.(New York: Oxford University Press: New York, 1998), 61.

⁶¹William E. Caplin, *Classical Forms, a theory of formal functions for the instrumental music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven*.(New York: Oxford University Press: New York, 1998), 61.

Figure 4 Two motifs of compound basic idea, mvt. III, mm. 1-5.

5.2 Unusual features of the rondo form

A Section mm.1- 95

The beginning of the finale (mm.1-29) is unusual because the A section is not presented in the tonic key. The movement begins in the key of B-flat, but it is perhaps more appropriate to view these 29 measures as the subdominant of F major instead of a new, established key center. The entire section is akin to an introductory section (with previews of motifs) that prepares for the “real” A section in m.29. As mentioned above, this section presents two motifs (M1 and M2), and the continuation of the phrase is based on the rhythmic figures of each motif. At m.22 the music leads to a cadence in the home key in order to reaffirm the tonality.

In mm. 29-45, the solo violin enters with A material in F major, presented in a sentence-like structure. This section is based upon M1 which has melodic quality as mentioned earlier. M2 is hidden in the tutti violin part which accompanies the soloist. As shown in Figure 5, the first and second violins play a diminution of a fragment of the M2 rhythm in mm.33-35, which can be identified by the three pick-up notes. The continuation of this solo section A is built on repetitions. The music in mm.35-44 (Figure 6) of the solo violin part changes from repeating each measure to repeating each half measure.

Figure 5 Section A played by solo, mvt. III, mm. 29-35.

The musical score for Figure 5 shows measures 29-35 of Section A. The Solo Violin part begins with a melodic line in F major, marked with a forte (f) dynamic. The Violin I and II parts play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, also marked with f and p. The Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass parts provide harmonic support with various rhythmic figures and dynamics. The score is written in 4/4 time and includes a key signature of one flat (B-flat).

Figure 6 Solo violin part, mvt. III, mm. 35-44.



The thematic material of section A is strengthened by a tutti restatement in the tonic. In mm.45-62, this section is presented in an identical structure to the preceding solo violin section. However, the continuation is expanded by the solo violin modulating to the dominant key of C major. In m.62, section A appears once again in the dominant key of C major before moving to the B theme section. In this short appearance, only M1 is used as the basic idea and this time the sentence structure is simplified to 2+2+4 with a cadence in G major.

The transitional section in mm.70-95 can be broken into two segments, the first of which is in mm.70-85. The tonality still emphasizes F major, the phrases are symmetrical, and the material is derived from M2. As depicted in Figure 7, the three pick-up sixteenths to an eighth note resembles the M2 rhythm. The second segment of this section (from mm.86-95) starts to move away from the tonic with passage work that is highly modulatory. Since this passage is virtuosic with a lot of passing harmonies, it creates a dramatic effect before the arrival of the *cantabile* B section.

Figure 7 Solo violin part, mvt. III, mm. 70-71.



B Section mm.95-147

The B section mostly tonicizes the dominant key and has contrasting thematic material, rhythmic material, and orchestration. The melodic material itself has a more lyrical character. The phrasing is not as symmetrical as the A section. The repetitive rhythmic figure of a thirty-second note with a dotted sixteenth note becomes part of the thematic identity of this B section (see Figure8). This rhythm also contrasts with the even thirty-second, sixteenth, and eighth note rhythmic elements of the A section. The orchestration of the B section features more solo wind instruments, and the texture of the orchestra is much thinner. The thematic material of the B section is introduced by the oboe (which provides a different color), and the solo violin responds with the same theme. The musical conversation is continued by the flute and solo violin. While the solo violin continues with passage work, the wind instruments play the more structurally important melodic material (fragments of the B section thematic statement, or the thirty-second note with dotted sixteenth-note rhythm). The texture is reduced immediately at the beginning of the B section, and the duet solos are accompanied by only the bassoon, trombone, tutti violin and cello. Although Ma chose a dotted rhythmic character, this section still has a great deal of fluidity.

Ob. *mp Cantabile*

Figure 9 Introduction theme from the first movement, mvt. I, mm. 1-5.

Allegro moderato (♩ = 92)

Violino I. *p* *pizz*

Violino II. *p* *pizz*

Viola *p* *pizz*

Violoncello *p* *pizz*

Contrabbasso *p* *pizz*

5

This musical score is for the song "The Rose Tree" and is arranged for a solo voice and a four-piece band. The solo part is written in a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 2/4 time signature. The band accompaniment consists of four staves: Violin (Vla.), Viola (Vik.), Violoncello (Vcl.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The Violin and Viola parts are in treble clef, while the Violoncello and Contrabass parts are in bass clef. The music features a melody with many eighth and sixteenth notes, and the accompaniment provides a harmonic foundation with various rhythmic patterns.

A' Section mm. 148-171

Before another arrival of the A' section, the music in mm.141-142 cadences temporarily in A major. The bass line descends from A to F in mm.146-148, and the music returns to the tonic key within two measures. The solo violin restates the familiar A' section motifs in the home key, quickly reestablishing F major before the harmony changes.

There is a mini cadenza inserted in mm.166-170 that links the A section to C section. The tonal character of this short passage reminds us of the pentatonic material Ma uses in the second movement. The pentatonic notes of B-flat major/G minor take the strong F major tonal center away and prepare us for the upcoming B-flat pentatonic thematic material of the C section.

C Section mm. 171-229

The C section continues with the B-flat pentatonic material from the previous passage. In addition, the C section also reflects many characteristics from the lyrical B section. The songful thematic material is expressed through solo instruments. The melody is exchanged between solo violin, flute, and clarinet. Ma gradually simplifies the texture by reducing the instrumentation. This section has solo violin, flute, and clarinet as the leading voices and bassoons, horns, and viola supporting the harmony. The harmonic structure of this C section is mostly in B-flat, but briefly arrives in the key of C major towards the end of the section before going to F-flat major. The driving force of this section is a fragment of M1 that pushes the music forward to the next section. The thirty-second notes of M1 play a contrasting role in the lyrical thematic material of the C section, and the energetic M1 serves as a reminder of the initial motif, even when the music has moved on to another section (see Figure 11).

Figure 11 Fragment of M1 in C section, mvt. III, mm. 188-193.

A" Section mm. 229-299

Many interesting features exist in the "A" section starting in m. 229. First of all, the harmonic rhythm is faster than the other A sections. In m.229-260, the phrase structure is based on a harmonic progression that is four measures in duration, and the harmony changes almost every phrase: from F-flat major to G major, E minor, and A minor before returning to F major at m. 260. The F-flat major phrase sounds very similar to the E minor phrase because they use almost the same notes. Similarly, Ma also uses a similar enharmonic technique in his second movement. The section from m. 260 to m. 299 is basically in the home key until m. 293. Towards the end of this section, the harmony goes through A-flat major and G-flat major.

Secondly, connections exist between the thematic materials of this section and previous sections. Fragments of the first movement introductory theme are recycled again in this section in mm.254-259. Additionally, the oboe part from mm. 264-266 (Figure 12), the thematic materials of the violin cadenza (Figure 13) and the transitional passage (Figure 14) all recall the

material of m.70 (Figure 15) and they all have the three pick-up notes with rhythm modifications. But the pitch gesture stays the same with first and third notes ascending by whole step and the second and forth notes being are the same). This three pick-up note gesture also matches the characteristic rhythm of M2. I believe that this particular material in the C section is directly linked to m.70 and indirectly connected to M2 at the beginning.

Figure 12 Oboe part material similar to m.70 of third movement, mvt. III, mm. 264-269.



Figure 13 Violin cadenza material similar to m.70 of third movement, mvt. III, mm. 272-280.



Figure 14 Solo violin and strings material similar to m.70 of mvt. III in mm. 290-295 of mvt. III



Figure 15 m.70 motif of mvt. III.



C' Section mm. 299-325

In a rondo form, the B section will usually return for a second time. However, in this movement, the C section unexpectedly reappears. The oboe and solo violin alternate the lyrical melodic statement in this section. In the previous C section (mm.171-229), the motivic material of M1 contrasts with the thematic material of the C section. In the second C section, the tension is presented harmonically. The solo melodies are in A major pentatonic, and the accompaniment materials are in A major. Therefore the harmony is somewhat ambiguous until the final A section returns at m.325.

A''' Section mm. 325-399

The final A section also has a few features worth mentioning. There is a false return at m.325 with M1 in A major. A second return also happens at m. 336 with an authentic cadence in F major. This is followed by the coda, immediately starting two measures after the second return. There are actually two parts contained in this lengthy coda, indicated by two sets of tempo markings: *piu allegro* (m. 336), and *presto* (m.376). In this two-part coda, Ma modulates frequently to give this concerto an epic ending. Fragments of M1 and M2 are used throughout the entire coda. The coda ends on M1 in F major to correspond with the beginning of the coda, as well as the beginning of the third movement.

5.3 Comparison to Previous Movements

The third movement shares several similarities to the first two movements. Both first and third movements share the idea of an introductory section--the first movement has its own

introductory thematic material (which is quoted in the finale movement in multiple sections), whereas the last movement uses the same material as the “real” theme but in the subdominant key. Due to the nature of rondo form, the initial motifs of the A section serve as an anchor in the progression of the music just as in the first movement. The quick change (short transition) of keys also occurs in both the first and third movements.

All three movements have their own characteristic motifs, but some of them are similar. For example, many places in the last movement use the three pick-up notes to a double valued note (a part of M2), which relates to the motivic material in the accompaniment of the B section in the second movement. That motivic element of the second movement is closely connected to mm.231-233 of the first movement. Therefore, the three pick-up note gesture is shared among all three movements.

As mentioned in my analysis of the last movement’s C section, there are important uses of pentatonic melodies and harmonies. Similar to the second movement, Ma uses pentatonic notes that are in both major and the relative minor keys. Therefore the harmony is difficult to identify as having a clear tonal center. Another similarity between the second and third movements is the prominent use of wind instruments in the orchestration. In the B and C sections of the finale, the orchestra is reduced to a simple and transparent texture reminiscent of the second movement’s orchestration. The combination of pentatonic harmonies and use of wind instruments also remind us of a French stylistic influence.

Before concluding the analysis of all three movements, it is necessary to review Ma’s musical style as reflected in this concerto. The emphasis on melodic material was greatly influenced by the monophonic texture of folk music. Chinese folk music does not share the same

compositional philosophies as Western music. Therefore the music requires a unique point of view to understand it. A large portion of the analysis of the first movement dealt with unusual features of the harmony and form which we should keep in mind while analyzing the other movements. An awareness of both Chinese and Western techniques in this composition will give us a more balanced understanding of the piece as a whole.

Chapter 6: Ma Si-Cong, the Musical Bridge between East and West

As we have become acquainted with Ma's compositional voice, we have also examined the diverse influences in his music. From the various excerpts in Chapter 2 and the thorough study of his violin concerto, we see how both Chinese musical elements and Western classical music play a significant role in Ma's compositions. The traditions of Western classical music that influenced Ma the most include German traditions, French impressionism, and certain Russian musical styles. Ma's music bridges the musical gap from the East to the West.

This document has hopefully provided knowledge about the Chinese musical elements that are connected to certain unconventional aspects of the concerto. Folk music influenced this concerto in almost every aspect, including the uniqueness of its formal structure, organization of its melodic material, aspects of harmonic organization, and characteristics of thematic elements. Chinese influences are also evident in the borrowed melodies and in the imitation of Chinese instruments.

Scholarly work on this concerto has previously been done in China, but mostly in academic circles that were, until recently, more or less inaccessible to Western readers. In these writings, the connection of borrowed folk songs to individual movements of the concerto has been noted--the melodic material in the concerto is closely related to specific Cantonese songs. The first movement incorporates "NiaoJing Xuan 鸟惊喧", and the theme of the second movement, played on the violin, is from the popular tune "Zhao Jun Yuan 昭君怨". Lastly, the third movement is inspired by "He Xin Sui 贺新岁". The connection of these Chinese songs to

the concerto has a profound meaning. First of all, these Cantonese traditional songs originate from the region Main which was where Ma was born and raised. In each movement, we can clearly hear Chinese-influenced melodies and harmonies recalling the sound of Ma's youth. Secondly, Ma uses the meaning of these songs to express his personal beliefs. Ma's son, Ru-Long Ma, wrote several unpublished articles about his father's work, aiming to explain the musical ideas behind Ma's compositions. In these articles, Ru-Long Ma writes:

This concerto was composed during the hard times of the Sino-Japanese war, however it reflected the faith and hope of that generation. The song "Niao Jing Xuan" describes how birds are singing about the great land of China, and flowers are blooming to celebrate the thriving country. The song "Zhao Jun Yuan," used in the second movement, expresses the sadness of Princess Zhao Jun upon leaving her beloved family and homeland because of apolitical marriage for the Jin dynasty. And the last movement has captured the joyfulness of the Chinese New Year festival...⁶²

While the concerto itself is a Western genre, it also preserves Chinese musical traditions. The violin concerto was inspired by regional folk songs, subtly applied. Because the folk songs are an important part of this concerto, analysis in conventional musicological or music-theoretic terms is problematic. Hopefully, an introduction to Ma's life, compositional styles, and influences can provide us a platform from which we can understand the musical world of Ma—and of his soul.

Before starting this project, I knew very little about Ma Si-Cong. As a Chinese classical musician, I only knew a handful of Ma's violin pieces based on famous Chinese tunes. I had previously heard that he was one of the first classical composers belonging to the early contemporary period of Chinese history. However, I had little knowledge beyond this. I never expected to find symphonies or string quartets composed by Ma Si-Cong and was surprised by

⁶²http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/articlelist_1757948307_13_1.html

the size and range of his repertoire. During the process of getting to know Ma Si-Cong, I realized how much he and his music were underappreciated. His social status prevented his music from reaching its full potential. Making his music more known to both Chinese and Western audiences become one of my motivations behind this project.

In recent years, the Western music world has become fascinated with contemporary classical compositions containing Chinese elements. Chinese contemporary composers like Chen Yi, Bright Sheng and Tan Dun are receiving acceptance in the West. All of them share the same inspiration: music from China. As this musical trend thrives, it is important to find out how and where this success originated. This can be credited to first generation Chinese classical musicians like Ma who not only contributed musical talent to China, but also worked to build a bridge that united the East with the West. In this document, I have dealt mainly with one of his “Western”-genre compositions, the Violin Concerto in F. It represents the two specific musical fields in which he excelled: composition and violin. This concerto showcases Ma’s full capabilities as a classically trained musician.

As the world learns to appreciate contemporary music with Chinese elements, Ma’s reputation is being gradually restored in China. A Ma Si-Cong museum has been built in Guangzhou to honor him. Many violin competitions and awards have been established to honor Ma’s legacy. In 2012, Ma’s 100th birthday was celebrated worldwide. Chinese Classical musicians, both in China and the United States, held concerts in memory of Ma. Ma’s name and music are being restored in many important historical publications by the Chinese government. There are also more scholars and students researching his music. Moreover, they are also recording his violin music, making it part of the accepted violin repertoire.

The main goal of this document has been to provide more knowledge about Ma Si-Cong to both Chinese classical musicians and Western readers and to enrich the understanding of contemporary classical music history in China, as well as Ma's significant place in Chinese history. Hopefully, I have restored some of Ma's reputation as a classical composer, violinist, and pedagogue. And to the Western world, this document will serve as an introduction to Ma and his compositions. Through an analysis of Ma's violin concerto, it is hoped that more scholarly research will be done on his other classical compositions. From the list of compositions provided in the Appendix, it is clear that there are many more compositions to be analyzed and studied such as violin sonatas, string quartets, the opera, and his ballet music. I hope this document will serve as inspiration, and that many more will study Ma and his works.

Appendix

This is a partial list of Ma Si-Cong's work in chronological order. The list combines information from *Ma Si Cong Nian Pu [Chronicle of Ma Si Cong's life]* and *A Critical History of New Music in China*. When the date of a composition is different in these two sources, I have preferred the information in *A Critical History of New Music in China*, since it is published internationally.

Due to the complication of his political status, unorganized publications and his unstable lifestyle, it is difficult to have a complete list with unified information on some of the compositions. Some of the music was banned and destroyed in China during Ma's lifetime, which makes it difficult to trace back. There are also some compositions Ma composed for Taiwan that were published only in Taiwan, perhaps as Ma's musical protest to China who treated him unfairly. Given the sensitive political issues between China and Taiwan, accurate information about Ma's music is in many cases difficult to obtain. While he was in the United States, Ma composed a number of works for private purposes, almost none of which were apparently meant for publication. The information about the late compositions is from his manuscript collection privately owned by his family.

Year	Composition Title	Genre
1929	古词七首 <i>Seven Old Verses</i>	Vocal music
1931	弦乐四重奏 <i>String Quartet in C Minor</i>	Instrumental music
1933	钢琴三重奏 <i>Piano Trio in B Minor</i>	Instrumental music
1935	摇篮曲 <i>Lullaby for Violin and Piano</i>	Instrumental music
1937	不是死，是永生 <i>It is not Death, but Eternal Life</i> (words by Cai Ruohong)	Vocal/instrumental music, large-scale vocal solo with orchestral accompaniment
1937	绥远组曲 <i>Inner Mongolian Violin Suite</i>	Instrumental music
1937-1945	抗日战争歌曲 20 余首 <i>Twenty-plus Songs From the Anti-Japanese War</i>	Vocal music
1938	弦乐四重奏 <i>String Quartet No. 1</i>	Instrumental music
1938	第一回旋曲 <i>Rondo No. 1 for Violin and Piano</i>	Instrumental music
1939	钢琴奏鸣曲 <i>Piano Sonata</i>	Instrumental music
1941	第一交响乐 <i>Symphony No. 1</i>	Orchestral music
1942	西藏音诗 <i>Tibetan Tone-poem Violin Suite</i>	Instrumental music
1943	雨后集 <i>After The Rain</i> (six songs, words by Guo Moruo)	Vocal music
1944	牧歌 <i>Pastorale for Violin</i>	Instrumental music
1944	小提琴 F 大调协奏曲 <i>Violin Concerto in F Major</i>	Instrumental/orchestral music

1945	钢琴五重奏 <i>Quintet for Piano and Strings</i>	Instrumental music
1946	抛锚大合唱 <i>Casting Anchor Cantata</i>	Vocal music
1946	民主大合唱 <i>Democracy Cantata</i> (words by Duanmu Hongliang)	Vocal music
1946	民歌舞蹈两集 <i>Two Volumes of Folk Songs and Dances</i>	Vocal music
1947	祖国大合唱 <i>Motherland Cantata</i> (Words by Jin Fan)	Vocal music
1948	春天大合唱 <i>Spring Cantata</i> (Words by Jin Fan)	Vocal music
1949	喜乐序曲 <i>Joyous Overture</i>	Instrumental music
1950	鸭绿江大合唱 <i>Yalu River Cantata</i> (Words by Jin Fan)	Vocal music
1950	第二回旋曲 <i>Rondo No. 2 for Violin</i>	Instrumental music
1950	鼓舞，杯舞，巾舞 <i>Drum Dance, Cup Dance, Scarf Dance for Piano</i>	Instrumental music
1952	粤曲三首 <i>Three Cantonese Tunes for Piano</i>	Instrumental music
1952	春天舞曲 <i>Spring Dance for Violin</i>	Instrumental music
1952	慢诉 <i>Sharing Feelings Slowly</i>	Instrumental music
1952	山歌 <i>Mountain Song for Violin</i>	Instrumental music
1952	抒情曲 <i>Lyrical Song</i>	Instrumental music
1952	跳龙灯 <i>Jumping the Dragon Lantern</i>	Instrumental music
1952	跳元宵 <i>Dancing at the Lantern Festival for Violin</i>	Instrumental music
1954	新疆狂想曲 <i>Xinjiang Rhapsody</i>	Instrumental music
1954	山林之歌 <i>Song of Mountains and Forests</i>	Orchestral music
1955	花儿集 <i>Three Qinghai Folk Songs</i>	Vocal music
1956	淮河大合唱 <i>Huai River Cantata</i> (Words by Jin Fan)	Vocal music
1956	钢琴小奏鸣曲六首 <i>Six Piano Sonatinas</i>	Instrumental music
1956	管乐五重奏 <i>Wind Quintet</i>	Instrumental music
1959	第二交响曲 <i>Symphony No. 2</i>	Orchestral music
1960	A 大调大提琴协奏曲 <i>Cello Concerto in A Major</i>	Instrumental /orchestral music
1971	阿美山歌 <i>A Mei Folk Song</i>	Vocal music
1973	阿美组曲 <i>A Mei Suite for Violin</i>	Instrumental music
1978	晚霞 <i>Clouds at Sunset</i> (Music for a Ballet)	Ballet

1980	第三小提琴回旋曲 <i>Rondo for Violin No. 3</i>	Instrumental music
1980	第四小提琴回旋曲 <i>Rondo for Violin No. 4</i>	
1983	双小提琴协奏曲 <i>Concerto for Double Violin</i>	Instrumental/orchestral Music
1983	小提琴二重奏 <i>Duets for Violins</i>	Instrumental music
1983	A 大调钢琴协奏曲 <i>Piano Concerto in A Major</i>	Instrumental /orchestral music
1984	第三小提琴奏鸣曲 <i>Violin Sonata No. 3</i>	Instrumental music
1986	热碧亚 <i>Rebiya</i>	Opera

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