



Is Xiao Youmei a Criminal of Westernization of Chinese Music?



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Abstract

Some Chinese scholars always criticized the situation of 20th-century Chinese music education when criticizing post-colonial Chinese music education. Some of the arguments made by several music educators and musicians of that time were also one of the targets of criticism. Due to Xiao Youmei's view that "Chinese music lags behind Western music by a thousand years," as well as his role as the founder of China's first professional music academy, his name has repeatedly appeared in the post-colonial criticism of Chinese music education by Chinese scholars. Those scholars believe that the implantation of the western music education system results in the adherent character of the music education and value standards in some developing countries and makes them affiliate to the West in the concept and form of music development, propelling the dissemination of "Western Music-centrism Theory" in the field of Chinese music education. The western music theory is currently the authoritative mainstream in Chinese music education and culture, impeding the development and spread of traditional Chinese music theory. That also leads to the lack of voice of traditional Chinese music. However, it is unfair to blame a historical figure more than 100 years ago for the over-westernization of Chinese music education, even though he directly applied the western music education system to China. This essay discusses some of Xiao Youmei's musical thoughts and the criticisms some scholars have made about him based on related historical, political, and humanistic backgrounds, and re-evaluates his contribution and blunder from the perspective of post-colonialism.

Introduction

Unlike military and political colonization, post-colonialism is fundamentally different because it is a form of cultural colonization. 'The worldview of post-colonialism mainly subjects to the modern ideas of the West. The third world is under the control of knowledge-discourses in their ideologies... ..making it impossible for them to form and express independent subjectivities and historical consciousness, so the third world has no choice but to follow a western ideology.'¹ Post-colonialism is different from colonialism because colonial hegemony and power are unequal and oppressive relationships, which mainly appeared as the political and economic control of weak countries by stronger ones. This relationship can be broken and eliminated by resistance from the colonized. By contrast, post-colonialism is a kind of ideological control and cultural infiltration, which is a conscious or unconscious process of implicit acceptance, compared to the economic and political colonization.

Indeed, Chinese music education in conservatories is still systematically using western style. Many music schools mainly adopt western ways of teaching, especially in music composition. Western teachings such as solfeggio, piano, chorus, polyphony, musical form, orchestrate, score reading, conductor, are considered as compulsory courses, accounting for the most significant proportion of the total credit.² In 1998, the Chinese Academy of Music collaborated with German scholars on a research project named 'Comparison of Music Education in China and Germany.' German scholars once joked informally: "You are using a completely German music education system, so there is

¹ Ben Xu, *Towards Post-modern and Post-colonialism* (Beijing: Chinese Social Science Publishing House.1996), 164.

² Jin Song, "A Post-colonial study of Chinese Music at the Turn of the Century". *Fujian Arts*, no.6 (2005): 7.

no 'Chinese-German comparison,' but only 'German-German comparison'³. The joke tells the truth. In recent years, the government advocated the 'elegant music' in school education and social education, in which western symphony music is still mainly taught. Piano, violin, and electronic piano are the most popular instruments among children, indicating the West's admiration, which is also the result of music education in China since the 20th century.

Although some Chinese researchers have studied and criticized the relationship between Chinese and Western Music and Chinese music education from the perspective of post-colonialism in recent years, such studies have not become a trend in China yet. Some music educators even think that the only way forward Chinese music is to turn to the West for help.⁴ Among the few scholars who have made post-colonial studies on Chinese music education, some scholars mention and criticize that Chinese music education is in a mode of teaching based on Western education, with the content focusing on western culture and the teaching ideas following the West, and seeks 'total Westernization'.⁵ Some critics ascribe the 'total westernization' to a group of scholars and pioneers of Chinese music education in the late 19th and early 20th century, who advocated for the western modern music education. Moreover, blaming that their reform of Chinese music education has resulted in the West's dependence on current Chinese music teaching, and some of their statements have left many Chinese the impression that Chinese music is inferior to the western counterpart. The first one being criticized is Xiao Youmei, who established the first professional Western-style Music College in China and was famous for the comment: 'Chinese music lags behind Western music a thousand years'⁶. Xiao is therefore considered as the culprit of the westernization of Chinese music education. However, it is unfair to think of him as the

³ Jin Song, "A Post-colonial study of Chinese Music at the Turn of the Century". *Fujian Arts*, no.6 (2005): 7-9.

⁴ Zhongde Cai, *On Humanistic Thinking of Music* (Guangzhou: Guangdong People's Publishing House, 1999), 319.

⁵ Bin Liu, "Reflection on the Reason of Total Westernization in Chinese. Music Education." *Journal of College of Xinxiang*, no. 6 (2019): 182-183.

⁶ Youmei Xiao, "The evolution of old music," in *Complete works of Xiao Youmei*, ed. Linqun Chen, Qun Luo (Shanghai: Shanghai Conservatory of music press. 2004), 689.

culprit just according to his effort in popularizing western music teaching and some of his early remarks that western music was advanced, without analyzing the historical facts of that period. To objectively evaluate a historical figure, we should first start from comprehensive and informative resources, followed by objective analysis of Xiao Youmei's own words, literary theory, and other relevant materials, so that a piece of convincing evidence can be achieved. Besides, we should also consider the historical background and social rules, because, for all the historical figures, their words, work, thoughts are indispensable to related time and society. One's self-consciousness comes from the interaction of factors such as politics, economy, and cultural tradition. Therefore, this thesis will discuss post-colonial criticisms of Xiao Youmei in the framework of post-colonialism. The main research question is that Are Xiao Youmei's Music and ideas on music education truly comprehensively Westernized? Subquestions are when some scholars are making post-colonial criticisms of Chinese music education, they have a negative attitude towards Xiao Youmei's music thoughts and music education practices, but what are the main theories that they are in accordance with? Are their post-colonial criticisms of Xiao Youmei reasonable and fair? By applying historical research and literature review methods, I have briefly organized the historical background of the late 19th century to the early 20th century as well as the history of Chinese music education at that period. I have also gathered and arranged Xiao Youmei's musical works and have analyzed his music views and his thoughts on music education. Furthermore, I have collected and categorized articles mentioning Xiao Youmei's in post-colonial criticisms of Chinese music, and have examined his statements in these papers.

The first chapter of this paper introduces the historical background of the late 19th century to the early 20th century, presenting the social situation at that time and the attitudes of advanced intellectuals toward Western culture. The second chapter puts forward the condition of Chinese music education at that time, aiming to show that modern Western-style music education in China is based on the burgeoning decline of the country's old traditional music education model. The music education model in 20th

century China complies with historical choices, conforming to historicism. The third chapter discusses Xiao Youmei's life as well as a review and analysis of his musical thoughts and ideas on music education. The fourth chapter arranges some of the criticisms made by Chinese scholars of Xiao Youmei and an analysis of some of these criticisms from a post-colonial perspective. The contents of the fifth chapter are some of my comments on the criticisms of Xiao Youmei. The sixth chapter is a conclusion that answers the main research question while also pointing out several problems that should be focused on in future explorations.

I. Historical Background

The 19th century was an era of colonization, with imperialist colonial territories on all continents. The Opium War was triggered by the conflicts of the opium trade, and the British then started to open up the door of China and encroached its land. The first Opium War, which began in June 1840, lasted more than two years and ended with the signing of the Nanking Treaty, the first unequal treaty in the history of modern China, in August 1842. The signing of the Nanking Treaty marked a serious violation of the Chinese government's national sovereignty and the entry of China from a feudal society into a 'semi-feudal and semi-colonial' society.

The Opium War is a watershed in the history of cultural exchanges between China and the West. Before the Opium War, Christian missionary activities were carried out under the Chinese government's control and were basic cultural exchanges. While after the Opium War, China was defeated and lost its sovereignty, and the Christian missionary activities, together with acts of aggression such as 'trade, land cut, compensation, etc.' were written into unequal treaties. China had no choice but to accept it. That shows the start of the cultural colonization from the imperialist powers, through religious communication, as well as political control, economic exploitation, and military invasion.⁷

The failure of the Opium War did not make the Qing rulers aware of their shortcomings, but the officials and intellectuals represented by Lin Zexu (1785-1850) and Wei Yuan (1794-1857) woke up from the defeat of the war and began to reflect the causes of the failure and the future of the country. The first thing they realized was the backwardness of 'artifacts' (mainly refers to weapons and equipment). They believed that it was

⁷ Wenci Feng, *History of Communication between Chinese and Foreign Music* (Changsha: Hunan Education Press, 1998), 252.

indispensable to learn advanced military technology from the West. The idea of 'Shi Yi Chang Ji Yi Zhi Yi' (To learn from the foreigner and then compete with them) had the most significant impact. That was the first time in the modern history of China to formally recognize the importance of learning from the West, which also marked the beginning of awareness of the connection between education and the destiny of a nation.⁸

While some scholars in China proposed to learn Western technology, the Christian Church in China started to do supportive activities such as establishing schools, apart from regular religious teaching, to promote Christianity in China and ensure the interests of the West itself. The church schools started mainly from training poor young children. Unlike traditional Chinese teaching, music played an important role in western Church school education, together with religious teaching and knowledge of modern science.⁹

In the 1860s, when China was defeated in the Second Opium War, the Qing government, represented by officials like Zeng Guoxuan (1811-1872) and Li Hongzhang (1823-1901), launched the Westernization Movement (Yang Wu Yun Dong)¹⁰. During this period, it became a popular idea in the ruling class and academy to learn skills from the West and improve China. During the Westernization Movement, the government managed to reform traditional education, establish first modern schools, translate western books, cultivate new talents, send international students abroad, etc. However, this movement mainly focused on western science, technology, and other instrumental

⁸ Chunmiao Wu, "The Evolution of Modern Chinese Thoughts to Save the Nation by Education," *Higher Education Exploration*, no. 1 (2019): 110.

⁹ Wenci Feng, *History of Communication between Chinese and Foreign Music* (Changsha: Hunan Education Press, 1998), 255.

¹⁰ The Western Affairs Movement introduced a large number of Western science and technology and various western literature, and trained a group of students studying abroad, opened the door to Western studies. Although the Qing Army's Beiyang Marine Division was destroyed in the Sino-Japanese War, this movement still had great significance to the modernization of thought and science in the Qing Dynasty and even China as a whole.

Source: Wikipedia contributors, "Self-Strengthening Movement." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, last revised 3 August 2020 10:24 UTC, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Self-Strengthening_Movement&oldid=970954627

aspects, rather than the ideological and cultural levels.

The year 1894 witnessed the first Sino-Japanese War, by then Japan had just finished the Meiji Restoration, and then launched the war against China. In 1895, China was defeated and signed the Treaty of Shimonoseki with Japan. The fiasco burned people in the whole country with a sense of crisis. At the end of the 19th century, the Eight-Power Allied forces invaded China¹¹ and the Boxer Rebellion broke out. However, due to the corruption of the Qing government, the Boxer Movement failed under the suppression of Chinese and foreign reactionary forces. In 1901, the Qing government was forced to sign the Boxer Protocol with eleven countries, including Britain, the United States, Russia, Japan, France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Belgium, Netherlands, Spain. China's repeated failures during the war prompted some scholars to notice the power of the West, thus they started to pursue modernization. Some of the new Chinese intellectuals who first approached western knowledge began to reflect on the Chinese system and cultural traditions. After that, they started to learn all of the western cultures., for example, philosophy, drama, novels, films, Music, and so on. Translated Western books began to spread widely in China, and even more schools promoting "Western learning" were founded.¹² Reforming culture and education became important parts of learning from the West. Music education became part of school education at this time.

¹¹ Siege of the International Legations. That is a joint expeditionary force sent by British, French, German, American, Japanese, Russian, Italian, and Austrian to protect the embassy in Beijing in the name of the war with the Boxer Rebellion in 1900. This war was the division of the Qing Empire. The eight-nation coalition succeeded in suppressing the Rebel Symnality. The collapse of the Yihe Movement and the collapse of the Qing Army in the Beijing-Tianjin area forced the Queen Cixi and Guangxu emperors to flee to Xi'an, Shaanxi Province. Finally, the Qing Dynasty signed the "Xin chou Treaty" with the 11 countries, including the eight countries that sent troops, paying huge compensation and losing many sovereignties. The countries also gained the privilege of stationing troops and building fortresses in Beijing.

Source: Wikipedia contributors, "Siege of the International Legations," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, last revised 16 August 2020 22:18 UTC, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Siege_of_the_International_Legations&oldid=973379761

¹² Wai-Chung Ho, "Westernization and social transformations in Chinese music education, 1895-1949," *History of Education*32, no. 3 (May 2003): 289.

II. Modern Chinese Music Education

Modern Chinese education gradually started to develop in the historical background discussed above, with developing ideas and proposals of learning from the West. Modern Chinese music education was built during the period of the decline of traditional Chinese music education while Western music education sprouted and rapidly developed in church schools founded in China by Christian churches and non-governmental schools.

2.1 The church school's music teaching in Late Qing time

In China, Christian churches had begun establishing missionary schools before the Opium War, and music courses were soon added. After the Opium War, the number of schools operated by Christian churches in China grew rapidly, as unequal treaties protected missionary activities. Music courses also became one of the essential courses in church schools. The music teaching mainly consisted of singing, western musical instrument, western knowledge of music, the organization of military bands and orchestras, choirs, etc. In addition to church schools, the Christian Church also ran secondary schools and various educational institutions in China. Most of these schools offered music courses. By 1899, there were about 2,000 church schools and more than 40,000 students in China. In the early stages, such schools mainly enrolled poor children, but after 1877, children from the upper class are mainly admitted¹³.

¹³ Wenci Feng, *History of Communication between Chinese and Foreign Music* (Changsha: Hunan Education Press, 1998), 318.

2.2 Music education in non-governmental schools

A group of scholars, represented by Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, chose to promote western culture. They set off the Reform Movement of 1898, and affirmed the importance of music education, establishing non-governmental schools and offering music courses. Kang Youwei (1858-1927) was the first person to add singing to the school curriculum. He believed that music had the function of cultivating children's hearts.¹⁴ The content of the courses was western music at that time. One example of non-governmental schools is the Shimin School, which was established in Guangzhou in 1898.¹⁵ Our topic in this article, Xiao Youmei, one of the founders of modern Chinese music education, was the first graduate of this school.

After 1900, a group of young people decided to learn western culture to save China by studying in Japan. Among these earliest Chinese students in music (including those who changed to study music after coming to Japan), there were some crucial figures in modern Chinese music education in the later period: Xiao Youmei (1884-1940), Zeng Zhimin (1879-1929), Shen Xingong (1870-1947), Li Shutong (1880-1942). During their studies in Japan, Shen Xingong, Zeng Zhimin, and Li Shutong imitated Japan's school song (Syoka) and created the earliest foreign tunes (mainly European and American and Japanese tunes), whose lyrics were newly written. These songs also prototyped the Chinese School Song, which had a profound effect on Chinese music education. After 1903, international students such as Shen Xingong and Li Shutong gradually returned home, beginning to engage in music education, teach in various primary and secondary schools to promote School Song education. The School Song music had spread to the whole country from Shanghai after 1904.

¹⁴ Wai-Chung Ho, "Westernization and social transformations in Chinese music education, 1895-1949," *History of Education*, no. 3 (May 2003): 289.

¹⁵ Jinan Sun, *Annals of the History of Musical Education in Modern China*. (Jinan: Shandong Friendship Publishing House, 2000), 8.

2.3 Music education in Qing government schools

In contrast, in schools operated by the Qing government, it was until 1907 that ‘music’ was officially considered as an optional course in the girls’ primary school, and as a compulsory subject in the girls’ normal school for the first time. ‘school songs’ was contained as optional modules in boys' school in 1909 to 1910, when male students started to have the opportunity of learning music¹⁶. The neglect of music education and its hesitation in the implementation of music education have given opportunities to western Christian church schools and patriotic intellectuals who advocated saving the country by western culture and education to develop western music and music education as the main ways of teaching and contents of music education. It can be said that in the decades after the end of the First Opium War, there were a large number of young people, including Xiao Youmei and other important figures in modern Chinese music education, receiving the first-step music education based on western music and mode of teaching. That also indicates the trend of the over-westernization of Chinese music education later. After the founding of the Republic of China in 1911, international students, including Xiao Youmei, went to Europe, the birthplace of Western Music, to receive more systematic Western music education. When they returned home, they brought the European model of teaching back to China, further promoting the westernization of Chinese music education.

¹⁶ Xincheng Shu, *Information on the History of Modern Chinese Education (Vol. 1)* (Beijing: People’s Education Press.1981), 195.

III. Xiao Youmei's view of music

Chinese scholars have been the most controversial and critical in their assessment of Xiao Youmei's comments on traditional Chinese music. Xiao Youmei holds a negative attitude towards traditional Chinese music. Scholars now argue that Xiao Youmei, one of the most influential Chinese music educators and musicians of his time, his negative perceptions and criticisms of Chinese traditional music influenced a large number of musicians and music educators at that time. This idea of despise for our country's traditional music still has a deep influence today and even becomes a 'consensus.'

3.1 Xiao Youmei's life and music learning background

Xiao Youmei (1884-1940) is a modern Chinese music educator, music education theorist, and composer. Xiao Youmei was born in Xiangshan (present-day Zhongshan) county, Guangdong Province. At the age of 5, he moved to Macau with his father and studied in the 'Guan Gen Cao Tang' private school, where he learned English and Japanese. His first contact with Western Music was coming from a neighbor who was a Portuguese missionary and musician. In 1898, 15-year-old Xiao Youmei enrolled Guangzhou's first new school – Shi Min School, where he studied Chinese, history, geography, arithmetic, picture, singing, gymnastics, and other courses, but also selected as the first graduate of this school to go to Japan for further study. During his time in Japan, Xiao Youmei majored in education and music courses, such as piano and vocal music. In 1912, Xiao Youmei went to Germany to study music. He then returned to China to work in music education in 1920. In 1927, Xiao Youmei established China's first western-style professional music college in Shanghai.

3.2 On the Achievements of Chinese Ancient Music Culture and Music Education

Xiao Youmei speaks highly of Chinese music in ancient times, and he is even more impressed by the musical educational institutions and systems of the Zhou dynasty. He said that ‘The system and various organizations of the Zhou Dynasty were already very perfect and sophisticated, so when Western scholars read the Rites of the Zhou, they would be very impressed. There is no one who does not marvel and recognize the Zhou dynasty as the first golden age of China...’¹⁷, ‘We have been amazed at the work of the emperor and the Shun in setting the clock’s time, discussing the human voice, and pushing forward the six laws. I was even more amazed to read about the elaborate division of labor and the various systems of music officials in the Zhou Dynasty. As for music and songs, although dictation has not been handed down, we can still see today that the Zhou Dynasty’s achievements in casting clocks are appreciated by both Chinese and foreign people and are not casually echoed.’¹⁸ At the same time, Xiao Youmei also regretted that most of the ancient Chinese music documents could not be preserved, believing that they were related to the way music was taught at that time, ‘The important music educators of the Zhou dynasty were blind, and their method of teaching, naturally, was to listen, learn, and learn by ear alone, without music... So, the music of the Zhou dynasty cannot be preserved’.¹⁹ Perhaps it was out of this idea that Xiao Youmei devoted all his life to the development of music education in China.

For Chinese Music after Tang and Song Dynasties, Xiao Youmei’s evaluation is relatively low. He was quite disappointed with the low status of music in the social life of Chinese people and the development of musical art at that time: ‘although many

¹⁷ Youmei Xiao, “A Brief Account of the Evolution of Chinese Music in Past Dynasties (Part I),” in *Complete works of Xiao Youmei*, ed. Linqun Chen, Qun Luo (Shanghai: Shanghai Conservatory of music press. 2004), 391.

¹⁸ Youmei Xiao, “The evolution of old music,” in *Complete works of Xiao Youmei*, ed. Linqun Chen, Qun Luo (Shanghai: Shanghai Conservatory of music press. 2004), 683.

¹⁹ Youmei Xiao, “A Brief Account of the Evolution of Chinese Music in Past Dynasties (Part I),” in *Complete works of Xiao Youmei*, ed. Linqun Chen, Qun Luo (Shanghai: Shanghai Conservatory of music press. 2004), 397.

musical instruments were imported from the western regions in the Sui and Tang dynasties, the notation of ruler characters (so-called flute character notation) had been changed. Although the Tang Ming emperor loved music, there was still no progress in the music itself. Music was still composed of single tones, taught by musicians, and attention was paid to listening instead of reading the notation. Therefore, music handed down from the Tang dynasty was rare.' He believed that music after the Tang dynasty was basically stagnant, 'except for the late Ming and early Qing dynasties Kunqu notation, it is still monophonic music, with no improvement in the music itself.' In fact, the Sui and Tang dynasties were an active period of extensive musical and cultural exchanges between China and its neighboring countries and regions. Much foreign music and musical instruments were introduced into the Middle Kingdom and adopted by Chinese musicians. Although it is true that after the Tang and Song dynasties (government-run) music education institutions gradually fell into disuse, the center of musical activities shifted from the court music of the Sui and Tang dynasties to the secular music of the folk. It is true that there are many differences between Chinese Music and Western Music in terms of direction, degree, and speed of development, but it is not entirely convincing to argue that Chinese music has not evolved much in recent centuries.

Xiao Youmei's opinion of Chinese music education during the Tang and Song dynasties is also very low. 'The classical music schools of the Tang dynasty were merely places for musicians to practice music, and their status could never be compared to the universities of the Zhou dynasty. The Tang Ming Emperor's orchestra was his own personal pastime.'²⁰

Chinese music from the Song dynasty to the Ming and Qing dynasties was basically stagnant in Xiao Youmei's eyes. "the music notation has not progressed at all. That is

²⁰ Youmei Xiao, "The Significant Truths of the Development of Western Music in the Recent 1,000 Years and the Causes of the Decline of Old Music in China," in *Complete works of Xiao Youmei*, ed. Linqun Chen, Qun Luo (Shanghai: Shanghai Conservatory of music press. 2004), 637.

the result of the Government's failure to promote music education..... No one has researched and improved musical instruments for more than a thousand years..... could only play 30 notes.'²¹ "China has never had an official music education institution, so the music teaching method has not been improved, and the notation cannot be unified."²² These comments by Xiao Youmei show that he seems to have paid more attention to the rise and fall of the 'official school' and music education in the court, while he was less concerned about the music education of the folk. In fact, after the Ming dynasty, although there were still musical institutions in the court, however, both in the court and among the people, Chinese opera music, as a representative of 'folk music,' increasingly occupied people's ears and eyes. Opera music is mostly taught privately in civil society. These musical activities had a great impact on the spread of local operas throughout the country and on the prosperity of opera music activities in society as a whole. Along with the development of printing and publishing, 'Qin'²³ experts and performers put a lot of effort into arranging and printing the notations of Qin music, and there were different genres of Qin music and performance. Among all the ways of the spread of Qin studies in the Ming Dynasty, the Qin club became one of the most important occasions to teach Qin skills.

3.3 On the Causes of Backward Music in Ancient China

Xiao Youmei believed that one of the reasons for the lack of progress in Chinese music after the Tang dynasty is that the musicians were not able to make any progress in social status. Their social status is too low, and their contempt is due in part to their personal misconduct.²⁴ He even found out the reason for the flaw in the musician's conduct, that

²¹ Youmei Xiao, "A Comparative Study of Chinese and Western Music," in *Complete works of Xiao Youmei*, ed. Linqun Chen, Qun Luo Shanghai: Shanghai Conservatory of music press. 2004), 163.

²² Youmei Xiao, "The Significant Truths of the Development of Western Music in the Recent 1,000 Years and the Causes of the Decline of Old Music in China," in *Complete works of Xiao Youmei*, ed. Linqun Chen, Qun Luo (Shanghai: Shanghai Conservatory of music press. 2004), 637.

²³ Qin is a plucked seven-string Chinese musical instrument.

²⁴ Youmei Xiao, "Why Music Is Not Valued by Ordinary People in China," in *Complete works of Xiao*

is, “because music is the most touching art, and mankind appreciates music, it is not necessary to have any literacy or preparatory education to unconsciously understand the meaning of music. Music lovers are often so intoxicated by it that they are driven by their emotions and forget to solve their personal problems”.²⁵ This analysis also reveals Xiao Youmei’s incomplete knowledge of ancient Chinese music and the limitations of his analysis of the problem. In ancient China, the social status of musicians was indeed in decline from the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods to the Qin dynasty. The scholars gradually became ashamed to associate with musicians. However, the reason for this situation cannot be attributed to the quality and conduct of the musicians themselves.

Xiao Youmei’s assessment of ancient Chinese music shows that his own musical thought was deeply influenced by the colonial ‘chauvinism’ of colonists and the ‘Eurocentric music theory.’ This influence seemed inevitable to Xiao Youmei, who had studied in Japan and Germany. In the 19th century, Western musicians’ one-sided understanding of Chinese music and even discrimination against Chinese music culture undoubtedly influenced Xiao Youmei’s views on Chinese music. For example, “They have no musical Notes, nor any Sign to denote the Diversity of Tones...”²⁶ “It has been said, that the Chinese have no music in parts; we acknowledge very readily, that they have nothing like our score, for their notation is all too unwieldy for any such purpose²⁷. These Western perceptions of Chinese music are very similar to Xiao Youmei’s comment that “there is no polyphonic music in China because there is no good music notation.”²⁸

Youmei, ed. Linqun Chen, Qun Luo (Shanghai: Shanghai Conservatory of music press. 2004), 653.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 656.

²⁶ Jean-Baptiste Du Halde, *The General History of China III* (London: John Watts, 1739), 68.

²⁷ George Tradescant Lay, *The Chinese Repository VIII*, (Tokyo: Kraus Reprint Ltd., 1839-40). 43.

²⁸ Youmei Xiao. “On China's New Music Movement,” in *Complete works of Xiao Youmei*, ed. Linqun Chen, Qun Luo (Shanghai: Shanghai Conservatory of music press. 2004), 681.

3.4 On to upgrade of China's new music and national music school

For a long period of time, Xiao Youmei and the Chinese modern music education industry he founded had been branded with the accusation of "total Westernization" and had been the subject of various reproaches.²⁹ "Total Westernization" is an attitude towards the Western culture that appeared during the 1930s, propagating an absolute acceptance and introduction of Western culture, thoroughly opposing traditional culture, as well as rejecting the integration of Chinese and Western cultures.³⁰ As exemplified by articles of Xiao Youmei's earlier criticisms of Chinese traditional music as well as his comprehensive acceptance of Western music education models, there are indeed similarities between his actions and the concept of "total Westernization." However, Xiao Youmei is not entirely against traditional culture and the reconciliation between East and West. He once expressed that "if there is an intent to reform traditional music, then we cannot fully renounce traditional music." Although he maintains that the transformation of old music "can be borrowed from Western music," he pointed out that "I do not wish to fully advocate for imitating Western music but to learn its techniques just as a reference." Furthermore, he agrees with John Hazedel Levis, a British scholar, that Chinese tunes are not suitable to harmonize with Western Music and that they should seek another harmony that is appropriate for Chinese music. Unfortunately, Xiao Youmei passed away before he could exercise this viewpoint in his music education practices.

In 1934, he evidently wrote, "I promote Western music not because I want my fellow citizens to be the godchildren of Bach, Mozart or Beethoven, we just have to be their students." "The backbone of music is a nation's nationality. If we are not art monkeys, we can definitely retain our nation's nationality in our music even if its format is

²⁹ Zhihua Jiang, "Pioneer and practitioner of modern Chinese music education," *Music world*, no. 5 (2013): 57.

³⁰ Qiao Jin, "Xiao Youmei and Chinese modern music education." (PhD diss., Shanghai conservatory of music. 2003), 23.

Westernized.”³¹ This clearly shows that he did not want Chinese Music to be purely "Westernized" but to find an object of learning for Chinese music. Learning is not copying indiscriminately much less "transforming" Chinese Music to Western Music. In 1938, while discussing "new music with our country's spirit as the soul and Western techniques as its body," he said that this "is a very good kind of experiment, but it's a shame no one has thoroughly implement it."³² At that time, a considerable number of new music works based on the concept of combining Chinese and Western Music had emerged. It is evident that his ideal combination of Chinese and Western music culture should be deeper and more intrinsic, and not a superficial integration. In the same year, while talking about the "school of national folk music," he said that this problem was "significant" and that "the completion of the establishment of this school of music within this century all depends and can only be determined based on the intention and efforts of our country's new composers."³³ This indicates that he was already aware that it would be a tough and long road for China's new music. Furthermore, he also pointed out an important fact that the establishment of China's New Music Building was ultimately dependent on the positive efforts of the Chinese composers under the correct "intentions."

From some of Xiao Youmei's musical views, Xiao Youmei's Chinese and western music views were indeed influenced by colonial and post-colonial thoughts. His negative evaluation of ancient Chinese music is based on western music values. He uses the method of dichotomy in colonial discourse to analyze Chinese traditional music³⁴. That is, the relationship between China's Music and western music is only the opposite of the relationship between advanced and backward, essence and dross. Then he got a

³¹ Youmei Xiao, "Musicians' new life," in *Complete works of Xiao Youmei*, ed. Linqun Chen, Qun Luo (Shanghai: Shanghai Conservatory of music press. 2004), 616.

³² Youmei Xiao, "On China's New Music Movement," in *Complete works of Xiao Youmei*, ed. Linqun Chen, Qun Luo (Shanghai: Shanghai Conservatory of music press. 2004), 679.

³³ Youmei Xiao, "Musicians' new life," in *Complete works of Xiao Youmei*, ed. Linqun Chen, Qun Luo (Shanghai: Shanghai Conservatory of music press. 2004), 616.

³⁴ Jianhua Guan, "Untie the Knot between Colonization and Post Colonialism and Move Towards Cultural Equalit," *China Music*. No.3 (1997): 10.

conclusion of the backwardness of Chinese music. After studying Chinese traditional Music, Xiao Youmei's views changed in the middle and late periods. He asked students to learn traditional Chinese music and musical instruments and to create new Chinese music with western music as the method and Chinese music as the soul.³⁵ This kind of hybrid music is not simply music with western music as the main body, but a kind of music to reflect the characteristics and spirit of Chinese music. Xiao Youmei, in the late period, hoped to create a real new Chinese music with the theme of China's own music values and western composing techniques. Although such a concept can not completely break away from the framework of colonial and post-colonial music thoughts, it can at least show that Xiao Youmei's music thoughts and music education practice are not completely westernized. When we comment on Xiao Youmei, we should not only see his early music thought and practice, but also deny him as a promoter of "total Westernization." We should also comment on historical figures with a developing perspective.

³⁵ Sai Yang, "Song creation of Xiao Youmei," last revised November 29, 2019, https://www.sohu.com/a/357247251_seven_hundred_and_ninety_thousand_six_hundred_and_sixteen

IV. Chinese scholars' post-colonial criticism of Xiao Youmei

The Chinese music industry's argument surrounding the proposition of "the developmental road of 20th century Chinese music" has never faltered since entering the 20th century. The core of the debate has always been Chinese and Western relations. The early 20th century discussion regarding Chinese and Western relationships unfolded between the schools of "all-embracing," "nationalism" and "total Westernization." After nearly 20 years of debate and practice, from the "school songs" to Xiao Youmei and others' "new music" and the rise of the "new music movement" during the period of anti-Japanese resistance, Chinese music finally chose the "all-embracing" road.³⁶ After New China was founded, the music industry's stance on Chinese and Western relations had thoroughly evolved into fierce criticisms of "blind Western adulation," "the philosophy of servility to all things foreign," and "total Westernization." Regarding criticisms of Xiao Youmei, although there were not many who publicly commit to words in identifying him by name, through the perspectives of certain articles and conversations held at several academic conferences, he was almost criticized as the "offender" or "bane" of modern Chinese music.

4.1 Criticisms Based on the Theory of Relativity of Music Value

In 1986, a group of young and middle-aged music theorists held a forum and some of the participants expressed that after the school songs, under the advocacy and implementation of Xiao Youmei and other musicians, they "started the effort to use European professional music standards to 'reform' Chinese music which resulted in

³⁶ Xingwu Li, "Analysis of Xiao Youmei's Thought on Chinese music". Sina blog., last revised April 29, 2011, http://blog.sina.cn/dpool/blog/s/blog_6d1157050100r3_np.html

tampering with the true colors of folk music, ignoring and even abandoning the traditions of ethnic music. They established the precedent of 'Eurocentrism,' creating the largest strategic error in the history of modern Chinese culture."³⁷ This passage points out that the mistake of "Eurocentrism" lies in ignoring the fact that the national and folk music of various countries in the world is produced from different cultural backgrounds and has different values.³⁸ Behind this argument lies the statement of the "theory of relativity of music value." The so-called "theory of backward Chinese music" is a product of "Eurocentrism"; therefore, it is incorrect. The initiative and music activities conducted by Xiao Youmei and others resulted in the biggest tactical blunder in the history of modern Chinese music.³⁹

In the mid-1990s, a group of musicologists published papers in succession, using the "theory of relativity of music value" as their main theoretical weapon and "Eurocentrism" as their main target of attack. They conducted a comprehensive reflection on the history and current situation of the works, performances, education, theoretical research, and other fields of 20th century Chinese new music, and proposed stern criticisms regarding the existence of the problems of "total Westernization" and "post-colonialism" in those fields. Among them, Wang Yaohua believes that the professional music education system established by Xiao Youmei was deeply influenced by "Euro music-centrism" and conducted education based on European music theory systems. Xiao ignored the deep explorations and reconstruction of Chinese music theory systems, instead of fostering the concepts of self-belittlement and blind Western adulation which went against the propagation and development of outstanding musical culture.⁴⁰ In the U-Turn of 20th Century Chinese Music Thought, Shen Qia believes that the "foundation" of 20th-century Chinese music has already been

³⁷ Qihong Ju and Ye Miu, "The Meeting of Wind and Clouds Expresses Madness - The Forum of Young and Middle-Aged Music Theorists". *Musicology in China*, no. 4 (1986): 7.

³⁸ Ibid, 8.

³⁹ Qihong Ju, "Choosing between History and Future (Part 2)," *Huang Zhong (Journal of Wuhan Conservatory of Music)*, no. 3 (2006). 54.

⁴⁰ Yaohua Wang, "The Gains and Losses of Music Education in Modern Chinese Schools," *Music Research*, no. 3 (1994):14.

"Westernized" and that multiple professional musicians with Western music backgrounds have "monopolized" the aesthetic and value orientation of the entire nation's Music lives, "monopolizing" the national music education.⁴¹ Meanwhile, as stated by Hong Kong scholar Liu Jingzhi in his work *On the History of Chinese New Music*, he believes that modern Chinese musicians and ordinary citizens commonly consider the phenomenon of Chinese music lagging behind Western Music having been caused by the publication of Xiao Youmei and others' articles in the early 20th century denouncing Chinese music. Moreover, he deemed the developmental path of 20th century Chinese music as "total Westernization" and summarized the process as "plagiarism, imitation, transplantation."⁴²

These criticisms are basically built on the foundation of the theory of relativity of music culture. They think that all music is equally matched and are incomparable; therefore, they made criticisms of Xiao Youmei and other similar thinkers' argument that Chinese music is lagging behind Western Music. The theory of relativity of music culture emphasizes that every national music has an irreplaceable unique cultural value.⁴³ In this sense, there is no question of whether a certain kind of music is lagging or not, which is not incorrect. With regard to China, this theory is undoubtedly one of the weapons used to criticize and resist the blind worship of Western Music. From this perspective, there is value in confirming it and yet, it is not comprehensive because the theory of relativity of music culture rejects any comparability between different music in any aspect, angle, or meaning, which is unrealistic.⁴⁴ The weaknesses of the theory of relativity of music value are already evident in these papers that discuss the rejection of current European music centralism in China.

The theory of relativity of music value singles out the true colors of different national

⁴¹ Qia Shen, U-Turn of 20th Century Chinese Music Thought, *Music Research*, no. 2. (1994): 70.

⁴² Jingzhi Liu, *On the History of Chinese New Music*, (Taipei Taiwan: Time of Music Magazine Publishing Company.1998): 8.

⁴³ Wenci Feng, *History of Communication between Chinese and Foreign Music*. (Changsha: Hunan Education Press, 1998), 318.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

music cultures but neglects to analyze historical and social backgrounds, which result in denying the development of national music culture under new social conditions while only confirming the inherent music culture in history and rejecting the progress. The theory of relativity of music value believes that the value of each national music culture is the same, and thus, it denies the necessity and possibility of conducting comparisons between any standard of music culture value, also rejecting contrast in any sense.⁴⁵ It easily causes thorough refusal of the need for communication and possibilities between various national music cultures. Therefore, it is evident that in some criticisms based on the theory of relativity of music, they deny the school songs generated from exchanges between Chinese and foreign music as well as their creators, denying the development of ancient Chinese music toward modernity. They ignored the introduction of school songs, which were triggered by internal factors in Chinese society after the First Sino-Japanese War. They instead claimed that school songs were a "bitter fruit" forced upon the Chinese people under the violent pressures of the West.⁴⁶ They further mocked Xiao Youmei and other promoters of music history, thinking that they are the initiators of the theory of the total Westernization of Chinese Music.⁴⁷ These scholars ventured into error because they did not notice the weaknesses in the theory of relativity of music culture and lacked support in historicism, ignoring the social backgrounds and historical facts.

4.2 Self-nature and Otherness: A Comparison between Chinese and Western Music

One of the important areas in which some scholars have made negative comments on the development path of Chinese music in the 20th century is that Xiao Youmei and

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ Xiaobing He, "The background of the backwardness theory of Chinese music". *Music research*, no.2 (1993): 11.

others have drawn the conclusion that Chinese music is backward according to the European music standards, and chose a wrong path of "taking Europe as a teacher" and finally created the result of total Westernization.⁴⁸ In order to completely overthrow the "prejudice," these scholars worked extensively to re-evaluate and summarize the features and rules of Chinese and western music and drew many important conclusions and thoughts—for example, the discussion about self-nature and otherness. The so-called "self-nature" mainly refers to the features and laws of Chinese music, "otherness" refers to the characteristics and laws of other nations and music of other countries out of "self-nature". According to the specific exposition in the literary theory proposed by scholars, their so-called "self-nature" can be defined as the characteristics and laws of Chinese traditional music or folk music, and the so-called "otherness" is deemed as the characteristics and laws of European professional music or art music. In this context, the comparison between Chinese and western music is made between Chinese Music and Western Music, which is actually the comparison between "Chinese traditional music" and "western art music." It makes the logic somewhat ambiguous.

This discussion of self-nature and otherness also gives rise to another extreme view, that is, to negate Xiao Youmei's theory of Chinese music's backwardness by summarizing self-nature and otherness and prove the advanced nature of Chinese music while stressing the backward status of its European counterpart. For example, Guan Jianhua once declared that he was eager to carry out an in-depth analysis of western music's backwardness. In his categorization of "self-nature" and "otherness" of Chinese and western music, he also identified the backward characteristics of western music as well as the advancement of Chinese music. According to him, "the system of Chinese regional music belongs to the organic historical view," western music is "written music," whereas Chinese music is "spoken music" western music is "mechanical subject," whereas Chinese music is "organic ontology."⁴⁹ Liu Jingzhi, a scholar from

⁴⁸ Qihong Ju, "Choosing between History and Future (Part 1)," *Huang Zhong (Journal of Wuhan Conservatory of Music)*, no. 2 (2006): 57.

⁴⁹ Jianhua Guan, "Reflections on the Subjective Crisis in the Development of Chinese Music Culture," *Music Research*, no. 4 (1995): 30.

Hong Kong, also contrasted Chinese music against western music and concluded that Chinese music is based on "meaning," whereas European Music is grounded in "physics and form."⁵⁰ It is certainly true to consider meaning as the base for Chinese music. However, it is unnecessary to define the foundation of European Music as "physics and form" and contrast with Chinese music by making it "meaning-based." This argument may leave people with an impression that European Music seems to focus solely on sound structure and form, while neglecting the need to reveal the inner world of the subject, such as the emotion and rhyme therein.⁵¹ This is undoubtedly a huge misunderstanding.

4.3 Post-Colonial Criticism and Nationalism

Some scholars hold that shattering the shackles of colonialism and gaining political independence as well as national liberation is not a complete sign of national independence. Only by maintaining and developing a unique culture of its own under the profound influence or domination of western culture can our nation truly obtain spiritual independence.⁵² This type of cultural appeal is understandable and should be supported. In China, there are some post-colonial discussions about Chinese music, such as "the total westernization of Chinese music," the "foundation has been westernized," the "self-crisis" or "subjective crisis," the loss of "mother tongue" in Chinese music, and so on. Despite the implicit detest of musical colonization, these articles did not explicitly state the so-called "colonization" and "post-colonialism" literally. Later on, Guan Jianhua continued the discussions in the cultural context of colonization and post-colonialism explicitly in his article "Untie the Knot between Colonization and Post Colonialism" and Move Towards Cultural Equality. The author

⁵⁰ Qihong Ju, "Courage, learning and knowledge of new music historians: eight questions about Liu Jingzhi's two articles," *People's music* no.8 (2000): 31.

⁵¹ Qihong Ju, "Choosing between History and Future (Part 2)," *Huang Zhong (Journal of Wuhan Conservatory of Music)*, no. 3 (2006): 59.

⁵² *Ibid*, 60.

holds that the Chinese music road paved by Xiao Youmei and others in the 20th century was by default colonized and post-colonial. The Chinese musical system established by Xiao Youmei and the relevant scholars introduced Western harmony, polyphony, and musical form into China, depriving the indigenous Chinese traditional musical theory. That leads Chinese people to struggle to assess western music based on their own musical culture and value. The article also states that the emergence of "new trend" music in the 1980s and "post-new-trend" music in the 1990s are normal phenomena developed after exposure to western culture following the reform and opening up. However, it has been taken as the modern standard of Chinese musical development by some music critics and news media coverages at home and abroad, all of whom catapulted it into a new and single authority that facilitate the dichotomy view of the difference of "advanced versus backward," "superior versus inferior" and "innovative versus conservative" and gives up on the authority to assess from the perspective of the cultural subject. ⁵³

Xing Weikai elaborated his different opinions on this type of post-colonial criticism in his article "Comprehensive Modernization, Full Globalization: the Only Way for Contemporary Chinese Music." According to him, there is a surge of the nationalist current beneath the cloak of the "post-colonial" criticism. ⁵⁴ Such nationalistic and post-colonial criticism appear to be ironic because post-colonial criticism goes against colonialism and nationalism.

In fact, Guan Jianhua's post-colonial criticism is not the only one brimming with nationalism. Many Chinese scholars failed to get rid of the grip of nationalism in their comprehension of post-colonial theories. This phenomenon is historically rooted. Zhao Xifang wrote in his book *Postcolonial History* that the understanding of post-colonial theory in China is disorganized. Quite often, there are scholars who equate post-colonial

⁵³ Jianhua Guan, "Untie the Knot between Colonization and Post Colonialism and Move Towards Cultural Equalit," *China Music*, no.3 (1997): 12.

⁵⁴ Weikai Xing, "Comprehensive Modernization, Full Globalization: the Only Way for Contemporary Chinese Music," *Chinese musicology*, no.4 (1997): 33.

theory with anti-westernization and the advocacy of nationalism. It is mainly attributed to the fact that Chinese scholars and intellectuals are first introduced to the post-colonial theories developed by Fredric Jameson, and got access to the post-colonial theories of Edward Waefie Said later. The affirmative discussions about nationalism by Fredric Jameson certainly moderated how Chinese scholars perceive the post-colonial theory.⁵⁵ At present, the damage and barrier to the development of Chinese music culture do not come from the imaginary "total Westernization," but rather from the narrow-minded nationalism. Toxic musical nationalism maintains a repulsive force to the outside world, which hinders the national culture from absorbing and internalizing the assets in foreign cultures. Internally, it is also a repressive force that could deprive art of the very much needed diversity under the label of the so-called "nationalization."⁵⁶

4.4 Critic on the criticism of Xiao youmei

Personally, I disagree with some of the criticism made by these scholars to Xiao Youmei and others, and I found them being far-fetched and grossly unfair. Since the Han Dynasty, Chinese music started to exchange with foreign counterparts. There were even two climaxes in Northern and Southern Dynasties, Sui and Tang Dynasties, and "School Songs." The first climax of communication is attributed to the proliferation of musical instruments, the popularity of Chinese lute, the maturity of song and dance tunes, as well as other positive ramifications, which boosted the development of Chinese music in the exchange to a great extent. The second climax is the emergence of school songs in the early 20th century, the background of which differs drastically from the previous one. However, this time, the Chinese intellectuals took the initiative to introduce school songs and promote the modernization of Chinese music, eventually giving rise to the

⁵⁵ Xifang Zhao, *Postcolonial Theory*. (Beijing Univercity Press. 2019) Chap.5.

<http://www.ireader.com/index.php?ca=Chapter.Index&pca=bookdetail.index&bid=10899484&cid=1>

⁵⁶ Xiaogang Feng, "There is a breakthrough, there is a refutation, there is a theory, and the "verification" and "falsification" are interwoven," last revised April 5, 2010.
http://musicology.cn/reviews/reviews_5957.html

birth of "new music." It is not scientific to extract a fraction of Xiao Youmei's remarks of "total westernization," or consider him as pro westernization, both theoretically and practically, without studying his works carefully. Admittedly, due to the historical conditions and the limits in Xiao Youmei's studies, it is acceptable to conclude that the modern Chinese music education system established by Xiao Youmei in his early stage has taken the western music education as the paradigm, in which European classical music as the main content of instruction for the modern music education system in China, aligning with "European music-centered theory."⁵⁷ Incrementally, it induces and promotes the influence of the "European music-centered theory" on how the Chinese perceive their domestic musical development. Moreover, imitating western music education has caused China's delay in establishing an independent music education system ingeniously, and the research and teaching of traditional Chinese music still have much space to improve. As the teaching process is basically grounded in western music theory, the Chinese music theory system has not yet been constructed. As a result, students mistook the western music theories as a universal truth, so much so that they even measured traditional Chinese music with the acquired theories from the West, which further estranged the musicologists from the authentic traditional music.⁵⁸ However, Xiao Youmei's music thoughts and music education theories in his later period evolved, compared with his early period. In his later stage, Xiao Youmei devoted himself to developing his own music, namely "the new music." Xiao Youmei, Liu Tianhua, Huang Zi, etc. put forward the idea of national music school. They emphasized the integration of Chinese and western music in theory and practice, and produced a series of works such as "The Cowherd's Piccolo." The Chinese society has undergone dramatic changes in modern times, and musical pieces featuring "new music" works such as "The Cowherd's Piccolo" came into being in this context. Given the historical development of the ancient Chinese music tradition, it is not a fixed nor a closed loop.

⁵⁷ Qiao Jin, "Xiao Youmei and Chinese modern music education." (PhD diss., Shanghai conservatory of music. 2003), 141.

⁵⁸ "A discussion on the pioneer and practitioner of modern Chinese music education," Zuiart. <http://www.zuiart.com/yylw/30486.html>

The criticism of Xiao Youmei and Chinese music in the 20th century from the perspective of cultural relativity is untenable from the perspective of theory and practice in the history because it overlooks the flaws of cultural relativity itself, which may lead to blind complacency with the available music of our own nation and fail to embrace the pros and cons of domestic and western music as it automatically excludes the outcome of communications, references, and absorptions of other outstanding musical cultures.⁵⁹ It is no different from closing the door of musical development. In doing so, starting from this century, all the musical creations with foreign elements, all new professional music education, and even all the new music undertakings in China that draw on the achievements of western musical culture will not be fulfilled. In essence, this backward movement may backpedal the Chinese music culture to the medieval age.

In fact, school music is often considered as a wrong road historically, which proves the inevitable historical trend.⁶⁰ Originally, western music elements have been introduced into China. In the Ming Dynasty, the clavichord was brought into China by Matteo Ricci. Emperor Kangxi of the Qing Dynasty had studied clavichord very seriously. Not only that, but a large number of modern pianos also boarded Chinese ports in 1842.⁶¹ In spite of the zest shown to western music, they did not boost the large-scale entry of western music. Fundamentally, western music was not an indispensable for China back in that historical stage. At the beginning of 20th century, all aspects of Chinese society are bidding farewell to the Middle Ages in an unprecedented scale. China was all fueled up to modernize itself relentlessly. By extension, this revitalizing social environment also fostered a good environment to embrace the western musical culture, which spurred western music to flood into China since the initiative of "school songs."⁶²

⁵⁹ Tinge Wei, "Xiao Youmei's musical thought and its practical significance" *Journal of the Central Conservatory of music*, no.1 (1998): 34.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 35.

⁶¹ Wenci Feng, *History of Communication between Chinese and Foreign Music*. (Changsha: Hunan Education Press, 1998), 231-234.

⁶² Tinge Wei, "Xiao Youmei's musical thought and its practical significance" *Journal of the Central Conservatory of music*, no.1 (1998): 35.

When the whole society moves forward in full swing, and the medieval music education is preserved, would it not mean to separate a part of a complete organic body from the whole? The modern Chinese music education system established by Xiao Youmei and relevant scholars also aligned with this historical irreversibility. As the historical process of Chinese music culture headed to modern times and sought for modernity, the Chinese music education system was also revitalized. Modern Chinese music education was carried out in line with the western paradigm, which was established at the incremental decline of traditional Chinese music education institutions and systems. The blind copy of the western music education system to China could establish music education institutions in the shortest span of time and train music talents as soon as possible. In particular, music education became no longer the exclusive privilege of a few; instead, it can be popularized.⁶³ Compared with the handful of musical talents, the popularization of music knowledge and the enhancement of musical appreciation of the masses are way more important. Therefore, it is incorrect to attribute the argument of the "total westernization of Chinese music culture" to the western-oriented music education system proposed by Xiao Youmei.

⁶³ Qiao Jin, "Xiao Youmei and Chinese modern music education." (PhD diss., Shanghai conservatory of music. 2003), 145.

V. Conclusion

Through the analysis of some of Xiao Youmei's works and thoughts, combined with the complexity of the social and cultural background at that time and the process of Xiao Youmei's establishment of China's modern music education system, we can see that Xiao Youmei and his music education system were deeply influenced by colonialism at that time. The westernized music education system established by Xiao Youmei is indeed in line with the 'Euro-China Music Center Theory' and has induced and deepened the influence of the 'Euro-Center Theory' on the Chinese music industry. To a certain extent, the western music education system in China has led to the failure of China to establish a music education system with its own characteristics. However, it is one-sided and narrow-minded to portray Xiao Youmei and his contemporaries as sinners of westernization of Chinese music education, or 'a complex mixture of strong national inferiority and egotism'⁶⁴. In fact, by analyzing Xiao Youmei's works, the music thoughts and ideas of whom are not entirely westernized. His collection of Chinese folk music calls for students to learn a traditional Chinese musical instrument, and to transform Chinese musical thoughts with Western music technology on the grounds of Chinese traditional folk music, which is quite different from the argument of utter westernization, so Xiao Youmei cannot be simplified as an entirely westernized musician. It is also because the modern music education system in China established by Xiao Youmei and others ended the situation that only a few people had access to music education in China's feudal society, giving every Chinese the right and opportunity to receive music education.

⁶⁴ Dajun Yao, "Staring Long: New Chinese Music under the Western Gaze." *Weekend Pictorial*. (2003), uploaded by Dawa, last revised September 3, 2012, https://tieba.baidu.com/p/1878881523?red_tag=1729763051

Through analyzing the articles criticizing Xiao Youmei's post-colonial criticism, it is seen that the criticism of Xiao Youmei is mostly based on the criticism of "European music centralism" and the theoretical basis of which lies in the "music culture relativity" and the misperception of post-colonial theories. The main scathing criticism lies in Xiao Youmei's famous argument of "Chinese music lags behind its western counterpart for a thousand years," and his music education system with an outstanding reference to the German music education system. The assessments did not do justice to Xiao Youmei, because the criticism based on the relativity of music culture brushed the shortcomings of the theories aside and excluded the analysis of the specific historical and social environment of that era. However, some Chinese scholars misread the post-colonial theories and criticized Xiao Youmei's post-colonial theory indiscriminately from the contradictory angle of nationalism, let alone being fair.

When we analyze the current situation of music education in China, investigate for problems from a post-colonial perspective, or analyze a historical figure, we should combine historical, political, social, and humanistic factors. After the Opium War, China's feudal society gradually came to an end. The invasion of western imperialism led to continuous wars. China became a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society. Western culture entered China strongly under the influence of western hegemony when colonialism was rampant in the world. Chinese people's attitude towards western culture is from passive acceptance to active learning. Learning western thoughts had become a cultural trend and social atmosphere. At that time, traditional music education in China was not well inherited and even gradually disappeared from official schools, while western music was in full swing under the influence of church schools. It is against this background that modern music education in China was established. The westernization of music education in modern China is not one's choice, but the result of the combination of complicated factors. Therefore, it is not objective and fair to attribute all the mistakes to the scholars at that time only through the problems existing in Chinese music education today and the comments and choices made by Xiao Youmei and others at that time.

In future researches, intellectuals and scholars of contemporary society should comment on history and historical figures rigorously with modern academic theory. In particular, Chinese scholars should be more careful when giving critical analyses of "Eurocentrism," and they should refrain from being trapped in the perspective of some westerners' outdated and narrow orientalism. Furthermore, it is important to check the accuracy of our research methodologies while getting itchy to make a conclusion. In a word, we should be well-composed, fact-based, and bias-free, respecting the authentic historical records as well as facts. No culture will remain unchanged for hundreds of years. No one can guarantee that even without the colonial history and scholars such as Xiao Youmei, Chinese traditional music will not be influenced by western music. Today's Chinese music educators should not dwell on the mistakes and shortcomings of their predecessors. However, they should make full use of the greatly improved modern material conditions and the results of their own theoretical research, make breakthroughs and innovations based on their predecessors' efforts, and create a whole new situation in Chinese Music.

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