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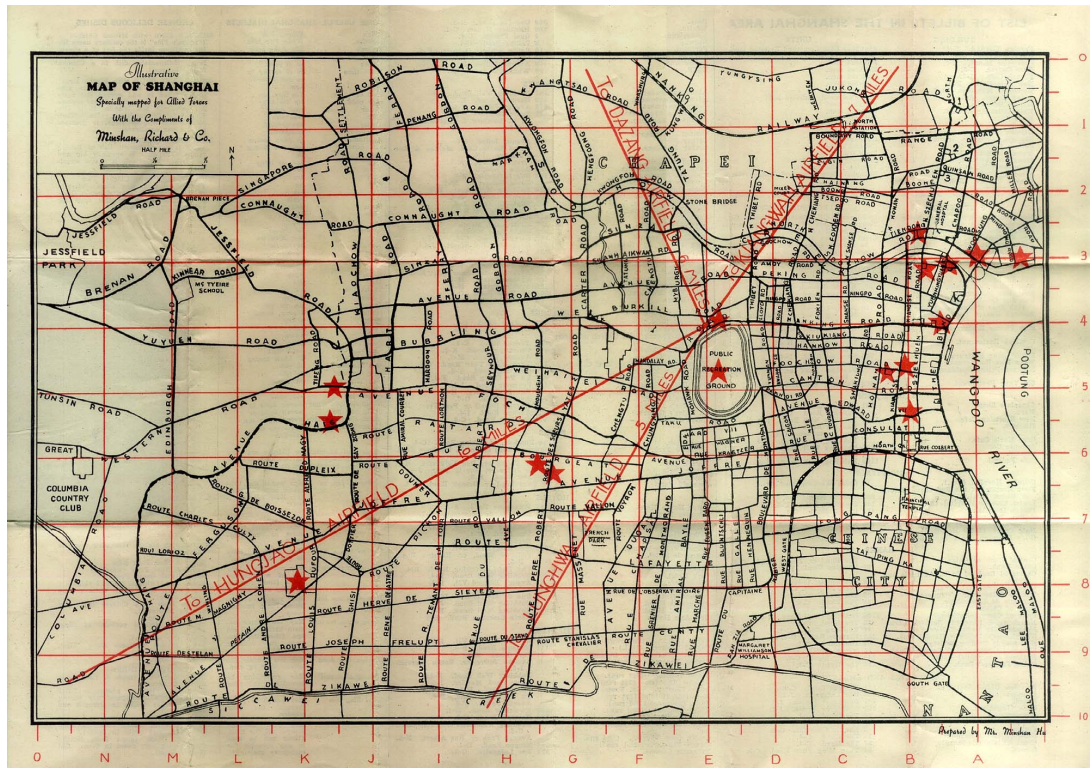
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Western Music and Municipality in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai



Yen Jen Yvonne Liao
PhD
King's College London, 2016

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Music

ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to examine the complex relationship between western music and municipality in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai. The objective is to carry out an inquiry into musical venues, municipal policies and ideas of musical sound in a fragmented administrative geography. Music historians have yet to research in tandem municipalities of the British and French settlers, Japanese military and the Chinese Nationalists—an alternative historical modelling that nuances studies of 1930s and 1940s Shanghai as a global and colonial metropolis. In terms of the evidence, the thesis draws on documentary sources in Chinese, English, French and German from Shanghai's treaty port, war and postwar years. Surviving materials extend from concert programmes, used scores and musical advertisements to venue licences and tax correspondence.

The four main chapters function as case studies; each is located in a specific municipality. Chapter One discusses the International Settlement: British settlers' sonic values and the aural phenomenon of the Shanghai Municipal Brass Band in the parks. Chapter Two discusses the French Concession: the sonic regulation of the French Municipal Council and the jarring but no less 'French' entertainment of eateries. Chapter Three discusses 'Little Vienna' in Japanese-occupied Shanghai: the landscape of European Jewish cafés and their sound worlds of *Unterhaltungsmusik* in the Restricted Sector for Stateless Refugees. Chapter Four discusses Nationalist Shanghai: eateries' claims of a distinct musical sound in the context of an anti-music tax policy. The Epilogue shifts from '1930s and 1940s Shanghai' as a matter of music history to matters of historiography, first exploring reproduction maps and repositories, then

outlining some further directions for an archival musicology. In terms of its overall contribution, the thesis brings to light not only Shanghai's western musical venues and municipal policies, but also the peculiar geography of a city of cities, multinational yet divided.

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I would like to record my gratitude to an inspiring mentor: Emma Dillon. In this instance, the timeline can be traced back to 1998. The occasion, an open day for A-Level students in the Music Department at Bristol. I attended and met Emma, a medievalist and a lecturer who had just joined Bristol from Christ Church, Oxford. (That she has no recollection of the meeting is rather reassuring.) In early 2013, and as a full professor, Emma came to King’s from the University of Pennsylvania. She launched a series of PhD seminars, exploring sound studies and such topics as musical evidence. I gained in no small measure from those forums, and from other conversations with Emma regarding archival research, aural history and job applications. Teaching undergraduate seminars as her assistant was equally valuable. Matters medieval shaped, albeit very subtly, my historical modelling of a nuanced Shanghai. On my work, Emma gives incisive advice. I also appreciate her sense of the profession—how musicologists can contribute further to the humanities, and to higher education.

In 2003 I toyed with a doctoral research idea (wartime radio propaganda in the 1940s). Initially I wondered about places on the East Coast, then found myself writing to Roger Parker. It was a delight to meet him at St John's, Cambridge to discuss further. A job offer around the same time from Klaus Heymann, founder of Naxos, routed me to the world of content and rights management, and meant putting academic research on hold. I am glad, more than a decade on, to have participated in Roger's reading groups at King's and sought his wise counsel. My acknowledgements extend to other scholars in the Music Department: Martin Stokes, Michael Fend, Bettina Varwig, Katherine Butler Schofield, Matthew Head, Heather Wiebe and Zeynep Bulut.

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NOTE ON CHINESE CHARACTERS

Traditional characters are used for the pre-Communist period (for example, musical venues in Nationalist Shanghai), and simplified characters for the post-1949 period (for example, archives in present-day Shanghai). Where it is necessary to transliterate, the *pinyin* method of Romanisation is used.

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PROLOGUE

‘1930s and 1940s Shanghai’: A Socio-Musicological Inquiry

The mystique of Shanghai as a city at once reveals and obscures its past. Consider, for example, ‘Whore of the Orient’. An action video game, it rehearses a series of tropes associated with 1930s Shanghai. Preliminary screenshots show adventure, crime and danger in ‘the most corrupt and decadent city on the planet—a plaything of the western powers who greedily exploit the Chinese masses’.¹ A release date is not available at the time of writing, yet the game’s racial and derogatory connotations have already sparked controversy.² What is striking, however, is that Shanghai has and continues to capture the historical imagination. At a deeper level, scholars from East and West have engaged critically with such topics as Chinese nationalism, modernity, imperialism and urban entertainment in Republican, pre-Communist Shanghai (1911–1949).³ Why, then, embark on another project on the city of the 1930s and 1940s?

Two points should be emphasised at the outset. First, archival studies of Shanghai within musicology are few and far between—a startling paucity, in view of the wealth of surviving materials from the early decades of the twentieth century. These sources remain fairly intact and are well organised in the city’s repositories. Granted, such preservation is both a matter of chronicling the past and of narrating the nation. Extant documents give currency to Chinese-Marxist historiography. They evidence the

¹ ‘Team Bondi Return with Whore of the Orient’, accessed 12 February 2016, <http://www.thegamingvault.com/2012/08/teambondi-return-with-whore-of-the-orient-for-next-gen-pc>.

² ‘Whore of the Orient’s Name Comes Under Fire’, accessed 12 February 2016, <http://uk.ign.com/articles/2013/09/02/whore-of-the-orient-name-comes-under-fire>.

³ The Qing Dynasty was overthrown in October 1911. The Republic of China was formally established in January 1912. To prevent the footnotes from overwhelming the main text, relevant historical publications concerning Shanghai and/or China are listed under a specific header in the bibliography.

ubiquity and a century of foreign settlements—the 1840s through to the 1940s—bearing testimony to so-called phases of development in the official (and linear) conception of history. Dogmas aside, the archival environment in current-day Shanghai is conducive to new research. Public repositories including smaller district archives are open-door environments and are easy to navigate, thanks to ongoing digitisation and to a particular penchant in the city for the Anglo-European attributes of its past. Despite separate catalogue systems, access is reasonably straightforward. Available to scholars and other users are printed and handwritten sources in a number of languages, specifically Chinese, English, French, German, Japanese and Russian.

Rarely scrutinised in tandem, such materials point to western music as an everyday phenomenon in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai. Musical activities were accorded regular coverage. Venues and events were documented across a range of sources, extending from concert programmes and musical advertisements to licence applications and departmental memos. Site-based music featured in municipal policies, and attracted discussion and debate in a metropolis with myriad identities. The cosmopolitan status of the city is nothing new to commentators, of course. Jeffrey Wasserstrom states: '[B]y the 1930s, no other Chinese city had large blocks of new immigrants, sojourners and second-generation settlers with ties to such a wide array of different places. [Additionally] [m]ost of China's other regions were represented within the local demographic kaleidoscope as well.'⁴ By the mid-1930s, Shanghai reportedly had a

⁴ Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, 'Locating Old Shanghai: Having Fits about Where It Fits', in *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900–1950*, ed. Joseph W. Esherick (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 193. Also worth mentioning is Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, *Global Shanghai, 1850–2010: A History in Fragments* (Oxford: Routledge, 2009).

population of over three million and was the sixth largest city in the world.⁵ Yet, the notion of a global Shanghai also risks masking a quasi-colonial city—an ambiguous and therefore fascinating setting for music researchers.

The second point to emphasise concerns the existing scholarship on or relating to western music in Shanghai. Here, ‘western music’ refers to music that solely or mainly employs western instruments. Scholars have tended to focus on classical composers, performers and ensembles, for example pianist and conductor Mario Paci and the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra in the early twentieth century (now the Shanghai Symphony).⁶ In the introduction to *Rhapsody in Red: How Western Classical Music Became Chinese*, Sheila Melvin and Jindong Cai state: ‘Our approach is people-centred, rather than academic, with each chapter built around one or two key figures or events. Our tale is anchored in several key musicians who devoted their lives to helping classical music take hold and develop [in twentieth-century China].’⁷ A similar take can be found in Richard Kraus’ *Piano and Politics in China: Middle-Class Ambitions and the Struggle over Western Music*.⁸ Despite the wide-ranging title, the discussion is still structured around individuals, for example composer Xian Xinghai, pianist Fu Cong (known internationally as Fou Ts’ong), and pianist and composer Yin Chengzong. And

⁵ This statistic comes from the 1934–1935 travel guide *All about Shanghai and Environs*, reprinted in 1986 by Oxford University Press.

⁶ See, for example, Joys Hoi Yan Cheung, ‘Chinese Music and Translated Modernity in Shanghai, 1918–1937’ (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2008); and Irene Pang, ‘Reflecting Musically: The Shanghai Municipal Orchestra as a Semi-Colonial Construct’ (PhD diss., University of Hong Kong, 2015). Also worth mentioning is the forthcoming book *Networking the Russian Diaspora: Russian Musicians and Musical Activities in Interwar Shanghai* by Hon-Lun Yang, John Winzenburg and Simo Mikkonen, to be published by the University of Michigan Press.

⁷ Sheila Melvin and Jindong Cai, *Rhapsody in Red: How Western Classical Music Became Chinese* (New York: Algora, 2004), 2.

⁸ Richard Curt Kraus, *Piano and Politics in China: Middle-Class Ambitions and the Struggle over Western Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

in Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau's edited volume *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, a number of contributions are composer-based.⁹

Notwithstanding the wealth of biographical studies, there is a lacuna in the existing scholarship. Due to the preoccupation with creative authors and with art music, musicologists writing about Shanghai have yet to engage with the broader notion of music as a social phenomenon. A socio-musicological inquiry is particularly pertinent here. Shanghai as a metropolis can detract from Shanghai as a jurisdictionally splintered city. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s there was no stable sovereignty, but rather: i) treaty port Shanghai, which was characterised by the co-existence of British-led, French-controlled and Chinese-governed areas for most of the 1930s; ii) Japanese-occupied Shanghai during the Second World War; and iii) Nationalist Shanghai in the late 1940s, which ended with Communist rule in 1949. Especially intriguing amid these ruptures are venues of live music and attendant ideas of sound—the human values behind what is documented about musical practices. I echo Peter Martin, who asserts that ‘what people say about music and the claims they make for it must be treated by the sociologist not as objective descriptions of it but as data which are an indication of their beliefs about it’.¹⁰ Understanding human values enables me to make sense of (varying) historical attitudes implied towards music and sound, and by extension, to perform an archival musicology of 1930s and 1940s Shanghai.

⁹ Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau, eds., *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2004). For composer-based articles in the volume, see, for example, Yu Siu Wah, ‘Two Practices Confused in One Composition: Tan Dun’s *Symphony 1997: Heaven, Earth, Man*’.

¹⁰ Peter J. Martin, *Sounds and Society: Themes in the Sociology of Music* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 12. See also Peter J. Martin, *Music and the Sociological Gaze: Art Worlds and Cultural Production* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006).

With the foregoing points in mind, I propose to focus on eateries and public parks. My project considers, on the one hand, repertoires and performance styles in these venues, and on the other, municipal policies towards live music at such premises. In exploring music as a social phenomenon, I draw out the tension(s) between municipal policies and musical venues, between official and other ideas of sound, in and across a fragmented administrative geography. Factored into my discussion are extant materials in Chinese, English, French and German. These are currently held at the Shanghai Municipal Archives (上海市档案馆), Hongkou District Archive Shanghai (上海虹口区档案馆), the Shanghai Symphony Archive and Library (上海交响乐团档案及乐谱室), Shanghai Library (上海图书馆) and the Xujiahui Library (藏书楼), the city's most extensive archive of foreign-language sources from before the Communist takeover in 1949.

In *Music and Urban Geography*, Adam Krims seeks to 'treat both broader urban change and specifically musical practices as particular locations in a singular mode of production (capitalism)'.¹¹ Acknowledging his effort (as a music scholar) to co-theorise music and geography, I adopt a trajectory different from Krims', which is essentially Marxist and specific to his study of post-Fordism. My inquiry seeks to map urban governance, musical practices and sonic values in a 'city of cities'. That is, I give emphasis to the administrative geography of 1930s and 1940s Shanghai.

My interest in tracing sections of rule can be explained as follows. Shaping and reshaping Shanghai's geography are multinational as well as shifting municipalities.

¹¹ Adam Krims, *Music and Urban Geography* (New York: Routledge, 2007), xxi–xxii.

Strikingly, they have never been examined in tandem. By municipality, I refer both to the local government and to the area under its purview. As concerns the 1930s, I note: the British-influenced Shanghai Municipal Council (工部局) and the International Settlement (公共租界); the French Municipal Council (公董局) and the French Concession (法租界); and the Nationalist administration and Greater Shanghai (including the Old City) surrounding the Settlement and the Concession. (See figure P.1.)



Fig. P.1. Map of treaty port Shanghai in 1931.¹² The International Settlement appears in the middle (orange area), and the French Concession, south of the Settlement (purple area). At the bottom right is a street map of the Settlement's Central District, and underneath, a 'panoramic' image of the Bund, an embankment dominated by foreign businesses along the river Huangpu (黃浦江).

¹² The map was reprinted in 2015 by the Shanghai Academy of Surveying and Mapping (上海市测绘院).

These developments must also be registered: from 1937, Greater Shanghai was occupied by Japanese forces. Following Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor and the commencement of the Pacific War in December 1941, the rest of the city fell. The wartime years witnessed a municipality loyal to the Japanese Army. With Japan's surrender in 1945 and the relinquishment of foreign extraterritorial rights, Shanghai was no longer a treaty port or a beleaguered city. The Nationalists resumed control. Their municipality was short-lived, however: civil war during the late 1940s concluded with the Communists' establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949.¹³ The Nationalists retreated to Taiwan and founded the Republic of China with a view to reclaiming the Mainland—which never happened.

Shanghai of the 1930s and 1940s invites attention not only because of its neglected and fractured geography, but also because of the relevance and irrelevance of colonialism to its rule. Shanghai, or for that matter China, did not constitute a single or centrally managed colony. Rather there was a highly complex patchwork of 'colonial formations', sprawled along the Chinese coast, inland ports and railway junctions, and perceived by foreign powers to be strategic locations, deemed beneficial to their interests.¹⁴ Such formations mainly comprised treaty ports. Following China's military defeat in the early 1840s, fishing villages were forced to open as ports for trade. Specifics were laid out in the Unequal Treaties between the Qing

¹³ The People's Republic of China was formally established on 1 October 1949.

¹⁴ Bryna Goodman and David Goodman's term 'colonial formations' is useful inasmuch as it reflects the peculiar nature of colonialism in China. See Bryna Goodman and David S.G. Goodman, eds., *Twentieth-Century Colonialism and China: Localities, the Everyday, and the World* (Oxford: Routledge, 2012), 3.

Dynasty and a number of signatory countries.¹⁵ Nationals of the signatories were accorded extraterritoriality. Consular laws and courts often trumped native legal practices.¹⁶ Foreign subjects also enjoyed other rights and privileges such as fixed tariffs.

Given the exploitative terms of the Treaties, enclaves associated with such powers as Britain and France spread from the mid-nineteenth century. Foreign habitation in China was extensive in the early decades of the twentieth century. With regard to the British, Robert Bickers details: ‘[A]t the start of 1927 might be found the following: A Crown colony [Hong Kong Island and subsequently the Kowloon Peninsula], two leased territories [Weihaiwei in Northeastern China and the New Territories in Hong Kong], two British-dominated international settlements [Shanghai and the island of Gulangyu near Xiamen], six concessions and a settled presence in cities and towns stretching from Manchuria to the borders with Burma.’¹⁷

Despite foreign aggression, colonialism in China was more a convoluted phenomenon than a homogeneous operation. The settlements and concessions had different structures of rule.¹⁸ The former were virtually self-governed by a locally elected body made up of nationals of treaty signatories. The latter were answerable to a

¹⁵ The first of the Unequal Treaties, the Nanjing Treaty in 1842, was signed in the aftermath of China’s defeat in the First Opium War. Under this treaty and the Supplementary Humen Treaty (Treaty of the Bogue) in 1843, Shanghai, Fuzhou, Guangzhou (Shamian Island), Ningbo and Xiamen were established as ports for foreign trade and residence. Signatories to the Unequal Treaties as well as other conventions and agreements include Great Britain, France, the United States, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Germany, Sweden and Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Switzerland, Holland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Mexico, Peru and Japan.

¹⁶ See Pär Kristoffer Cassel, *Grounds of Judgment: Extraterritoriality and Imperial Power in Nineteenth-Century China and Japan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

¹⁷ Robert Bickers, *Britain in China: Community, Culture and Colonialism, 1900–49* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 10.

¹⁸ It is worth noting that Chinese translations of the International Settlement and of the French Concession do not reflect this important distinction: both are referred to as ‘leased areas’ (租界).

single foreign power and its appointed consul-general. Regardless, they were not colonies in the strict sense of the word. Bryna Goodman and David Goodman rightly note:

[T]he fact that China preserved formal independence, retained sovereignty over most of its territory, and was at least nominally recognised as a sovereign nation by international law may be taken to be not simply a quantitative difference from an always incomplete colonialism, but a qualitative distinction that produced a different relation between coloniser and colonised and different experiences of government.¹⁹

One only need contrast Shanghai with Hong Kong, both mentioned in the 1842 Treaty of Nanjing, the first of the Unequal Treaties. Their respective statuses signified distinctive political arrangements. Treaty port Shanghai was characterised by foreign-and-local governments. Three municipalities co-operated from the late 1920s through to the Japanese occupation. Hong Kong Island and the Kowloon Peninsula, by contrast, were ceded to the British in perpetuity. They constituted a Crown colony. A third area of Hong Kong, the New Territories, was leased from 1898 for ninety-nine years. The complications that surfaced in the second half of the twentieth century, triggering negotiations between China and Britain from the late 1970s through to the early 1980s, concerned the future of Hong Kong as a whole after 1997.²⁰

The vexing legalities of the Unequal Treaties may seem more relevant to political historians than to music historians researching Shanghai. However, the

¹⁹ Goodman and Goodman, *Twentieth-Century Colonialism and China*, 13.

²⁰ The future of Hong Kong after 1997 was formalised by the Sino-British Joint Declaration on 19 December 1984. Under the Declaration, the Government of the United Kingdom would hand over Hong Kong to the Government of the People's Republic of China on 1 July 1997.

fragmented character of a quasi-colonial city—of a city administratively divided—is rather germane to the socio-musicological inquiry that I propose. The partitions in and of Shanghai raise the question how one situates, and by extension, ‘hears’ the city historically.²¹ Here my thinking is similar to that of Geoffrey Baker. Regarding the study of music in colonial Latin America, he argues that that ‘there is a perceived need not just for musicology *in* the city but a musicology *of* the city’.²² My variation, in the case of 1930s and 1940s Shanghai, is that the very notion of *the* city is worth interrogating. What is called for is a specific urban musicology—one that engages with the dis/unity of the city.

The above concerns become all the more apposite when one considers the major themes under which Shanghai as a city has been examined in secondary literature. In the context of my inquiry, the themes especially of colonial modernity, semi-colonialism, nightlife and urban experience warrant discussion. Such themes shed light on Chinese cultural activities and on Shanghai as a singular metropolis—often in some relation to major capitals in the West, notably Paris, London and New York.²³ Further, much of the scholarly interest has revolved around native intellectual thought, literary sources and the so-called splendour of Shanghai, which arguably has the effect of reifying the uniformity of the city. The past that emerges from some of this research suggests a cohesive urban fabric. Woven into the fabric are such ‘motifs’ as fashion, lifestyle and

²¹ Mark M. Smith, ed., *Hearing History: A Reader* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2004). I discuss Smith’s ideas later in the Prologue.

²² Geoffrey Baker, ‘The resounding city’, in *Music and Urban Society in Colonial Latin America*, eds. Geoffrey Baker and Tess Knighton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 1.

²³ ‘Paris of the East, New York of the West’, an evocative though orientalist description of Shanghai, first appeared in an English-language travel guide in 1934. See the reprint *All About Shanghai and Environs* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

expressions of identity. My intention is not to replace familiar depictions of 1930s and 1940s Shanghai, but rather, to propose municipal Shanghai as an additional frame of reference, one that is concerned with sites of western music in and across a sectionalised geography. But first, it is necessary to devote some coverage to colonial modernity, semi-colonialism, nightlife and urban experience, and to survey the approaches in some of the attendant publications.

Though helpful to research on cross-/cultural transfers, the theme of colonial modernity poses some limitations, notably the extent to which one is able to focus on local musical venues in Shanghai. Let's consider Andrew Jones' *Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in the Chinese Jazz Age*.²⁴ Jones, a historian specialising in Chinese literature and media culture, explicates his work as follows: '[T]his book does not concern itself exclusively with China [but also with] the status of national music in an age in which culture is rendered increasingly portable by the global diffusion of new media technologies.'²⁵ Jones' words are telling, indicating an interest in the Chinese engagement with transnational cultural flows. The book delves into intersections of colonial influences and the colonised masses. Both author and reader concentrate on connexions as well as tensions between the two. Jones pays extensive attention to recorded sound and to objects of transmission, notably the gramophone. The diffusion of material culture and the latest commodities in and across ports around the world is doubtless emblematic of the 'Jazz Age' that he examines.²⁶

²⁴ Jones, *Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in the Chinese Jazz Age* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001).

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 7.

²⁶ Of the transnational circulation of recordings and other paraphernalia, see, for example, Michael Denning, *Noise Uprising: The Audiopolitics of a World Musical Revolution* (New York: Verso, 2015).

Yellow Music makes important inroads into understanding the nexus between popular culture, political ideology and phonographic technology in early twentieth-century China. However, its stress on performing a transnational history is such that local venues and practices, coupled with Shanghai's administrative particularities, may not receive sufficient critical attention. Worth probing is the dynamic between municipal policy, musical activity and aural environment. Given his research and his approach as a cultural historian, it is not surprising that Jones is more invested in media and technology than in music-making itself. Although he draws on aural vocabulary in places, the vocabulary serves predominantly as a rhetorical device, enhancing the thesis at hand. Of competing cultural ideologies in the interwar period, he states that 'yellow music [Li Jinhui's 'controversial brand of popular music', in Jones' words] and anticolonial mass music rub[bed] sonic shoulders and contend[ed] for a measure of dominance within a newly constituted media marketplace'.²⁷ Ultimately, *Yellow Music* is couched in terms of troubled formations of a modern Chinese identity. And in focusing on the impact of colonialism in China, the book does not quite account for its pluralities. As seminal as the book is, it is neither conceived to explore practices of live music and ideas of sound in situ, nor attuned to the peculiarities of quasi-colonial settings such as Shanghai.

Given the complexity and plurality of colonial formations in China, the theme of semi-colonialism, rehearsed by such authors as Shu-mei Shih, appears more compelling than that of colonial modernity. In *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China, 1917–1937*, Shih, a scholar of literature and comparative studies, makes a point of shifting away from political conceptions of imperialism to an

²⁷ Jones, *Yellow Music*, 6.

understanding of ‘how imperialism [both Western and Japanese] and its forms of practice affected modern Chinese cultural production’.²⁸ The prefix ‘semi’ has nothing to do with the extent or measure of colonialism, but rather, with its ‘fractured, informal and indirect character’, considering that there was never a central colonial government in China.²⁹ Shih interrogates the Eurocentric history of modernism and the ‘usual binary models of the non-West’s confrontation with the West—“China versus the West” or “East versus West”’.³⁰ Instead, she posits a triangular relationship between China, the West and Japan, casting doubt over the hegemony of the West.

Despite her nuanced argument of colonialism in China, and the ostensible advantages of semi-colonialism as a model, Shih’s story remains one of colonial influence (described as ‘no less destructive and transformative’) and the consequent indigenous response.³¹ Although Shih attends to literary practice, and Jones to political and cultural ideology, *The Lure of the Modern* is fundamentally not dissimilar from *Yellow Music*. They both explore Chinese intellectual thought in the global world of the early twentieth century. Whereas Jones deals with the repercussions of media technology, Shih anchors her work in writers: Lu Xun, Fei Ming and Mu Shiying, to name but a few.

Shih’s use of sources poses certain implications. Literary and mostly fictional writings constitute the basis of her history. Although the same materials can potentially aid musicological research, what they do from a present-day standpoint is to impart information about native authors amid continuity and change. Insofar as my inquiry is

²⁸ Shu-mei Shih, *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China, 1917–1937* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001), 30.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 40.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

concerned, such evidence arguably has little to offer about western music as a social phenomenon. Fictional sources are doubtless valuable in that they are indicative of the predicaments of Chinese writers in search of a modern identity. But while these sources shed light on the contemporary literary imagination, they do not facilitate a ‘hearing’ of the tension between municipalities and musical venues in a city of cities.

My reservations notwithstanding, *Yellow Music* and *The Lure of the Modern* are connected to broader developments in historiography in the United States. The re/exploration of indigenous knowledge construction is consistent, even if not directly aligned, with a wider effort that gathered momentum in American historical scholarship on China in the later decades of the twentieth century. This effort must be understood in the context of an academy in the West getting to grips with the politics of the post-/Cold War.

Worth mentioning is Paul Cohen’s *Discovering History in China: American Historical Writing on the Recent Chinese Past* (original publication in 1984; reissue in 2010).³² In Cohen’s view, the West has become the default reference point from and against which nineteenth- and twentieth-century China is discussed. He pushes for an historical scholarship that is first and foremost China-centred. A western bias is perceived as a de facto impediment to writing history *in* China. In the introduction to the 2010 version, he maintains that ‘[t]he core attribute of [a] China-centred approach is that its practitioners make a serious effort to understand Chinese history in its own terms’.³³ Cohen’s intervention is certainly significant, challenging many of the assumptions on which understandings of China have been based in the latter half of the twentieth

³² Paul A. Cohen, *Discovering History in China: American Historical Writing on the Recent Chinese Past* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

³³ *Ibid.*, xlii.

century. Nevertheless, it makes sense to ‘keep’ the West in a musicological study of 1930s and 1940s Shanghai, given the research possibilities afforded by surviving materials in numerous languages. Requiring official licensing as well as commercial advertising, western music was richly documented by a range of parties—from British settlers (known as Shanghailanders) to French officials, and from European Jewish refugees confined by the Japanese military to Chinese proprietors of eateries with western musical entertainment.

In that sense, the theme of semi-colonialism, coupled with a renewed emphasis on ‘China’, not only exposes Anglo-American centrism in historical analysis, but also alerts one to the issue of lurching from one extreme (over-stressing the impact of western powers in terms of its encroachment upon China) to the other (downplaying the actions of or affiliated with these powers’ subjects). Urban administrations, social institutions and foreign-and-Chinese communities that emerged as a result of the Unequal Treaties were real and ubiquitous. To an extent, a China-centred approach may risk neglecting western/-related activities. As Robert Bickers cautions: ‘[T]here is no doubting the absurdity of writing modern Chinese history as if there was no Western presence, or with a caricatured foreign presence, which has often been the net effect.’³⁴ The habits of treaty nationals meant that venues of western music came to grow and to operate in treaty ports like Shanghai; from a present-day vantage point, such venues merit scrutiny.

The themes of colonial modernity and semi-colonialism, and the research associated with them, reveal some degree of preoccupation with authors, for example the composer Li Jinhui and the writer Lu Xun. At this juncture, it is fitting to bring in

³⁴ Bickers, *Britain in China*, 6.

the theme of nightlife, which ventures beyond individuals and may facilitate closer examination of venues of entertainment. Much of the scholarly focus has been on commercial dance venues. Deserving of scrutiny is Andrew Field's *Shanghai Dancing World: Cabaret Culture and Urban Politics, 1919–1954*.³⁵ In his words:

This book assays the nightlife of Old [Republican] Shanghai, particularly its cabarets or dance halls, assessing their overall importance to the cultural and political history of the city. It examines how jazz music and social dancing became popular in the 1920s, first among the small yet influential group of Westerners, then among the much larger population of upper- and middle-class Chinese, who transformed the culture of the Jazz Age to fit their own needs, interests and tastes.

Jazz factors into the book, but the overall narrative is couched in terms of the terpsichore that reportedly swept the city—in and beyond the International Settlement and the French Concession. Of the attendant economics of supply and demand, Field observes ‘a new industry of bargirls and professional dance partners [that brought] talented musicians, dancers, performers and restaurateurs into the urban scene’.³⁶ Musical entertainment and performers get subsumed under the phenomenon of dance, then. Jazz becomes a proxy for discussing the Chinese dance madness in and of 1930s Shanghai.

³⁵ Andrew David Field, *Shanghai's Dancing World: Cabaret Culture and Urban Politics, 1919–1954* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2010), 2. Also worth mentioning is the work Chinese cultural historian Ma Jun on Shanghai's dance halls and industry. See, for example, Ma Jun, *Wuting shizheng* [Dance Halls and Municipal Administration] (Shanghai: Cishu chubanshe, 2010).

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 21.

Dance doubtless offers a useful angle to explore venues of entertainment. With regard to the available evidence, Field notes that ‘[d]uring the 1930s, Chinese newspapers and magazines abounded with detailed accounts, representations and images of the city’s cabaret culture’. Focusing the discussion on dance means, however, that musical activity is not given primary attention, or is simply left out. Although local places with live music are mentioned in *Shanghai’s Dancing World*, the resulting impression is one of opulent sites in a decadent age. With regard to the newly inaugurated Majestic Hotel, Field depicts graphically:

By the 1926 [the Majestic] had supplanted both the Astor House and the Palace Hotel as the grandest [lodging establishment] in Shanghai, the centrepiece a magnificent ballroom built out of marble, with pillars, pergolas, Greco-Roman statuary and a fountain in the centre attended by cherubs. It also featured a covered dancing pavilion in the Italian Garden at the Gordon Road end of the ballroom, used for outdoor dancing in the heat of summer. A fan-shaped canopy and rose-clad trellis completed the luxurious outdoor setting.³⁷

Field’s narrative displays a specific historical colour. He describes how, ‘with its cosmopolitanism, gangland influence and international intrigue, Shanghai certainly possessed the ingredients for a unique and thrilling nightlife culture’.³⁸ This language, while redolent of the sights and rhythms of an electrically charged city, exposes Field’s fascination with the postcard visuality of Shanghai in the early decades of the twentieth century—a playground of fun and fantasy, subsequently disrupted by the Japanese military occupation, resumption of the Chinese Civil War and by the Communist

³⁷ Ibid., 32.

³⁸ Ibid., 2.

takeover in 1949. Field thus situates Shanghai as a metropolis of individual pleasure and collective excess. What emerges is an historical imagination revolving around dancing hostesses, adventurers and mobsters.

To be fair, Field does scrutinise the impact of municipal policies as well as cabaret politics. However, central to his scholarship is the picture of pre-Communist Shanghai as a city of neon lights. Field's more recent effort *Shanghai Nightscapes: A Nocturnal Biography of a Global City*, co-authored with James Farrer, a sociologist, is rather conspicuous in that respect.³⁹ Farrer and Field's principal claim is that 'Shanghai, except for the Mao years, has been a global nightlife city, receiving and localising worldwide cultural trends and transmitting them to other parts of China'.⁴⁰ This assertion is not unfounded; of 'cosmopolitan nightlife culture', they point out that 'all sorts of people living and travelling in the city—whether of Asian, African or European heritage—met in its bars and on dance floors'.⁴¹ *Shanghai Nightscapes* makes a solid contribution in that it represents the first history of its kind, spanning nearly a hundred years.

Farrer and Field's preoccupation with the theme of nightlife turns out to be both an asset and a liability. On the one hand, they cover an impressive range of archival materials in Chinese, English and Japanese. Their inside knowledge of nightlife culture in Shanghai and contacts in the industry also serve them well in their ethnographic work. On the other hand, Farrer and Field's fixation on the nightlife experience of Shanghai may not work entirely to their advantage; the researchers project themselves

³⁹ James Farrer and Andrew David Field, *Shanghai Nightscapes: A Nocturnal Biography of a Global City* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

onto the city as flâneurs (Field regularly leads walking tours in Shanghai, for example)—possibly at the expense of the critical distance that is required in order to navigate a complex and divided geography. However compelling is the theme of nightlife, it has the effect of theorising Shanghai primarily as a city of sex and vice. The connotations of the theme are such that one decodes Shanghai in terms of its hedonism, which risks overlooking the fact that entertainment in the 1930s and 1940s was heavily tied to co-existing as well as to shifting local governments.

Similar to but also distinct from the theme of nightlife is that of urban experience. In principle, such theme provides a useful lens on the social life of the city. A crucial work to consider is Leo Lee's *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930–1945*, 'a book about the city of Shanghai in the 1930s as a cultural matrix of Chinese modernity'.⁴² In Lee's approach, modernity is situated as a manifestation and reflection of the *literary* urban experience in treaty port Shanghai. In fact, modernity becomes synonymous with this experience. He expounds: 'Through [various] early research ventures I became obsessed with an old Shanghai I had remembered [from my childhood] as a nightmare but which now emerged on thousands upon thousands of printed pages as a city of great splendour—the very embodiment of Chinese modernity.'⁴³ By extension, he (re)reads the texts of largely neglected contemporary writers, and through these texts, examines social practices in 'modern' venues such as movie theatres.

Lee's stance is not dissimilar from Shih Shu-Mei's assessment of Chinese literary modernism. The materials that he analyses, for example short essays in journals,

⁴² Leo Ou-Fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930–1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

⁴³ Lee, *Shanghai Modern*, xiv.

point to a burgeoning metropolitan and print culture in Shanghai. However, the weight accorded to textual representations of *modeng* (the Chinese transliteration of ‘modernity’) suggests that markers of taste espoused by the local literati take precedence in his narrative. Lee’s interest in matters of lifestyle, coupled with a specific choice of historical agents, means that ‘Shanghai’ is (re)viewed through the eyes of authors, and interpreted solely in terms of glamorous reportage. Indeed, Lee goes to great lengths to depict the ‘splendour’ of Shanghai.

To be sure, the theme of urban experience has been addressed from some other angles—perspectives that have less to do with novelty than with particularities of urban planning, for example. Worth mentioning is Joseph Esherick’s edited volume *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900–1950*, which makes further inroads in that regard, and not only in Shanghai.⁴⁴ An outcome of the conference ‘Beyond Shanghai: Imagining the City in Republican China’, the volume explores processes of urban reform, such as the modernisation of public sanitation, in metropolitan locations such as Tianjin and Wuhan, also interrogating the advantages and disadvantages of a Shanghai-centric analytic model.

Appearing in the same publication is Jeffrey Wasserstrom’s article ‘Locating Old Shanghai: Having Fits about Where It Fits’.⁴⁵ Wasserstrom asks, validly, about the degree to which Shanghai relates to other Chinese cities.⁴⁶ In adopting this line of thinking, he draws attention to the anomaly of the urban experience in Shanghai. Wasserstrom refers to the tripartite division of the city, and to the sheer size of population as well as diversity of non-Chinese and Chinese communities. Centring his

⁴⁴ Esherick, *Remaking the Chinese City*.

⁴⁵ Wasserstrom, ‘Locating Old Shanghai’.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 192.

thesis on the distinct multiplicity of Shanghai, he contends: ‘To take seriously the existence of many old Shanghais is to open the possibility that some decompartmentalising of discussions of the city is in order.’⁴⁷ Wasserstrom urges scholars to ‘think creatively about all the ways that different social and cultural Shanghais might be compared and contrasted’.⁴⁸ Indeed, a plural reading allows purchase on Shanghai’s status as a peculiar city of cities with foreign-and-local governments. The theme of urban experience, as Wasserstrom outlines it, offers some mileage inasmuch as it foregrounds Shanghai’s administrative geography. In the context of my inquiry, the theme works insofar as it does not get subsumed under dominant narratives of modernity, which may straitjacket the city as a global metropolis analogous to Paris, London and New York.

The themes of colonial modernity, semi-colonialism, nightlife and urban experience throw certain tenets into sharp relief. 1930s and 1940s Shanghai has primarily been interpreted as: i) a hub of contact between Chinese and foreigners, shaped by discourses of identity; ii) a city of entertainment and promiscuity; and/or iii) a global metropolis, on par with major capitals in the West. The outcome is too uniform a conception of Shanghai. It glosses over the various municipal presences and shifts throughout the 1930s and 1940s.

Framing Shanghai as one city has yet another effect: that of triggering reminiscences of a ‘bygone age’. The ongoing popularity of the decades-old description *Lao Shanghai* or Old Shanghai, which refers to the treaty port days, augments this sense of nostalgia. In Wasserstrom’s words: ‘The most striking aspect of Old Shanghai’s pre-

⁴⁷ Ibid., 210.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

World War II allure for authors is that it has gone on so long.⁴⁹ Indeed, Old Shanghai continues to interest both the East and the West. In new-millennium China, *Lao Shanghai* is part of popular historical memory. One only need note the proliferation of Chinese-language publications such as *The Story of Old Shanghai* series, a collection of books with abundant black-and-white photographs.⁵⁰ Romancing the past, this conception of Old Shanghai trades on the idea of *fengqing* (风情)—melancholy feelings associated with a familiar yet distant era.

In highlighting some of the approaches to studying 1930s and 1940s Shanghai, I draw attention to some of the existing assumptions about that time and place, and to the possibility of a sentimentalist interpretation. The aforementioned themes reveal that Shanghai has primarily been portrayed as a metropolis from a ‘golden age’. With municipal Shanghai, I shift the emphasis away from Shanghai as a city to Shanghai as a conglomerate of municipalities. By extension, I situate 1930s and 1940s Shanghai as a messy assemblage of powers and localities, changing across place and time—rather than as a coherent whole.

As stated in the opening, the focus of my inquiry is on eateries and public parks. In contrast to concert halls and theatres, these venues need not have music in order to function. If introduced, music features somewhat ambiguously, often in the background. The distinction between music and sound, and between attentive listening and casual listening, can easily be blurred. Further, the optional status of music renders its role far

⁴⁹ Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, ‘New Approaches to Old Shanghai’, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 32: 2 (Autumn, 2001), 263–265.

⁵⁰ *The Story of Old Shanghai* [Lao Shanghai cheng ji] (Shanghai: Shanghai jinxiu wenzhang chubanshe, 2010).

more uncertain than that in concert halls and theatres. Eateries and parks, with their impromptu musical sounds, thus provide fascinating platforms to examine music as a social phenomenon.

In municipal Shanghai, this phenomenon played out in three ways. First, the ‘additional’ provision of music by operators of eating and drinking establishments led to targeted regulation, namely licensing and taxation, by the French Municipal Council and the Chinese Nationalist Government. Second, the authorities themselves exploited the pliability of music’s function outside the concert hall, employing music as a tool in order to project official ideas of sound in public places. The British-influenced Shanghai Municipal Council tried to mould the Municipal Brass Band into an alfresco ensemble in the Kneller Hall military music tradition. The underlying expectation was for the Band to perform British-style pomp and pageantry in the parks, which had a multinational audience. Third, and in addition to regulation and exploitation, ‘ad hoc’ music was inherently social, in that it was bound up with foreign military occupation and with basic communal survival. With regard to the Shanghai Special Municipality during the Japanese occupation, the brutal treatment of prisoners of war and refugees—notably the confinement of European Jewish refugees who had fled the Nazis—was such that certain officials objected to refugee businesses in a segregated zone. The refugees eventually managed to secure licences from other administrators for their proposed cafés, and to advertise and offer *Unterhaltungsmusik* (‘entertainment music’) on the premises. The aural environment created by the cafés was at once real and surreal, reflecting cruel conditions of detainment on the one hand, and a semblance of normalcy in a ‘Little Vienna’ on the other.

The above serves as a preview of the ‘what’ and ‘who’ in my socio-musicological inquiry, about which I will say more in the final section of the Prologue. And before the ‘how’ (the penultimate section), let’s consider the ‘why’—significance—of studying the relationship between music and municipality in Shanghai. Here, I draw but also elaborate on the ideas of Tia DeNora, Peter Martin, Trevor Herbert and Dave Russell. Their output demonstrates a social orientation—an interest in attitudes, values and perceptions. Different professional backgrounds notwithstanding, the similarity of the work of these scholars is hardly surprising. DeNora and Martin are sociologists of music. Herbert and Russell write about popular music in terms of communality and sociality (the fabric of working-class bands in Victorian Britain, for example). They not only attend to the social dimensions and implications of musical practice, but also deal with the musical and the social as equal and parallel elements.

DeNora calls for a focus on ‘actual musical practice, on how specific agents use and interact with music’; she highlights the need to ‘explore music as it functions *in situ*, not as it is “interpreted” but rather as it is used’.⁵¹ In this conception of musical practice, music serves as ‘organising material for action, motivation, thought, imagination and so forth’.⁵² DeNora substantiates her thinking in a more recent work, *Music Asylums: Wellbeing through Music in Everyday Life*, but it should be noted that she develops her analysis via ethnographic research.⁵³ She does not expound on music as process in terms of historical inquiry. That music is as much a process as an object, susceptible to human intervention, is nothing new to scholars, of course. Yet the point is worth restating:

⁵¹ Tia DeNora, *After Adorno: Rethinking Music Sociology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 41–45.

⁵² DeNora, *After Adorno*, 46.

⁵³ Tia DeNora, *Music Asylums: Wellbeing through Music in Everyday Life* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2013).

music(ing) in eateries and parks in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai was inextricably tied to the institutional structures—municipal bodies—that came into existence.⁵⁴

Similar to DeNora, Peter Martin talks about music in action, particularly the social construction of meaning in and through music. He writes that ‘the social order rests on countless shared meanings concerning what is right, proper and natural (and what is not), and on the processes by which some interpretations become established as authoritative at the expense of others’.⁵⁵ Martin’s reading of music is valuable, bringing to the fore the question what is regarded as ‘acceptable’ (and by whom), and by extension, suggests that music may serve as a signifier of propriety. Such a reading applies to the regulation and exploitation of music that I alluded to, involving the French Municipal Council, Chinese National Government, Japanese-controlled Municipality and the British-influenced Shanghai Municipal Council. At the same time, there is an assumption in Martin’s argument, albeit an implicit one, that ‘social order’ simply forms of its own accord. It is worth querying the nature of social order in all its messiness. The in/stability of 1930s and 1940s Shanghai invites one to assess the effectiveness of municipal policy, notably the fate of official ideas of musical sound.

Trevor Herbert’s scholarship is also instructive. It opens up the possibility of a fruitful dialogue between ‘music’ and ‘society’. In a discussion of brass instruments’ valves, for example, he factors in the development of working-class bands as a form of ‘rational recreation’ in nineteenth-century Britain, contemporary organology on the Continent (in which the inventor Adolphe Sax played no small part) and the repertoire of emergent communal ensembles, which was often based on third-hand arrangements

⁵⁴ Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1998).

⁵⁵ Martin, *Sounds and Society*, 14.

of European art music.⁵⁶ At a deeper level, Herbert identifies linkages between the sonic values of groups of bandsmen, the technology of valve instruments and the new commercial market for that technology. The result, a piece of historical writing that does not simply place musical and social forces in parallel, but rather, mediates between them. In a similar vein, I want to consider the ways in which local musical venues and governing institutions were entangled in Shanghai.

At this point, it is worth bringing in Dave Russell's article: 'The "Social History" of Popular Music: A Label without a Cause?'—and not because of the politics of popular music studies and of its marginalisation within the academy that he perceived two decades ago.⁵⁷ Rather, I wish to highlight Russell's rhetoric:

[W]e need to study the history of popular music, both as genre and social activity, simply because it has played such a central role in people's lives. [I]f we genuinely want studies of past societies which demonstrate the activities that really mattered to people and not just what academics *think* mattered to them, then popular music must be firmly on the agenda.

Russell conceptualises social history as a means by which to broaden and deepen the scope of music research. Although class-driven commentaries cannot be taken for granted (due to their potentially utopian impulse), Russell's emphasis on 'people' is doubtless valid, particularly in terms of understanding the human values that influence music-making. In municipal Shanghai, musical practices in eateries and parks did not simply constitute entertainment; they occurred amid myriad inputs and interventions,

⁵⁶ Trevor Herbert, 'Social History and Music History', in *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction*, eds. Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert and Richard Middleton (Oxford: Routledge, 2012), 49–58.

⁵⁷ Dave Russell, 'The "Social History" of Popular Music: A Label without a Cause?', *Popular Music* 12, no. 2 (1993), 152–153. Russell's italics.

ranging from licensing stipulations in the ostensibly exclusive French Concession to entertainment taxation under the Nationalist regime. My variation on Russell's theme is this: the social study of music matters not only because it contributes to musicological *research*, but also because it encourages an investigation of the ways in which key local players (not just performers) can inform musicological *writing*. In my inquiry, such players include municipal departments and officials, operators of establishments with live music, patrons and park-goers.

A couple of words are now necessary to explain my focus on western music and not Chinese music. Chinese genres and traditions in the context of twentieth-century Shanghai have received much attention from scholars with expertise far more apposite than mine.⁵⁸ By extension, I do not look into such venues as teahouses, native opera houses and multi-entertainment complexes in Shanghai (for example, *Dashijie* or 'The Great World'). This thesis offers one of many possible interpretations of music in the city during the early decades of the twentieth century. It does not claim or aspire to be comprehensive.

In addition, the discussion of Chinese music implies a particular set of concerns and priorities, one that casts light on the negotiation and re/definition of Chinese identities across place and time. Such considerations are doubtless important. But this mode of investigation is different from the socio-musicological inquiry that I propose. Let's consider briefly Frederick Lau's *Music in China: Experiencing Music, Expressing*

⁵⁸ See, for example, Jonathan P. J. Stock, *Huju: Traditional Opera in Modern Shanghai* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); and Jin Jiang, *Women Playing Men: Yue Opera and Social Change in Twentieth-Century Shanghai* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2008).

Culture, a constituent volume of the Global Music Series published by the Oxford University Press.⁵⁹ In the preface, Lau states:

For a long time, music scholars inside and outside China have focused largely on the written traditions of the literati and the important role music played in elite culture while bypassing the music of commoners and the many popular folk genres. To present a more balanced representation of Chinese music, I chose themes that permit me to present genres of music performed by elite, local and regional folk musicians; in academe; in the media; and on the concert stage inside and outside China.⁶⁰

In highlighting the state of historiography at the outset, Lau rightly alerts the reader to the pitfalls of conceptualising Chinese music as a monolithic and museumised tradition, its long history notwithstanding.⁶¹ Chinese music does not constitute a system as such. Lau asks, for example, about the various ways in which ‘Chinese music’ is identified in a range of contexts—in China, in overseas Chinese communities and in international settings. Regardless, such an approach routes the scholar back to articulations as well as to the politics of Chinese-ness.

Also deserving mention, with respect to the objectives of scholars of Chinese music, is the work of Barbara Mittler, notably *Dangerous Tunes: The Politics of Chinese Music in Hong Kong, Taiwan and the People’s Republic of China since 1949*.⁶² Mittler, a sinologist, provides a detailed study of ‘New Chinese Music’, described as a

⁵⁹ Frederick Lau, *Music in China: Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, xiii.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, xiv.

⁶² Barbara Mittler, *Dangerous Tunes: The Politics of Chinese Music in Hong Kong, Taiwan and the People’s Republic of China since 1949* (Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1997).

type of music that developed under western influence, with stylistic techniques that were new to China at the time. She demonstrates an impressive command of literary sources and musical references. The research is painstakingly meticulous. In fact, the copious footnotes run the risk of overwhelming the discussion (structured, metaphorically, in sonata form). What comes across is a dogged desire to locate meaning in and of ‘Chinese’ compositions amid western influence. The accentuation of such keywords as tradition exposes a tenacious engagement with discourses, in and through music, of ‘being Chinese’.

Pace Mittler, publishers’ ongoing interest in Chinese music is such that discussions of Chinese-ness have a broader significance and impact in higher education. Such discussions are deemed to facilitate critical inquiry and to further knowledge about China. And in the context of funding applications, the exploration of Chinese identities potentially attracts support from universities, councils and other bodies. This state of affairs is anything but unique to the study of Chinese music in tertiary institutions, but is nonetheless characteristic of it, due to the scale and pace of change (imperialism, colonialism, communism, socialism) that has come to be associated with China outside China—not just in academia, but also in the media. Yet, scholars can afford to take a step back and to reflect on the status quo, without (I hope) alienating publishers and funders. Is Chinese-ness the only point of interest insofar as 1930s and 1940s Shanghai is concerned? The hitherto overlooked relationship between music and municipality, and between musical venues and municipal policies, would suggest otherwise.

In the penultimate section of the Prologue, I explain the ‘how’ and explicate my approach to analysing surviving materials. A practical question arises: how exactly does one tease sound out of a source?

The notion of drawing sound out of historical materials is nothing groundbreaking. It has received some scholarly attention, notably from Bruce Smith and Mark Smith.⁶³ In the edited volume *Hearing History*, they engage in a debate about reconstructing sounds from written sources.⁶⁴ Bruce Smith speaks of ‘indirect evidence for sound’: he errs on the side of caution when it comes to making straight deductions about sound from words. In response, Mark Smith queries whether evidence for sound needs to be explicit, arguing that ‘for the historian, interest lies in how [sounds] were perceived [and that] we should not necessarily assume tension between the eye and the ear in every context, even after the invention and widespread dissemination of print’.⁶⁵ My stance is closer to Mark Smith’s. To examine music and sound historically is to tap into what is recorded on paper. Worth registering, however, is that their debate is more concerned with ways of getting sound out of paper than with the paper itself. This thesis is more interested in evidence *of* sound than in evidence *for* sound. The survival of worded materials from 1930s and 1940s Shanghai, coupled with their accessibility in the city’s archives in the new millennium, makes it all the more salient to consider the potential of such sources for music researchers. The sources are not read verbatim, nor is their credibility taken for granted. Instead, I mediate between source clusters, for

⁶³ See, for example, Bruce R. Smith, *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O-Factor* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999); and Mark M. Smith, *Hearing History*.

⁶⁴ ‘Coda: Talking Sound History’, *Hearing History*, 365–404.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 395–396.

example between official stipulations and commercial advertisements, noting their in/congruities and implications for the key questions raised in each chapter.

Let's scrutinise the somewhat vague term 'written sources'. Not much has been said about *documents* in music scholarship: text-ed and other non-fictional sources of information, handwritten or printed. Examples include but are not limited to municipal records, departmental correspondence, internal memos and newspapers (especially advertisements). Not only are documents ubiquitous in everyday life, they also produce and carry meaning. In *Paper Knowledge: Towards a Media History of Documents*, Lisa Gitelman comments:

The word 'document' descends from the Latin root *docer*, to teach or show, which suggests that the document exists in order to document. Documents are epistemic objects; they are the recognisable sites and subjects of interpretation across the disciplines and beyond, evidential structures in the long human history of clues.⁶⁶

Gitelman's observations about documents as sources are rather pertinent. Documents do not just hold information, and can serve as leads. To be sure, in music studies, documentary sources have and continue to inform research; musicologists make extensive use of such sources as concert programmes and radio guides.⁶⁷ But on the whole the sonic aspect of prosaic—written—sources can be explored in more depth in music scholarship. Historical topics such as Shanghai in the 1930s and 1940s afford an

⁶⁶ Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Towards a Media History of Documents* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 3.

⁶⁷ See, for example, Jann Pasler, *Writing Through Music: Essays on Music, Culture, and Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); and Jann Pasler, 'Writing for Radio Listeners in the 1930s: National Identity, Canonization, and Transnational Consensus from New York to Paris', *The Musical Quarterly* 98, No. 3 (2015): 212–262.

opportunity. The suggestion of performing musicology through non-musical materials may seem striking, not least because it appears to conflate the purportedly different roles of a musicologist and a historian. Yet, the practices of musicology and of history are always interconnected. They are analogous to elements in a set in mathematics: distinct when taken individually (as so-called disciplines), cognate when viewed together (as modes of critical thinking).

The volume *Music and History: Bridging the Disciplines* is intriguing in that regard. Jeffrey Jackson and Stanley Pelkey, the editors, explain what they believe is aligning the two groups of scholars:

[H]istorians and musicologists have [long] been asking different questions about the human experience. Only within the last few years have historians and musicologists begun to use similar approaches in order to ask critical questions about a similar aspect of the human experience: the creation, performance and consumption of music. Born out of a similar set of questions that have challenged positivist claims about the nature of ‘history’ and ‘music’ as absolute things-in-themselves, historians and musicologists now approach a common ground.⁶⁸

Jackson and Pelkey attribute shared interests to the fact that historians and musicologists have both felt the influence of the linguistic turn. The need to probe ‘behind’ what is observed is no longer merely a theoretical aspiration, but a real objective. The editors emphasise at the same time that the aim of their volume is not to merge the disciplines into one. Instead, they ask what and how practitioners on both sides might enter into

⁶⁸ Jeffrey H. Jackson and Stanley C. Pelkey, eds., *Music and History: Bridging the Disciplines* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2005), xii.

dialogue: ‘Historians can learn something about music as a kind of text with its own special concerns. Musicologists can help to guide historians through the particular concerns about music as a text because of their intimate knowledge of it.’⁶⁹ Here one finds a strikingly conservative as well as a narrow definition of ‘music’.

Judging from the remarks, what differentiates the two disciplines is the specificity of the score. Essentially, Jackson and Pelkey confine the study of music to the analysis of notation. Their logic is that musicologists and historians are not identical. The former is able to deal with musical writing, whereas the latter cannot. And it is on that basis that Jackson and Pelkey see potential for further exchange between musicologists and historians. Paradoxically, the volume reinforces the barriers between Music and History, positioning them as parallel rather than as intersecting practices.

Surely, the historical discussion of music does not need to depend on so-called musical materials. The pertinence of documents past (notably administrative documents) to music research can be explained further as follows. First, although scores and recordings continue to inform music scholarship in productive ways, they should not be default source types. Music—an inter/discipline—is not synonymous with notated or recorded sound. Therefore, widening the scope of evidence is a logical if not an essential step. Shanghai’s eateries and parks are documented not only in such sources as licences, but also across numerous languages.

Second, given the abundance of research on literary modernism in Shanghai, it makes sense to venture beyond literary writings and to expand the source repertoire—and to supplement the novels, essays and other fictional pieces that feature in the

⁶⁹ Ibid., xii–xiii.

existing scholarship.⁷⁰ Novels, essays and other fictional pieces are classified as writings, rather than as documents, because they do not provide information per se. Last but not least, if and when a document contains references to music and/or sound, such references may reveal the sonic values of a particular individual or organisation. Whereas sound is ephemeral, a preserved document, in its material reality, is comparatively fixed.

At this juncture, I wish to quote Gary McCulloch, a historian who specialises in the history of education. In the introduction to *Documentary Research in Education, History and the Social Sciences*, he argues:

To understand documents is to read between the lines of our material world. We need to comprehend the words themselves to follow the plot, the basic storyline. But we need to get between the lines, to analyse their meaning and their deeper purpose, to develop a study that is based on documents.⁷¹

Although McCulloch's book does not cover the Humanities (and positions History closer to the Social Sciences), the above assertion is equally relevant to music history. For 'reading between the lines' makes it possible to extract sound from documents. Under interpretative pressure, text-ed information may offer some purchase on ideas of musical sound. Indeed, the combination of sound and paper can prove effective not only because of the information that it affords, but also because of the 'sticking attitudes' one can infer from that information. That is, the information may reflect institutional and/or

⁷⁰ Worth mentioning is the contribution to Chinese Studies of such sources as postcards, photographs and other pictorial and filmic items. A representative publication is Christian Henriot and Wen-hsin Yeh, eds., *Visualising China, 1845–1965: Moving and Still Images in Historical Narratives* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

⁷¹ Gary McCulloch, *Documentary Research in Education, History and the Social Sciences* (London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2004), 1.

individual values attached to contemporary musical practices. It is precisely this socio-sonic aspect of documents that the thesis seeks to explore. In turn, non-fictional materials from 1930s and 1940s Shanghai, coupled with their information on urban governance and live music, may shed (further) light on Shanghai's administrative geography.

As a brief example: Eatery licences issued by the French Municipal Council (FMC) in the 1930s, coupled with the administrative correspondence, throw light on official attitudes towards live music in Shanghai's French Concession, a municipality with a colonial style of rule. Although the licences were for the venues, they came with strict musical stipulations, which in turn reflected the FMC's ideas of sound in eating and drinking establishments. Classical music, specifically chamber music, was the only approved 'type' of music. Performances were restricted to indoors. Brass instruments and big bands were expressly prohibited. Whether or not the FMC's regulation translated into practice was a separate matter, however. Another documentary source cluster—advertisements in the broadsheet *Le Journal de Shanghai*—shows that quasi-Parisian popular entertainment took place daily in the Concession's cafés. The cafés seemed to operate all the same, *sans* pressure from the FMC. Ultimately, I call attention to policy and live music *within* the Concession, a municipality that was supposedly an emblem of French political authority in Shanghai. Noting discordant expressions of Frenchness, I ask what might best characterise the musical soundscape of the Concession—and whether the idea of colonial rule would suffice in this analysis.

The final section of the Prologue outlines the structure of the thesis. Four municipalities each have their own chapter: the British-influenced Shanghai Municipal Council and the International Settlement in the 1930s and early 1940s; the French Municipal Council and the French Concession in the same period; the Shanghai Special Municipality and Hongkew District (specifically the Restricted Sector for Stateless Refugees) during the Japanese occupation in the early 1940s; and the Chinese Nationalist Government and postwar Shanghai, from 1945 through to 1949. These four chapters function as semi-autonomous case studies. On the one hand, each chapter engages with specific historical actors. On the other, the chapters are collectively concerned with the relationship between western music and municipality in Shanghai: municipal policies, live music, official and other ideas of sound in a city plural yet divided.

Chapter One examines the aural phenomenon in the parks of the Shanghai Municipal Brass Band—an ensemble modelled on the Kneller Hall tradition and based in the International Settlement in the 1930s and early 1940s. The main actors are the ensemble’s British administrators, bandleader Wilfrid Sayer, conductor Mario Paci (Sayer’s superior) and park-goers (listening and non-listening ones). Documentary sources (in English) encompass internal memos, departmental correspondences, gazetted programmes and newspaper reports.

Chapter Two explores the sonic regulation of the French Municipal Council and the quasi-Parisian popular entertainment of eateries in the French Concession in the 1930s and early 1940s, assessing the extent to which the Concession—an emblem of French political authority in Shanghai—symbolised a colonial musical soundscape. The

principal actors are officials of the French Municipal Council and business proprietors. Extant licences and broadsheet advertisements (in French) inform the discussion.

Chapter Three surveys the landscape of Continental-style cafés and the sound worlds of *Unterhaltungsmusik* in the Restricted Sector for Stateless Refugees (a zone established by the Japanese military to segregate and to confine European Jewish refugees during the wartime years). The key actors are administrators of the Shanghai Special Municipality, refugee-operators and refugee-musicians. The archival material consists of completed licence forms and advertisements in a German-language refugee daily.

Chapter Four addresses Chinese Nationalist entertainment taxation in the late 1940s, and investigates claims of a distinct musical sound made by cafés, restaurants and bars to oppose that policy. It scrutinises the rationales that purportedly distinguished such venues from dance halls, nightclubs and ballrooms. The surviving paperwork (in Chinese) comprises letters exchanged between municipal bureaux, district tax offices and venue operators, as well as census forms and questionnaires circulated by trade guilds to member establishments.

The Epilogue is titled ‘Mapping (beyond) Pre-Communist Shanghai: Cartographic Contours, Repositories, Archival Musicology’. The chapter findings are first summarised; the discussion then broadens out of 1930s and 1940s Shanghai to become a historiographical reflection on ‘pre-Communist Shanghai’. Expanding from documentary sources to curatorial attitudes, the Epilogue incorporates an interview with an archivist at the Xujiahui Library, the city’s largest repository of foreign-language materials dating from before the Communist takeover. Highlighted here are the

popularity of ‘foreign history’ in present-day Shanghai, and the impact on archival policies of current relations between China and former signatory powers. Finally, three keywords—‘data’, ‘treaty ports’ and ‘architecture’—take the discussion beyond Shanghai, at which point some further directions for an archival musicology are outlined.

CHAPTER ONE

International Settlement (Treaty Port I), ‘Trying to listen to the music’:

Shanghaiers, Parks, The Shanghai Municipal Brass Band

Of public parks in the Victorian era, architectural historian Hazel Conway observes:

‘Music had been played [there] in the 1850s, before bandstands were introduced, but bandstands gave a focus to this activity and [outdoor ensembles] became very popular.’¹

While the present chapter does not concern parks in nineteenth-century Britain, the alfresco entertainment associated with them and described by Conway bears continued relevance in the East. Especially fascinating—and never examined in music scholarship—are the Shanghai Municipal Brass Band and its summer season in the city’s parks in the 1930s and early 1940s.

Administered by the British settlers, who called themselves ‘Shanghaiers’, the Brass Band (hereafter the Band) was one of two official ensembles based in the British-led municipality of treaty port Shanghai: the International Settlement. Founded originally as a public band in 1879, then reorganised and renamed in 1922, the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra and Band were arguably the city’s most high-profile western music groups in the 1930s and 1940s.² Funding came from ratepayers or taxpayers of the

¹ Hazel Conway, *People’s Parks: The Design and Development of Victorian Parks in Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 131.

² See Robert Bickers, “‘The Greatest Cultural Asset East of Suez’: The History and Politics of the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra and Public Band, 1881–1946’, in *China and the World in the Twentieth Century: Selected Essays (Vol. II)*, ed. Chi-hsiung Chang (Nankang, Taiwan: Academia Sinica), 835–875. Established in 1879, the Shanghai Public Band was initially organised along the lines of a military band. Spanish musician Melchior Vela was tasked with the recruitment and training of musicians, many of them Filipino. Following the introduction of ‘art music’ into the repertoire, gradual development of the Public Band into a fuller orchestra and successive resignations from the conductors (Vela; Melchior A. Valenza; Rudolf Buck), Italian pianist Mario Paci was appointed in September 1919 to take charge of the unit, renamed the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra and Band in 1922.

International Settlement, who participated actively in the affairs of the Settlement.³

From the late 1920s (when the Chinese were first admitted into the parks) to the early 1940s, the principal event of the Band's calendar was its open-air performances in the summer. The Orchestra also appeared in the parks, but its primary activity was the winter season at the Grand Theatre, and from 1934, at the Lyceum Theatre. The modus operandi changed in 1942, when the Japanese authorities placed the Orchestra under private auspices, and discontinued the Band.⁴

³ The rights of ratepayers can be found in Regulation XIX of the 1854 Land Regulations in *Land Regulations and By-Laws for the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai, North of Yangkingpang* (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1926): 'Every foreigner, either individually or as a member of a firm, residing in the Settlement, having paid all taxes due, and being an owner of land of not less than five hundred taels in value, whose annual payment of assessment on land or houses or both, exclusive of all payments in respect of licences, shall amount to the sum of ten taels and upwards, or who shall be a householder paying on an assessed rental of not less than five hundred taels per annum and upwards, shall be entitled to vote in the election of the said Members of Council and at the public meetings.' The Orchestra and Band were regularly plagued by civic and financial politics. Between 1927 and 1935 there were numerous attempts at the Annual Ratepayers' Meeting to scrap the ensembles. Those in favour of abolition protested against the yearly expenses and suggested that the Orchestra and Band stop operating as municipal provisions. The debate in 1934 was particularly heated and widely reported in the press. Although the resolution on abolition was defeated, SMC representatives found themselves obliged to promise 'more good music of a lighter kind', presumably in response to complaints about staid repertoire. See Shanghai Municipal Archives (hereafter SMA), U1-4-939-0256. An internal compilation of press extracts by the Shanghai Municipal Council (mainly comments and complaints in the newspapers) is instructive. Undated, but possibly from around the same time as the above debate, the document summarises the key suggestions, many of which pushed for more band performances and greater utilisation of the parks. The proposals read: 'Band section to be further developed and more outdoor concerts to be given in the spring, autumn as well as summer'; 'free brass band concerts in Jessfield Park twice a week and in the vicinity of the tea pavilion and lake'; and 'park concerts on Sunday mornings and afternoons'. See SMA, U1-4-939-0256. Although the Orchestra played in the parks in the summer, their priority remained the winter concert season, which was characterised by full-length and composer-centric programmes, such as the celebration of Liszt at the Lyceum Theatre on 15 March 1936—'in memoriam of the fiftieth anniversary of the Master's death'. See SMA, U1-4-926-1086.

⁴ On 31 May 1942, the Orchestra and Band ceased functioning as a municipal unit and was transferred by the Japanese to the auspices of the Shanghai Philharmonic Society, a private entity set up by the authorities. Having penetrated Shanghai's Chinese-governed areas in 1937, the Japanese military occupied the International Settlement following the attack on Pearl Harbor and the commencement of the Pacific War in December 1941.

Research has and remains focused on the Municipal Orchestra, now the Shanghai Symphony. Deserving of study is the Brass Band, an ensemble ostensibly more British than the Orchestra. The Band in the International Settlement presents an intriguing aural phenomenon—in an ‘area’ whose sovereignty was rendered meaningless by extraterritoriality accorded to no fewer than ten signatories under the Unequal Treaties.⁵ As per the 1930 census, of the foreign nationals residing in the Settlement, the Japanese numbered 12,788, and the British, 4,606. This is a striking statistic, given the image of the Settlement as a British-influenced municipality, notably the architecture of banks and other commercial premises along the Bund. Whereas in existing publications, notably Suzel Ana Reily and Katherine Brucher’s edited volume *Brass Bands of the World*, the global dissemination of the brass band tends to be linked with the spread of European colonialism, the Band in treaty port Shanghai defies straightforward analysis.⁶ Before I outline the content of the chapter, two important points need to be highlighted.

First, the Band was a deceptive imperial emblem. On the surface, it symbolised the pride—and the clout—of British administrators, ratepayers and residents in the city. Robert Bickers notes that affairs of the International Settlement ‘were dominated by a mostly British oligarchy, and served the interests until the late 1930s of British settlers’.⁷ A microcosm of those interests, and a prominent force, was the Shanghai Municipal Council (or the SMC), the de facto governing body of the Settlement, which

⁵ Under the Unequal Treaties, the Favoured Nations that enjoyed extraterritoriality in the International Settlement were: Belgium, Brazil, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.

⁶ Suzel Ana Reily and Katherine Brucher, eds., *Brass Bands of the World: Militarism, Colonial Legacies, and Local Music Making* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2013).

⁷ Bickers, ‘The Greatest Cultural Asset East of Suez’, 836.

sought to advocate and to implement British policies. The Orchestra and Band constituted one of the SMC's various departments; the Music Director and Bandmaster were municipal employees. Although different foreign subjects resided and conducted business in the Settlement, the local British presence that had developed over nearly a hundred years, since the first treaty ports were established in China in the mid-nineteenth century, was doubtless pervasive. Voted by the ratepayers, SMC Members (akin to an executive board) were mostly British nationals. Many of the SMC administrators were Shanghailanders.

The professed superiority of the SMC and of the British community had imperialist undertones—in a treaty port that was not a British Crown colony but still factored into the contemporary imagination of empire. British status in Shanghai and in China was to be upheld. The Shanghailanders' sense of prestige was at stake, namely: the achievement, albeit self-congratulatory, of reforms deemed transformative, such as modern public sanitation.⁸ Glorified, though in hollow and condescending fashion, was a 'Model Settlement' of municipal administration. Its proponents were of the opinion that the SMC outclassed the French and Chinese local governments. The British went so far as to proclaim the International Settlement as 'an unprecedented chapter in the history of the world's municipalities'.⁹ Ego and vanity mattered to the Shanghailanders and to how they pronounced their values in a multinational yet fractured city. Musically and sonically, parks provided an important site to project those values.

⁸ Of urban administration in the International Settlement, see, for example, Ma Changlin, Li Xia and Shi Lei, eds., *Shanghai gonggong zujie chengshi guanli yanjiu* [Research on the Municipal Management of the Shanghai International Settlement] (Shanghai: Zhongxi Press, 2011).

⁹ *The Land Regulations and Bye-Laws for the Foreign Settlement in Shanghai, 1845–1930*, 1. This was a British internal report and is held now at the Xujiahui Library in Shanghai.

The Band, managed by the Shanghai Municipal Council, might seem a sonorous sounding of empire. For the ensemble was expected to recreate the repertoires and sounds of nineteenth-century British military bands, and a style of performance not dissimilar from the Kneller Hall tradition.¹⁰ To that end the SMC made a point of appointing Wilfrid Sayer as bandmaster. In many ways Sayer was the perfect archetype in the overall positioning of the Band. A product of Kneller Hall, he directed the East Lancashire Regiment before, during and after the Great War; played a command performance for King George V; and went on to serve in colonial outposts such as Hong Kong, India and Malta before assuming his position in Shanghai.¹¹ During the summer season, Sayer and the Band were required to play: in public parks overseen by the SMC, such as Jessfield Park (兆豐公園), Public Garden (公共花園) and Hongkew Park (虹口公園); and in Koukaza Park (顧家宅公園, previously French Park), run by the French Municipal Council. Taking place on a pergola or a bandstand, the performances were reminiscent of outdoor events in eighteenth-century and notably in Victorian Britain. (Turn over for figures 1.1. to 1.4.)

¹⁰ Kneller Hall became from the 1850s the site of the British Army's Royal Military School of Music. That function continues to the present day. At the time of writing, the Ministry of Defence may put Kneller Hall up for sale.

¹¹ Sayer had close connections with other prominent British bandmasters at the time: B. (Bertram) Walton O'Donnell, leader of the BBC Wireless Military Band and a former student of his at Kneller Hall; and brother Percy S.G. O'Donnell, conductor of the Royal Air Force Band, who also delivered concerts on air. There was a third brother, Rudolph O'Donnell, who directed the Royal Marine Artillery Band and the Royal Force Air Force Band. The O'Donnells were also composers.

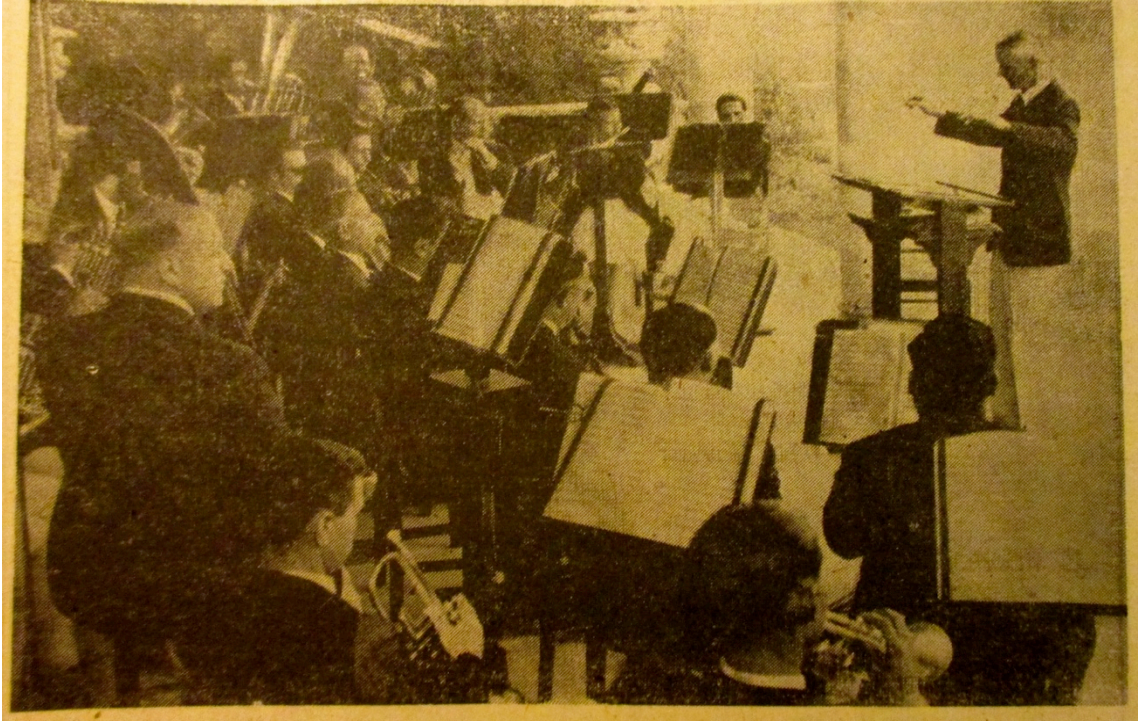


Fig. 1.1. Wilfrid W. Sayer and the Shanghai Municipal Brass Band in the early 1940s.



Fig. 1.2. Jessfield Park (now Zhongshan Park). Orchestra 'shell' in the background.



Fig. 1.3. The Public Garden and bandstand on the Bund. (Now Huangpu Park.)



Fig. 1.4. Koukaza Park. (Now Fuxing Park.)

The emphasis that the Shanghaianders placed on the Band can also be observed in the fact that concert offers from visiting military bands, many of them also British, were declined from the mid-1930s. Earlier in the decade, the SMC accepted proposals from such ensembles as the Band of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers and the Band of the Worcestershire Regiment to give concerts in the parks.¹² But those in charge were increasingly determined to distinguish the Municipal Brass Band from bands stationed with their regiments. In internal correspondence with the SMC Secretary, Mario Paci, Music Director and head of the Orchestra and Band (to whom Sayer reported), opined that ‘the interest of the public as regards music in the parks should be monopolised by the Municipal Orchestra and Band’.¹³

Yet: despite appearances the Municipal Brass Band was not an entirely British operation, still less the prestigious showcase desired by the Shanghaianders. Sayer apart, the Band was non-British. The musicians, close to forty in total and drawn primarily from the Municipal Orchestra, extended from Dutch, Italian and Russian, to Chinese, Filipino and Japanese.¹⁴ Sayer described the Band as a ‘miniature League of Nations’.¹⁵ Trained in other settings, these employees neither understood nor gave priority to the spectacle and decorum of British military music practice. There was also a technical issue. Many were professional string players, and with parallel obligations in

¹² See for example SMA, U1-4-915-1619 and U1-4-915-1627.

¹³ SMA, U1-4-915-1607.

¹⁴ The figure reported in the *North-China Daily News* on 22 August 1936 was thirty-seven, but since some of the string musicians, citing technical difficulties with learning a second instrument, asked to be relieved of their Band duties, that number would have fluctuated. The materials that I consulted at the SMA and at the Shanghai Symphony Archive do not contain musician rosters.

¹⁵ Refer to Sayer’s interview with the *North-China Daily News* on 22 August 1936. An SMC document produced before the interview lists the musicians’ various nationalities. See SMA, U1-4-916-1901.

the Orchestra, found it unreasonable to have to master a wind or brass instrument.

Although the Band took after Kneller Hall practice and was a ‘pet project’ of the British settlers, their sense of proprietorship did not define and shape the ensemble outright.

Following from the above, the second point that I wish to rehearse concerns the administrative *and* political geography surrounding the Band. In the Prologue, I explained that Shanghai in the 1930s and the early 1940s was sectioned into three municipalities: the International Settlement, the French Concession and Greater Shanghai. The complexity of this arrangement meant yet more territorial mutations. Although the International Settlement provided a platform for British subjects to assert their power and influence, the Settlement did not equate to the city. However vocal were they of their activities, and however attached were they to the place, Shanghailanders did not ‘own’ Shanghai.

The Band, while a British municipal undertaking, had to chart non-British territory in the treaty port.¹⁶ Though based in the Settlement, the Band also performed regularly in the French Concession. The ensemble did so mainly for financial reasons. The French Municipal Council gave additional and much-needed aid, the provisos being the expansion of the Band’s French repertoire and services on such occasions as Bastille Day. Given the virtues that the British settlers conferred upon themselves, this was in many ways a slap in the face: the administrators had to swallow their pride and bow to the sponsorship of another foreign (and long-competing) power in the city. Treaty port geography, coupled with territorial politics, trumped British musical parades and sonic values.

¹⁶ Sceptical of the Anglo-American alliance in Shanghai, the French established in the 1860s their own municipality, the French Concession, which will be examined in Chapter Two.

My two points suggest the need for a nuanced historical modelling. There was more to British-style pomp and pageantry in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai. The Band did not always manage to produce ostentatious display in the city's parks. The Chinese and other park-goers did not care much either. After all, the city offered countless forms of amusement, notably cinemas, dance halls and multi-entertainment complexes.

Regarding a performance in the Public Garden in summer 1941, an SMC internal report stated that 'of the several hundreds of people, the majority are youths and children playing noisy games [with] approximately a hundred people trying to listen to the music'.¹⁷ The ensemble was not discernibly heard, let alone listened to.

Granted, inaudibility in outdoor spaces is not unique to the Municipal Brass Band or to Shanghai in the early decades of the twentieth century. Nonetheless there is a valid albeit preliminary observation to be made here: the jarring disconnect between a planned ensemble and an unplanned ensemble, amid and notwithstanding the clout of the Shanghailanders. With that in mind, musicologists should seek to understand the policy of the Band as well as to follow it locally, situating it not only as a musical but also as an aural phenomenon. At stake from a present-day vantage point is the interpretation of an ensemble with an ostensibly British ethos but was also a mobile body of sound in a treaty port.

In order to examine the particularities of the Band in Shanghai's International Settlement, my discussion is structured around three 'acts' of historical listening. That musical sounds there and then are impossible to recover makes it all the more crucial to consider the available evidence. Drawing on such sources as newspaper reports and surviving scores at the Shanghai Municipal Archives and at the Shanghai Symphony

¹⁷ SMA, U1-14-2056-1564.

Archive and Library, I explore how the Brass Band was perceived and received according to contemporary ears in its summer season from 1930 through to 1942.

The first act of historical listening analyses the Band from an official standpoint, notably the sound and style of performance preferred by the British administrators. The second act traces the Band in situ, and does so according to accounts of non-/listening in the parks. The third goes further and asks about the formation of the audience in and across a territorialised (not just ‘tripartite’) treaty port. In the postlude, I close with some wider reflections on and beyond the Band as an aural phenomenon, contemplating the implications of my historical listening for comprehending music and empire in the East in the twentieth century.

Historical Listening (I): The expected sound and style of performance

At the outset it is worth stating that the Band in Shanghai was less a brass band than a wind band on the military model. Flutes, oboes and clarinets were an integral part of the ensemble. In addition it bore no relation to the working-class communities associated with brass bands in Britain.¹⁸ The ensemble was not strictly a military band either. According to George Martin, well into the twentieth century the term ‘brass band’ often included civilian bands of all kinds.¹⁹ The Band in Shanghai was a citywide entertainment band. On top of its summer season in the parks, the ensemble was

¹⁸ See, for example, Trevor Herbert, ed., *The British Brass Band: A Musical and Social History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); and Vincent Dubois, Jean-Matthieu Méon and Emmanuel Pierru, *The Sociology of Wind Bands: Amateur Music Between Cultural Domination and Autonomy*, trans. Jean-Yves Bart (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2013).

¹⁹ George W. Martin, *Opera at the Bandstand: Then and Now* (Plymouth, UK: Scarecrow, 2014), xii.

contracted for semi-public and private engagements throughout the year, in such venues as membership clubs and hotels.²⁰

Earlier I mentioned bandmaster Wilfrid Sayer, who arrived in Shanghai in the summer of 1936 to take up his position. Prior to that, Adrian de Kryger, Alexander Sloutsky and Arrigo Foa, all non-British, led the Municipal Brass Band. They were orchestral conductors (Foa was also a violinist) affiliated with the Municipal Orchestra, and were not professional bandmasters. The appointment of Sayer appeared significant in that it reinforced the Britishness and the ‘regal image’ accorded to the Municipal Brass Band. In a communiqué before the summer, the Publicity and Information Office of the SMC trumpeted: ‘Concerts [in the parks this summer] will be given by the new Brass Band, which promises to be the best and largest that Shanghai has ever had.’²¹ The rhetoric, albeit brazen, enunciated the pride of the Shanghailanders administrators. However the evidence points to more complex developments, highlighting differing priorities of Sayer and of Mario Paci, his superior—from which one can infer ideas of what, where and how the Band in Shanghai was expected to sound. Sayer was British in his training and experience, but ultimately, his intentions mattered less than the agenda of the SMC, or indeed those of Paci, himself an Italian, who was more invested in the Municipal Orchestra and in the winter concert season. Before I discuss the expectations for the Band, it is necessary to spell out the ways in which Sayer and Paci diverged,

²⁰ In order to generate additional income, the Orchestra and Band had outside, semi-public and private engagements throughout the year. The musicians re/assembled flexibly in various permutations that ranged from a ‘Full Orchestra’, ‘Half Orchestra’, ‘Full Brass Band’, ‘Special Small Concert Band’, ‘Dance Orchestra’, ‘Individual Musicians’, ‘Pianist’ to ‘Soloists’—all of which were contracted on the SMC’s set tariff of charges. See SMA, U1-4-935-2389 and U1-4-935-2390. An example is the New Asia Hotel (新亞飯店) and the employment of the Half Orchestra to give free monthly concerts in the hotel auditorium from November 1934.

²¹ SMA, U1-4-916-1882.

even though the two were allied insofar as their commitment to the Orchestra and Band was concerned.

Immediately after his arrival in Shanghai, Sayer gave interviews with *North-China Daily News* (字林西報), the *Shanghai Times* (上海泰晤士報) and *The China Press* (大陸報), all major English-language broadsheets in the city. The interviews were carefully coordinated for publication on 22 August 1936. Sayer outlined three aims. The first was to provide ‘music for relaxation’.²² Second, Sayer emphasised that classical or ‘high-brow’ music would be minimised. According to *The China Press*, an American-financed daily: ‘Under the new bandmaster programs will be more on the popular side, the numbers to be light and lively with only one or two classics played for the sake of variation.’²³ The *Shanghai Times* quoted Sayer in more detail: ‘The public should be encouraged to relax from the worries of the day. There is no better aid to relaxation than good, catchy and popular music.’²⁴

Last but not least, Sayer hoped to reorganise the Band along the lines of the BBC Wireless Military Band, suggesting that the Band in Shanghai would be ‘properly orchestrated in the manner of a British army band, and [that] the quality of the music should be greatly improved’.²⁵ He added, however, that the Band would not be known as a military band. Sayer’s position echoes a BBC internal memo from 1933: ‘If the Wireless Military Band is to be esteemed as a musical, as distinct from a marching, body of instruments, then the music chosen for performance must be good and must

²² ‘Music for relaxation’ was the main theme in Sayer’s interviews with the *North-China Daily News*, the *Shanghai Times* and the *China Press* on 22 August 1936.

²³ *The China Press*, 22 August 1936.

²⁴ *Shanghai Times*, 22 August 1936.

²⁵ *North-China Daily News*, 22 August 1936.

make as wide an appeal as possible. The term “military band” [is] an unfortunate one.’²⁶

According to the *North-China Daily News*, Sayer looked to introduce ‘the latest dance music from England and America, which will be played as soon as possible after it reaches Shanghai’.²⁷ He even proposed ‘a scheme for co-operating with the local cinemas, and playing dance numbers at the same time as the films in which they are featured are being shown in Shanghai. [T]his would encourage audiences to go and see the pictures from which the music is taken. [F]ilm-goers would [also] be encouraged to attend [the Band’s] concerts after hearing the tunes played in the film’.²⁸

Under the impression that he would be able to forge ahead with his plan, Sayer hurried to survey the orchestra library. Less than a month after the interviews, Sayer wrote to Paci with the following comments:

[I]n a very bad condition, parts torn beyond repair, and parts deficient, and the music, generally, is very old in every respect. Suggest that some arrangement be made whereby the latest musical successes in England and the U.S.A. be obtained, and, for future use, kept up, so that programmes may be up-to-date.²⁹

In addition to reviewing the Band’s library and repertoire, Sayer inspected the parks. In the same letter to Paci he suggested relocating the bandstands. The bandstand in Hongkew Park (see figure 1.5) was deemed out of place for afternoon concerts and inconspicuous to members of the public. Sayer recommended moving it to a more

²⁶ BBC Written Archives Centre, R29/147.

²⁷ *North-China Daily News*, 22 August 1936.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ SMA, U1-4-912-1019.

central location in the park, so that ‘even those playing games [and scattered about in the park] could hear the Band’.³⁰



Fig. 1.5. Hongkew Park. Hongkou was romanised as Hongkew at the time. (Now Lu Xun Park, named after the writer.)

Sayer wasted no time in getting to know his musicians. In an August 1936 report to Paci, he asked to start conducting the Band in public ‘from the 22nd of the month instant’, in order to “‘feel” the members of the Band, and [for] the Band to get accustomed to the change of conductor, so as to mutually inspire confidence between [them], and also to make any alteration of instrumentation felt necessary’.³¹

Paci was initially enthusiastic about the prospect of an improved band under a new and dedicated bandmaster. In response to the Shanghai Country Club’s request for the Band’s services on 11 September 1936, which was a Friday evening, Paci wrote to the Shanghai Municipal Council Secretary with his endorsement: ‘In order not to miss

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ SMA, U1-4-916-1863.

this very rare opportunity to present to a select public the reconstituted Brass Band under the leadership of the new bandmaster, I beg to recommend the cancellation of the evening public performance [at the Public Garden every Friday] and the acceptance of the Country Club's application.'³² And in another correspondence around the same time (about a month after Sayer's interviews), Paci praised the Band under Sayer as 'a real municipal asset for public entertainment'.³³

Yet, the eagerness of the music director did not last long. This can be noted in the lukewarm feedback to the bandmaster's 'specimen programmes' in the late 1930s.³⁴ Sayer proposed four such programmes for Saturday afternoon performances in May 1939 at Jessfield Park, to which Paci responded with reservation in a report to the SMC. The wording was partially ambiguous but essentially unyielding: the specimens 'have my approval but will have to be replaced by much easier programmes on account of the absence of the first and second clarinet players'.³⁵ In three out of the four specimens, one finds a good number of hand-marked crosses next to Sayer's suggestions, which shows that Paci was not entirely in favour of them. On the other hand, pieces performed in the Band's alfresco concerts over the years, such as *A Selection from The Mikado* and the Overture to *Die Fledermaus* were endorsed, as were excerpts from celebrated operas such as *Aida* and *La Bohème*. Judging from the unmarked items on the list it would appear that Paci had no issues with the works of Berlioz, Dvořák, Puccini, Wagner and Weber, or of 'light music' composers such as Gilbert and Sullivan, Johann Strauss II, von Suppé and Lehár. Axed were compositions considered too challenging to the Band,

³² SMA, U1-4-916-1864.

³³ SMA, U1-4-912-1016.

³⁴ SMA, U1-4-917-2204 and U1-4-917-2205.

³⁵ SMA, U1-4-917-2201.

for example Heed's *Fairies Greeting* (a caprice), Luigini's *La Voix des Cloches* (a rêverie) and Völker's *A Hunt in the Black Forest* (described by Sayer as a 'musical episode').

Whether or not technical difficulty was the real reason to withhold approval (another possibility not stated in Paci's letter being the additional expense of getting new sheet music from abroad), Sayer's experiment did not come to fruition. The programme scheduled for the Band's concert on 27 May 1939 at Jessfield Park consisted of the usual choices:

March *Rákóczy* (Berlioz)

Overture to *Morning, Noon, and Night in Vienna* (Suppé)

Invitation to the Waltz (Weber)

Suite *Egyptian Ballet* (Luigini)

INTERVAL

Selection from *La Bohème* (Puccini)

Alexander's Ragtime Band (Berlin)

Selection from *The Blue Mazurka* (Lehár)

In fact, the doubts that Paci harboured about the Band were not unique. Some of the musicians, particularly the string players drawn from and loyal to the Orchestra, had long had reservations about the brass band project. A petition dated May 1935 (a year before Sayer's appointment), written jointly by the players and addressed to Paci, is telling:

We wish to inform you and declare that with our sincerest regret we are unable to comply with your desire and your warning that we should have learnt to play a

second instrument (wind or brass) and be therefore in a position to do full duty during the three months of summer season in the Orchestra and in the Brass Band. Although you have given us fair notice to this effect, we regret to say that we are unable to play in the Brass Band concerts during the approaching summer season of 1935. At our age (ranging from 35 to 56 years) and being specialised string instrument players, we have not found it possible to start to study another instrument.³⁶

The players suggested cutting twenty percent of their pay in order to hire ‘specialised wind instrument players’, arguing that the Band would be more efficient that way.³⁷ Paci was not too pleased but defended the musicians nonetheless: ‘I have to state that it is certainly very rare [to find] a really good string player who plays a second wind instrument. The six players are very good players and certainly the best string players available in Shanghai.’³⁸ A month later, the Council approved four extra musicians for the summer season in 1935.³⁹ The fact that technical ability remained an issue in 1939—when Sayer proposed his specimen programmes—is intriguing then. Although it is not clear whether the extras were rehired after 1935, or whether the issue of technical ability was more a pretext than a problem, Paci steered clear of taking risks on unknown musical choices.

That norms prevailed over vogue can also be observed in the municipal acquisition of sheet music. In a report dated September 1934 and addressed to the SMC Secretary, Paci gave assurances that the new music that he purchased represented value

³⁶ SMA, U1-4-916-1930.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ SMA, U1-4-916-1927 to U1-4-916-1929.

³⁹ SMA, U1-4-916-1920.

for money. The list that was presented consisted of selections for ‘small or half-orchestra’ (notably works by operetta composer Victor Herbert), as well as overtures, waltzes, marches and other dances arranged for bands.⁴⁰ Such genres reveal that the so-called new music features the kinds of pieces as well as styles long familiar to the Band.

The contrasting priorities of Sayer and of Paci, coupled with musicians’ scepticism and a conservative sheet music policy, lead to the question what, where and how the Band in Shanghai was expected to sound. First, let’s turn to what was scheduled. The repertoire for the ensemble’s summer performances in the parks was typical of band programmes in the nineteenth century. It contained selections of operas and operettas by Italian, German, French, British and Russian composers; arrangements of works by ‘art music’ composers (for example, the *Grand Fantasia from the works of Mendelssohn*); transcriptions of overtures, symphonies and other classical genres; eighteenth- and nineteenth-century dances such as the quadrille, polka, waltz and the military march; and descriptive pieces, for example intermezzos and idylls. Judging from the Municipal Brass Band’s programmes from the 1930s through to the early 1940s, they were similar recreational potpourris, barring auditory focus on a single composer or work.⁴¹ Below are four examples, which include Sayer’s inaugural summer programme in May 1937.

1930

March *Jock’s Patrol* (Godfrey)

Overture to *Mignon* (Thomas)

Waltz *España* (Waldteufel)

⁴⁰ SMA, U1-4-939-0135 to U1-4-939-0143.

⁴¹ The programmes are held at the Shanghai Symphony Archive. Some of them can also be found in foreign-language newspapers at the Xujiahui Library.

Selection from *Princess Ida* (Gilbert-Sullivan)

INTERVAL

Rustic Dance (Ansell)

Song Without Words (Tchaikovsky)

Serenade (Leoncavallo)

Selection from *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Mascagni)⁴²

1935

March *Jingle Bells* (Roberts)

Overture to *University Songs* (Suppé)

Waltz *Cécile* (McKee)

Selection *The Blue Mazurka* (Lehár)

Euphonium Solo on Airs from Donizetti's Opera *Maria di Rohan* (Kappy)

Selection from *The Gypsy Baron* (Strauss)⁴³

1937 (Sayer's first summer performance with the Band in Jessfield Park)

March *A La Militaire* (Ord Humes)

Overture to *Lustspiel* (Béla Kéler)

Sketch *By the Mississippi* (Knowles)

Valse *La Berceuse* (Waldteufel)

INTERVAL

Idyll *Hiawatha* (Moret)

Patrol *The Kentucky Patrol* (Kaps)

⁴² *The China Press*, 13 August 1930.

⁴³ SMA, U1-4-916-1890 and U1-4-916-1891.

Intermezzo *The Wedding of the Rose* (Jessel)

Selection from *The Merry Widow* (Lehár)

1941

March *Entry of the Gladiators* (Fuick)

Overture to *Zampa* (Herold)

Selection from *The Merry Widow* (Lehár)

INTERVAL

Suite *Coppélia* (Delibes)

Intermezzo *In a Monastery Garden* (Ketèlbey)

Selection from *Merrie England* (German)

Selection from *La Traviata* (Verdi)⁴⁴

The programmes remained largely unchanged over the 1930s. Pieces by recognised composers such as Lehár, for example ‘A Selection from *The Merry Widow*’, were recycled throughout the decade. Although Sayer attempted to upgrade the music library and to introduce hits from the latest British and American films, his plan, so confidently announced to the press when he first reached Shanghai, fell through. The bandmaster’s summer debut with the ensemble did not mark a sea change from what went on before. Ord Hume, Béla Kéler, Waldteufel, Moret and Jessel were some of the names appearing regularly in the programmes. Paci, members of the SMC’s Orchestra and Band Committee and the SMC on the whole favoured a stable and unchanging repertoire—a sound world characteristic of military and alfresco bands in the nineteenth century.

⁴⁴ SMA, U1-4-930-1539.

In terms of where the Band should sound in Shanghai, the very tradition of an annual summer season in the public parks was inextricably bound up with the values of the British settlers in the treaty port. The occasion was perceived to facilitate the desired sound world and to re-enact a practice with which Shanghailanders readily identified—alfresco musical performances in public venues such as pleasure gardens in eighteenth-century and Victorian Britain, which featured musicians on a raised platform.⁴⁵ The popularity of outdoor concerts given by military bands in Britain can be inferred from a parliamentary document from 1856, which mentioned no fewer than 79,000 attendees in Kensington Gardens and nearly 90,000 attendees in Regent’s Park in London.⁴⁶ Fast-forwarding to the 1930s and 1940s, and shifting to Shanghai, the idea of what and where the Band should play was thus locked in a specific time warp—one marked by a distinct sense of place and an idealised past.

How the Band was supposed to sound in the open air was influenced by the performance tradition established at Kneller Hall in 1857. Of that tradition, Trevor Herbert observes the development of a non-martial mode of military music that displayed skill and spectacle beyond the parade ground.⁴⁷ He notes that on the one hand ‘[i]t did not take long for Kneller Hall to assume a fundamental importance in British military music’, and that on the other ‘the “martial” and the “ceremonial” must be interpreted here not so much in terms of function as of the nature of the performance

⁴⁵ Regarding such events, see, for example, Rachel Cowgill, ‘Performance Alfresco: Music-Making in London’s Pleasure Gardens’, in *The Pleasure Garden, from Vauxhall to Coney Island*, ed. Jonathan Conlin (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

⁴⁶ Edward Baines, *On the Performance of Military Bands in the Parks of London on Sundays* (London: Seeley, 1856), 5.

⁴⁷ Trevor Herbert, ‘Brass and Military Bands in Britain—Performance Domains, the Factors that Construct them and their Influence’, in *Brass Bands of the World: Militarism, Colonial Legacies, and Local Music Making*, eds. Suzel Ana Reily and Katherine Brucher (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2013), 45.

domain that was formed'.⁴⁸ Defining the performance domain as the way bands perform and consequently sound, Herbert goes on to say: 'Military music performance and the manner of its presentation in public concerts both indoors and in the open air, reflected the crisp precision, decorum and discipline that [were] to characterise the military orthodoxy.'⁴⁹

Indeed, military music did not automatically denote battlefield music. In a BBC internal memo from March 1934, conductor B. Walton O'Donnell, Sayer's protégé at Kneller Hall, commented about the repertoire of the Wireless Military Band, pinpointing what he believed was a misunderstanding of the ensemble: '[T]he material of what we term a "military band" did not originate in the fighting services. In the strict sense of the term, there is practically no such thing [as military band music]. Ninety-nine percent of music played by military bands consists of "arrangements".'⁵⁰ That musical militarism had less to do with combat and procession than with the overall ambience was certainly the case in Shanghai. Although Reily and Brucher focus on colonial musical settings in their edited volume, their observation is especially salient here: 'Like a soundtrack to a film, the band is central to establishing the atmosphere of a collective event.'⁵¹ In treaty port Shanghai, the Municipal Brass Band was envisaged to stir up awe and amazement, and ultimately, to reflect credit on the Shanghai Municipal Council. With regard to the bandstand in Jessfield Park, the SMC's Orchestra and Band Committee commented that

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ BBC Written Archives Centre, R29/147.

⁵¹ Reily and Brucher, *Brass Bands of the World*, 19.

‘a cheap type of construction is incompatible with the Council’s dignity’.⁵² Impressions were everything to the self-important Shanghailanders.

Surviving piano-conductor scores at the Shanghai Symphony Library prove a useful source, providing fascinating clues as to how the Band was intended to sound. Frequent markings are found in such materials as Samuel Coleridge-Taylor’s *Hiawatha Suite*, orchestrated by Percy E. Fletcher and published by Hawkes & Son.⁵³ The markings, presumably made by Sayer, demonstrate utmost concentration on order and detail. He added them to highlight tempo changes and other indications already printed in the score. Handwritten cues such as “accel” (accelerando), *più mosso*, and “rall” (rallentando) feature throughout, revealing the conductor’s painstaking attention to musical ebb and flow, whether in the space of just a few bars or in the context of a longer passage. (Turn over for figure 1.6.)

⁵² SMA, U1-4-916-1978.

⁵³ Hawkes & Son was the predecessor of Boosey & Hawkes.

Fig. 1.6. First and second pages of the surviving *Hiawatha* score, with Sayer's markings in blue.

SHANGHAI PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY LIBRARY 752

Conductor: *海文交响乐团 图书资料*

Suite

From the Ballet Music HIAWATHA.

I. THE WOOING.

S. COLERIDGE-TAYLOR.
Orchestrated by PERCY E. FLETCHER.

Moderato. (*d* = 40.) *Muted Strings.* *4 - 42*

W.W. & Horns sustain.

Poco più mosso.
Fl. Solo.

pp *cresc.* *Harp.* *mp*

Tempo I. *Str.* *W.W. & Horns sustain.*

p *cresc.* *Harp.*

Poco più mosso. *Fl.* *Ob.* *Cls.* *Horns.* *mf*

mf *pp poco accel.*

Tempo I. *Str.* *W. Wind.* *Harp.* *Horns added.*

p *cresc.* *mp* *pp poco accel.*

W. Wind. *poco a poco rall.* *W.W. & Trombs.* *W.W. & Str.* *1st Vl.*

cresc. mf *mf* *mp* *accel*

pp *mf* *mp* *accel*

Copyright 1920 in U.S.A. by Hawkes & Son. Copyright for all Countries. HAWKES & SON, Denman Street, Piccadilly Circus, LONDON, W. 1. PARIS, 16 Rue Saunier IXe

752

② Allegro moderato. (♩ = 180.) Piano Conductor.

1st VI. Cl. 3

W.W. *rit* *a tempo* *a tempo* *a tempo*

Str. pizz. Str. pizz. Tri. *p* *a tempo* *mprit.* *mp* *a tempo*

Harp added. *mp* *a tempo*

③ Fl. *Più mosso*

1st VI. & Cl. *accel* *Più mosso*

Brass stacc. *cresc.* *f*

Timp. Timp.

④ 1st VI.

rall. *a tempo* *a tempo*

Horns. Tambourine. *mprit.* *cresc.* Tamb.

④ 1st VI. & Oboe.

W.W. *rit.* *a tempo*

Str. Cls. & Bsns. Tri. *a tempo*

Cello & Bsn. added. *mf* *cresc.*

Harp. *mf* Horns add. *cresc.* Trombs stacc.

Bass pizz.

H. & S. 5812.

Sayer's insertions—and his layered reading of the score—show a meticulous approach towards how the band as a body of sound should articulate and project itself in the open

air. The combination of properly restrained music, bandstands and uniforms, coupled with the penchant for accuracy, points to a style of performance characterised by formality and virtuosity. Judging from the surviving programmes and scores, how the ensemble was *expected* to sound in 1930s Shanghai was informed by nineteenth-century band repertoires and by British military orthodoxy. Ultimately, it was a matter linked with the status-conscious Shanghai Municipal Council and with the complacency of the Shanghailanders.

Historical Listening (II): Non-/listening in the parks

I now shift from policy to site, and examine the Band in situ. For the Shanghailanders' expectations for the ensemble say little about its reception in the parks. Sources ranging from memos circulated among departmental units to editorials in newspapers raise the question whether park-goers necessarily paid attention to what was programmed and played, and if they did, whether their experience of the Band was satisfactory. A couple of examples are in order.

Of weekly concerts in Hongkew Park in summer 1936, the Superintendent of Parks remarked wryly to the Deputy Commissioner of Public Works: 'The usual audience at these concerts consisted of a dozen amahs [Chinese domestic servants] with perambulators, two dozen children, a few park coolies and a few groups of Japanese marines who happened to be drilling nearby.'⁵⁴ The comment makes an interesting footnote to attendance figures for the concerts, which fluctuated from twenty to more than two hundred.⁵⁵ Whether or not park-goers listened to the Band, let alone appreciated its intended sound and style of performance, was unpredictable. The

⁵⁴ SMA, U1-14-2056-1411.

⁵⁵ SMA, U1-4-893-1725 to U1-4-893-1729. The official figures were based on ticket receipts.

reception of the Band was contingent upon the size and composition of the audience that happened to be present. The situation worsened the following summer. Of a scheduled performance in Hongkew Park, Sayer expressed grave concern that ‘there was not one person in the park’ and noted that the Band waited for a good forty-five minutes before cancelling.⁵⁶ Describing the incident as a crisis, Sayer recommended that the concerts in the park be suspended until further notice.⁵⁷ Plans for the Band were offset by half-committed listeners, non-listeners as well as missing listeners. The absence of listeners ridiculed the official image of the ensemble, making a mockery of the values that Shanghailanders ensconced themselves in.

The disjuncture between a model style of performance and an unenthusiastic public can be found in other parks in Shanghai. Paci reported the following scenario in the Public Garden in summer 1941, alluded to at the beginning of this chapter: the concerts were ‘of very little interest to the public crowding the Garden [and] of the several hundreds of people, the majority are youths and children playing noisy games [with] approximately a hundred people trying to listen to the music’.⁵⁸ The futile attempt by a minority group to pay attention to the Band amid other activities suggests a mixed demographic, largely indifferent to the concerts. The alfresco setting where, according to the official imagination, the Band offered all things majestic actually hindered attentive listening. The relevance and irrelevance of the audience reduced the ensemble to a nominal rather than an effective body of sound.

At the same time, what was said about the Public Garden also exposed ‘loyalists’ who made a point of paying to support the Band and its outdoor performances. They

⁵⁶ SMA, U1-4-2056-1449.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ SMA, U1-14-2056-1564.

alongside other members of the public were levied an entry fee to access the so-called public parks. On top of that, they agreed to an additional charge to hire chairs near the ensemble. Judging from opinions and letters in broadsheets in the late 1930s, the regulars—many of them self-professed music lovers—anticipated pleasurable entertainment in the open air. Yet, the commitment of these park-goers often devolved into resentment and disappointment. Performances were cancelled or curtailed at the last minute. Strikingly, the local press sympathised with frustrated listeners. The *North-China Daily News*, a de facto mouthpiece of the Shanghai Municipal Council, accorded full coverage to a scathing complaint, sarcastically titled ‘The Band Again: The Queen That Never Came’:

[One] naturally takes kindly to such a programme as was advertised by the Band last week in your N.C.D.N. Ah! ‘My Queen Waltz’—the loved and the lost! And I had not heard it played by a brass band, and in sylvan surroundings, for years. A scene like this: trees, lawns, and people about. But what about the music? Now its absence becomes oppressive. I consulted my faithful ticker. It was six! Why can’t notices be posted up, or broadcasted, to prevent such shabby treatment of the paying public, particularly of music lovers?⁵⁹

At stake for the SMC was its reputation. The SMC thus duly requested an explanation from Sayer. The latter responded: ‘Owing to heavy rain yesterday afternoon at Jessfield Park which flooded the floor of the Bandstand and caus[ed] the overhead screen to be filled with water which continually seeped through, it was impossible to play so I had to cancel the concert.’⁶⁰ Public discontent did not dispel and protests in the press

⁵⁹ SMA, U1-4-911-0752. The letter was published in the paper in July 1938.

⁶⁰ SMA, U1-4-911-0750.

continued. Grievances against the Band were well documented and led to more embarrassment for the SMC. In another letter published by the same paper, titled 'A Small Shower: Musicians and the Rain', an attendee described how 'just a slight drizzle [that] brought not a stir among the spectators [had] caused the musicians [to march] off, never to return again'.⁶¹ Again Sayer defended his decision to cancel; convinced that the Band was wronged, he had the following words for Paci, well aware that the report would be forwarded verbatim to others in the SMC:

The writer of the said letter has grossly misrepresented the state of affairs. The rain quickly dispersed the public. I would draw attention to the fact that there is no roof to the Marble Pergola [in Jessfield Park and] only a series of rafters partially covered with a vine, which, when it [rains] is therefore worse than if nothing were overhead. The Conductor and I some time ago went especially to see what could be done about some sort of roofing. The P.W.D. [Public Works Department] was approached in the matter, and their estimate for providing an adequate covering was 450 dollars, and as an item of this was not budgeted for nothing could be done. To show how serious damage can be done to instruments, cases and music, etc., in Jessfield Park last year, the cost of repairs to two or three instruments damaged by the rain was about 80 dollars, and this was for one concert only.⁶²

Unconvinced, and more vitally, conscious of not losing face in a city with multiple governments, the SMC cautioned musicians that too many concerts were called off

⁶¹ *North-China Daily News*, 11 July 1939.

⁶² SMA, U1-4-911-0740.

‘without any justification, on the excuse that the weather was doubtful’.⁶³ After all, the Band was not an ordinary musical project, but rather, an undertaking associated with the British-led municipality in Shanghai.

My purpose here is not to adjudicate between contemporary accounts, but rather, to call attention to unsatisfactory instances of listening as well as fluctuating aural environments. Clearly, the Band did not always perform pomp and pageantry. In many ways the ensemble became a ludicrous operation, its sound world contingent on the park-goers present (and not present). Ardent support for the Band and its events was overshadowed by disparate ideas of how entertainment in the parks ought to proceed, and by how much the musicians could be expected to endure in the open air.

Although such circumstances were not specific to the Band or to Shanghai’s International Settlement, they altered the DNA of the ensemble, complicating what was ostensibly a British municipal project. Although audience discontentment did not constitute resistance against the Shanghai Municipal Council, it had the effect of deprecating the Band, not least the Settlement administration. Ironically, ongoing and vocal complaints from members of the local British community—the very supporters familiar with the form of alfresco entertainment envisaged by the SMC—had an adverse impact on British prestige, and on the superiority that the Shanghailanders as a group tried to bestow upon themselves in the treaty port.

Historical Listening (III): Territorialism and the formation of the audience

The third and final act of my historical listening picks up on the political geography of the Band—namely the ensemble’s operations in *and* beyond the International

⁶³ SMA, U1-4-911-0741.

Settlement. An internal document compiled by the Shanghai Municipal Council mentions various nationalities among the park-goers, from Chinese, Japanese, Russian to ‘Other Nationals’.⁶⁴ Such information is helpful inasmuch as it provides an indication as to who defined the audience, and by extension, highlights the plural demographic characteristic of the city. But it does not address *what* actually shaped that audience. For the formation of the ‘audience’ was dependent on local political and cultural forces, notably Japanese and French influences on the Band throughout the 1930s. Two scenarios will elaborate.

The first concerns the impact of the growing Japanese presence in the International Settlement on the ensemble. Japanese members of the Shanghai Municipal Council insisted on procuring Japanese sheet music and on performing Japanese music in Hongkew Park, which was located in a neighbourhood with a prominent Japanese community during the 1930s. Although the area technically belonged to the Settlement and fell under the purview of the SMC, the Band was required to cater specifically to non-British residents: a state of affairs that reflected Japan’s military ambition to make further inroads into Shanghai.

Let’s turn to a letter dated June 1937 from the SMC Secretary to Paci.⁶⁵ Relaying a comment from a Japanese Council Member, the Secretary instructed that Paci programme ‘foreign compositions’ in the first half of concerts and ‘Japanese popular music’ in the second half. Whether or not the SMC felt obliged to appease the Japanese community in Shanghai and the increasingly aggressive Japanese military, the Secretary found it necessary to contact Paci again less than a fortnight later, asking the latter to

⁶⁴ SMA, U1-4-917-2420.

⁶⁵ SMA, U1-14-2056-1439.

inform him of the bandmaster's 'success or otherwise' in sourcing Japanese sheet music.⁶⁶ Equally fascinating is Sayer's report to Paci in August. The former did not mention whether he was able to find Japanese scores, but instead, recommended that the concerts in Hongkew Park be suspended until further notice, due to the poor attendance figures and unnecessary costs of transportation.⁶⁷ Evidently, Sayer and the Council Secretary adopted rather different positions as to what they thought was the best way forward for the Band. Paci appeared least involved and did not speak out here: perhaps he wanted to avoid the politics.

These seemingly pedestrian exchanges throw conflict among SMC employees into sharp relief. Sayer chose to attend to what he thought was detrimental to the wellbeing of the Band. Perhaps more strikingly, the SMC Secretary deemed it a priority to cater to Japanese musical tastes, in order to satisfy but also perhaps to contain Japanese expansionism within the Settlement.

The second scenario concerns the effects of sponsorship of the French Municipal Council (or the FMC) on the Band outside the International Settlement, namely in the French Concession. In addition to dealing with the Japanese in repertoire matters, the British-run Band had to accommodate the French and their territorial interests. After all the ensemble needed money. On top of the funding from ratepayers in the Settlement, the Orchestra and Band received an annual subsidy from the FMC, an institution that will feature in the next chapter. The governing body of the French Concession, the French Municipal Council was characterised by a colonial and hierarchical style of rule, answerable only to the Consul-General in Shanghai. (By contrast the SMC had to

⁶⁶ SMA, U1-14-2056-1448.

⁶⁷ SMA, U1-14-2056-1449.

account to the ratepayers.) The FMC's subsidy was a welcome gesture to a public enterprise with a limited operating budget. Between 1933 and 1942 the French Municipal Council offered yearly grants of 2,100 *fabi* (the currency used at the time) to assist with the day-to-day expenses of the Orchestra and Band. From 1938 the FMC agreed to contribute an extra 20,000 *fabi*.⁶⁸ Yet this generosity was deceptive. The sponsorship carried numerous imposed conditions, such as that more French music should be played in the French-controlled Koukaza Park and that the ensembles perform publicly and privately in the Concession, on occasions like the French National Day.

That the FMC continuously pressured the SMC, by virtue of the control that came with the financial help, is exemplified by the fact that at the Shanghai Municipal Archives, there is an entire dossier of documents devoted to Bastille Day celebrations and the engagement of the Band's services from 1933 through to 1942.⁶⁹ This volume of evidence (not just evidence) is telling. It amplifies the ongoing tension between the autocratic French Municipal Council and the self-righteous Shanghai Municipal Council. Despite the arrogance of the latter, oftentimes it yielded, not only because of the cash injection but also because of the perceived marketing opportunity for the Band and its musicians outside the Settlement. Whatever the reasons for acceding to the FMC's demands, the musical ideals and sonic values of the Shanghailanders were aspirations at best. Just as half-committed and missing listeners ridiculed how the Band appeared and sounded in the parks, the obligation to provide musical services in national events in the French jurisdiction—and expressly on the terms of the sponsor—dented the ego of the SMC and of the British settlers. The humiliation lay in the fact that, amid

⁶⁸ SMA, U1-1-895. There is no microfiche number.

⁶⁹ SMA, U1-1-896. There is no microfiche number.

the tussling with the FMC, the ensemble was virtually made to honour a rival municipality that the Shanghailanders themselves had been gloating over since the establishment of the treaty port. French and foreign funding took precedence over the parading of Britishness, an unsurprising finding given the fragmented state of Shanghai as a divided city with oft-competing rather than entirely hegemonic powers.

Although the Band's programmes were regularly announced in major broadsheets in Shanghai, performing and sounding in the parks did not always go according to plan. The reality was arguably determined by a certain kowtowing to other forces in Shanghai, despite the longstanding clout of the British settlers in the International Settlement and in the city at large. In that sense, the Band itself became a contested platform, bearing witness to relations between the main foreign powers and to their claims of supremacy in Shanghai. The Japanese and French scenarios show that there was more to whether and how park-goers listened. Also significant were the repercussions of territorialism: micro-level politics that mirrored (as in the case of the French) as well as challenged (as in the case of the Japanese) the treaty port 'system' of Shanghai.

Postlude: Historical listening, music, empire

My three acts of listening afford some useful insights into how the ensemble was a) configured by the British administrators and municipal employees such as Sayer and Paci; b) received in situ by different constituencies; and c) subjected to different agenda amid an intricate web of power relations. In the final section I discuss some wider implications.

Although the Band was associated with the Shanghailanders and with projecting in the East things ‘great and British’, its local circumstances were ever fluctuating. Its cause was precarious in the administrative and political geography of the treaty port. Here my observation echoes that of Robert Bickers: ‘Shanghai was from the start a collaborative enterprise, between different local Chinese groups, individuals, and networks, and different and changing groups of non-Chinese, and Chinese outsiders, and the achievements of the [British] settler oligarchy were appropriated by others for their own use.’⁷⁰ Hollow pride of the Shanghailanders aside, the Municipal Brass Band had to adapt to the social conditions of a treaty port with myriad communities and no single municipality. With that attribute in mind, the British influence was far from pervasive. The Band was a troubled musical entity, at once embodying and cannibalising the British presence in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai.

My three acts of historical listening not only call attention to the various surviving sources pertaining to the Band, which are spread across the archives of contemporary Shanghai, but also encourage one to explore further the relationship between music and empire. Indeed it is worth pausing on strictly colonial contexts in the East such as India, which have received extensive attention. Scholars have taken an interest in such themes as cultural interaction between the coloniser and the colonised, and music and orientalism. The introductory remarks in the following publications suffice to illustrate.

In their edited volume on music and orientalism in the British Empire, Martin Clayton and Bennett Zon argue for ‘renewed emphasis on encounter and mutual influence of East and West’; essays in the volume go on to ‘trace musical orientalism

⁷⁰ Bickers, ‘Greatest Cultural Asset East of Suez’, 836.

from ambivalent and creative moments of encounter to systems of representation that render their objects unrecognisable (and thus say far more about the West than they do the East)'.⁷¹ In a more recent work, Bob van der Linden explains that his book is concerned with 'the ways in which some rational, moral and aesthetic motives underlying the institutionalisation and modernisation of "classical" music every so often resembled each other in Britain and India [and proposes therefore] to investigate musical parallels, networks and interactions within "webs of empire" that were interdependent and mutually constitutive in metropolis and colony'.⁷²

So far as colonial settings in the first half of the twentieth century are concerned, empire seems like a compelling and even necessary frame of inquiry. As Jeffrey Richards notes with regard to the British Empire before and after the First World War, it 'remained resolutely "a good thing" [in the sense that this] was how the majority of the [British] population understood it and such was the ideological context within which imperial music was to be understood'.⁷³ For Richards, empire as a frame has additional promise because of the wealth of source material: 'In view of the ubiquity of imperialism in fiction, poetry and theatre, it would seem intrinsically likely that it has left its traces in music. Research indicates that there was a veritable ocean of imperial music from the classical to the popular during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries,

⁷¹ Martin Clayton and Bennett Zon, eds., *Music and Orientalism in the British Empire, 1780s–1940s: Portrayal of the East* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007), 1-2.

⁷² Bob van der Linden, *Music and Empire in Britain and India: Identity, Internationalism, and Cross-Cultural Communication* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 1.

⁷³ Jeffrey Richards, *Imperialism and Music: Britain, 1876–1953* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 17.

most of it now forgotten.⁷⁴ Clearly, Richards' position is that music is inextricably bound up with empire.

But how might one theorise music-making in quasi-colonial environments—in treaty ports with co-operating yet non-coordinating local governments? The Band and its summer season in the parks mark a deviation from analyses of music *in* empire. Although the Shanghai Municipal Brass Band harked back to nineteenth-century repertoires, and its style of performance was based on the Kneller Hall tradition, it did not always succeed in furnishing the status and prestige so desired by the Shanghailanders. As I noted, such failure had nothing to do with subversion by the musicians or other actors. The band's reality was shaped less by resistance than by contrasting perceptions of what this ensemble should offer, in and across Shanghai's official municipalities and unofficial territories.

Although considerations of Britishness are pertinent to research on the Shanghai Municipal Brass Band, assessing the ensemble's activities does not revolve exclusively around the musical ideals and sonic values of the SMC. In this sense, empire is less a frame than one point of reference among many. Equally salient are factors on the ground, notably dissatisfied British listeners, third-party sponsorship, differing views between the Music Director and the Bandmaster, and not least contestations of terrain in and around the International Settlement. The Municipal Brass Band was susceptible to claims of power but not to outright domination, whether by the Shanghai Municipal Council, French Municipal Council, the Japanese community, musicians loyal to the Orchestra, the press or general members of the public. The Band as a project, however

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

symbolic of the Shanghailanders' interests, was also enveloped in the partitions of a city of cities.

The dividends of examining a hitherto neglected ensemble thus extend beyond a 'historical rescue operation'. Indeed, the Shanghai Municipal Brass Band does not merit investigation simply because it is a forgotten musical group. The aural phenomenon of the Band in the parks brings to the fore various issues of a British-administered ensemble musicking in and across treaty port Shanghai.⁷⁵ The performances of an imperialist band in a peculiar geography produce not only a local but also a trans-local politics of sound. This tension—between British and other ideas of sound for the parks—exposes intra- *and* inter-municipal conflict in 1930s Shanghai, unsettling the familiar equation of music, empire and colonialism in the East.

⁷⁵ Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1998).

CHAPTER TWO

French Concession (Treaty Port II), ‘Aucun instrument de cuivre’:

Colonial Rule, Licensed Venues, Musical Soundscape

To examine music, sound and policy in the Concession is first to understand the particularity of the area in treaty port Shanghai. In the 1930s and early 1940s it was the city’s ‘French quarter’, a municipality distinct from the British-influenced International Settlement and Greater Shanghai, which was under the purview of the Chinese Nationalists. The Concession had its origins in the Unequal Treaties. As mentioned in the Prologue, military defeat in the mid-nineteenth century forced the Qing Dynasty to enter into agreement with such powers as France, Great Britain and the United States. Foreign subjects were given *carte blanche* to form their own systems and communities along China’s coast, inland waterways and railways.

The British and the French had competing visions of how the treaty port should be run. The lack of goodwill between the two sides can be inferred from *The Land Regulations and Bye-Laws for the Foreign Settlement in Shanghai, 1845–1930*, a British internal report dating from the late 1930s. It was essentially a public relations exercise for the Shanghailanders, whom I discussed in the previous chapter. According to the author(s):

France obtained the same rights in China [under the Treaties] as Great Britain. The stipulations were identical with those of the Land Regulations [the code of Shanghai’s British Settlement before it merged with the American area] of 1845, with the only exception that the French Consul went much farther in his claim for jurisdiction over the French Concession than his British colleague. He

proclaimed as a principle that ‘no Chinese or foreign official would be allowed to exercise his power within the boundaries of the French Concession’. It was bounded on the south side of the city (Nantao); on the north by the Yankingpang [Yangjingbang, a creek], which separated it from the British Settlement; on the east by the Hwangpoo [Huangpu] River; and on the west by the line of the ‘temple of Gold of War and the bridge of the Chow family’. By acts of successive usurpation during the Taiping Rebellion this area was extended to the south and to the west, bringing the total area to nearly two hundred acres.¹

Notwithstanding the bias, notably the part-glorification, part-justification of the British cause in Shanghai, the account brings a crucial point to the fore. Carving out turf mattered to the French inasmuch as it was perceived to display the power of the French Empire in a multinational treaty port. Wary of the British political agenda in the city, the French instituted their governing body, Le Conseil d’Administration Municipale (hereafter the French Municipal Council or FMC) in 1862.² Not surprisingly, the French Consul-General in Shanghai objected to the newly proposed Land Regulations of 1866, specifically the suggestion of the British and the Americans to create a ‘homogenous municipal system’, later the Shanghai Municipal Council. The British and American

¹ *The Land Regulations and Bye-Laws for the Foreign Settlement in Shanghai, 1845–1930*, 12. Parts of the internal report were printed in 1926 by the Commercial Press in Shanghai and in 1937 by A.B.C. Press in Shanghai. The French Concession witnessed a number of expansions after 1849, in 1861, 1899 and 1914. The Taiping Rebellion was a civil war in the mid-nineteenth century, fought between the Qing Dynasty and the Christian millenarian movement of the Heavenly Kingdom of Peace. Displaced by bloodshed in and outside Shanghai, many Chinese fled into the city’s foreign-leased areas.

² The composition of the FMC and other administrative matters were laid out in the Municipal Regulations of the French Concession (‘Le Règlement d’Organisation Municipale de la Concession Française’) on 11 July 1866. According to the Regulations, the French Municipal Council was to have four French and four foreign members elected by ratepayers (taxpayers) of the French Concession. The regulations were amended in 1909 and completely revised in 1927. Modifications notwithstanding, the French Consul-General remained the officer in charge of the Concession. Translations from French to English in this chapter are all mine.

areas subsequently merged, the outcome being the International Settlement. The emergence of the Concession and the Settlement caused the rift between France and Great Britain (alongside the United States) to grow. Although there was no official point at which they became administratively autonomous areas, by the end of the nineteenth century they operated separately and represented different stakes in a porous treaty port geography. The Concession, Settlement and Greater Shanghai did not have borders.

Like the International Settlement, the French Concession technically remained Chinese sovereign territory. Yet, in Shanghai sovereignty was far from absolute, due to extraterritoriality, the coexistence of consular and native courts, and misapplications of the law. Individuals were able to shift ‘conveniently’ from one legal nationality to another so as to evade trial. What mattered, however, was control of land in the city. That control manifested partly in the form of leases.³ Under the Unequal Treaties, foreigners were able to rent plots and buildings from the Chinese at fixed and favourable tariffs. Boundary stones, placed under the joint supervision of the respective national consuls and the local Chinese authorities, defined the land rented.⁴ Over time, the foreign control of territory did not just stem from individual leases and street signage, but also from municipal bodies. By the 1930s, the FMC had real say over how the French Concession was run.

Although the Concession was not a colony in the strict sense of the word, it had a colonial style of rule with a hierarchical chain of command. The officer in charge of the French Municipal Council, to whom departments such as the Municipal Police (La

³ See Cai Yutian, Sang Yonglin and Lu Wenda, eds., *Shanghai Daoqi* [Title Deeds in Shanghai] (Shanghai: Guji chubanshe, 1997).

⁴ *Land Regulations and Bye-Laws for the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai* (Shanghai: A.B.C. Press, 1937), 12–14. It is a bilingual document; the Regulations alternate between English and Chinese.

Garde Municipale) reported, was the Consul-General of France in Shanghai. The aforementioned Land Regulations and Bye-Laws noted that ‘all real power was in the hands of the French Consul-General, who was only responsible to his superiors [back in France]’, commenting that the ‘difference of spirit characterising the authorities of the Settlement and the French Consul-General [resulted] in the liberal administration of the Settlement on the one hand and the autocratic manner in which the French Concession was governed by the French Consul on the other’.

Despite an element of British self-regard, it is fair to say that the French Municipal Council was organised as a monarchy, whose officials answered to the Consul-General as an act of loyalty to the French Empire. The power structure of the FMC differed from that of the Shanghai Municipal Council in the International Settlement. Under the by-laws of the Settlement, the SMC was required to answer to ratepayers (taxpayers). The Council in the 1930s and early 1940s had a mixture of British, American, Chinese and Japanese members, who were akin to an executive board. Though dominated by British/-related commerce, the International Settlement was not entirely controlled by the British, as demonstrated in my discussion of the Shanghai Municipal Brass Band in the preceding chapter.

In contrast to the International Settlement, which was the de facto central business district, the French Concession, south of the Settlement and about half its size, developed into an upscale retail and residential district. Contemporary maps with ‘bird’s eye views’ of the French Concession and of the International Settlement show vastly

different impressions of their layouts.⁵ The Concession displays residences (住宅) and green plots—lawns (草地), for example—that are comfortably spaced. The Settlement is densely packed with banks, companies, vendors, department stores, hotels and the like. (See figures 2.1 and 2.2.)

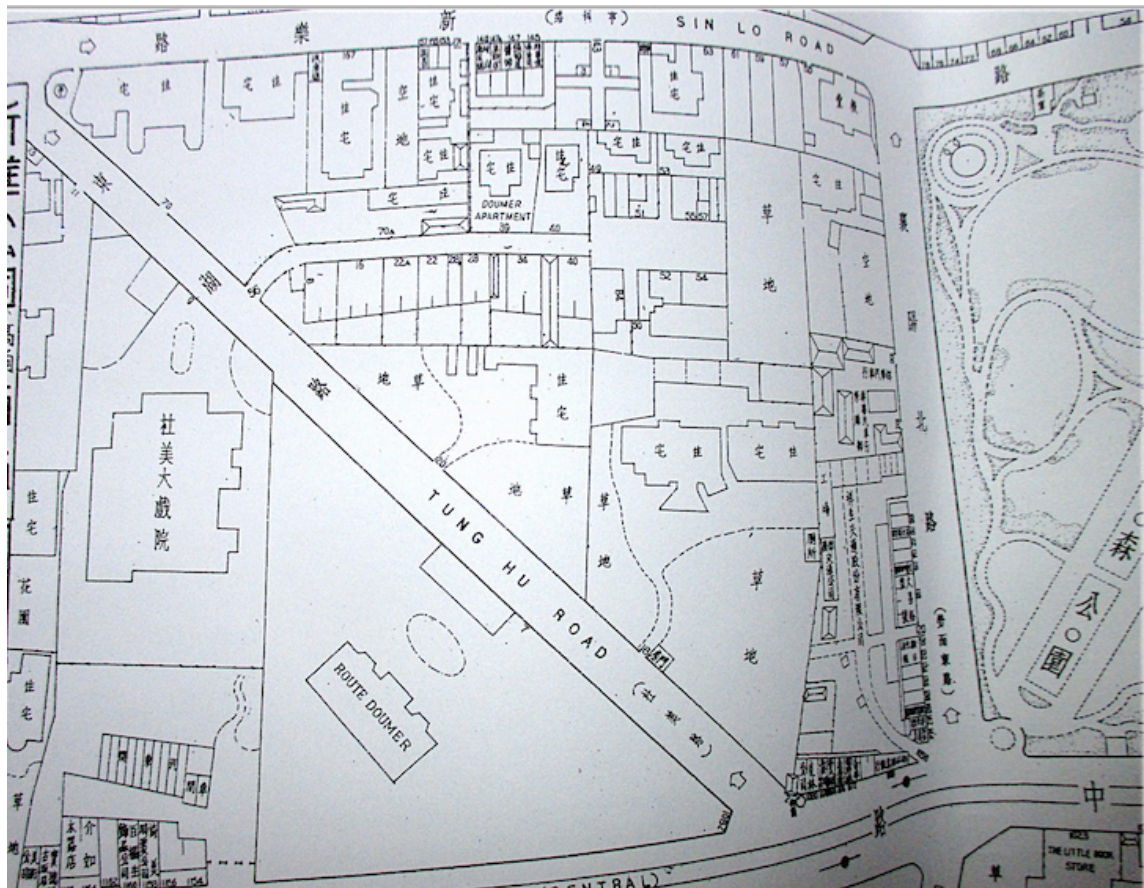


Fig. 2.1. Bird's eye view of the French Concession.

⁵ The maps can be found in *Lao Shanghai baiye zhinan* [Directory of Businesses in Old Shanghai] (Shanghai: Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2008). It is a reprint of the two-part volume *Shanghai shi hanghao tulu* [A Pictorial Directory of Hong in Shanghai]. The first part was published in 1937, the second in 1947. Businesses were referred to as 'hongs' (行) at the time.

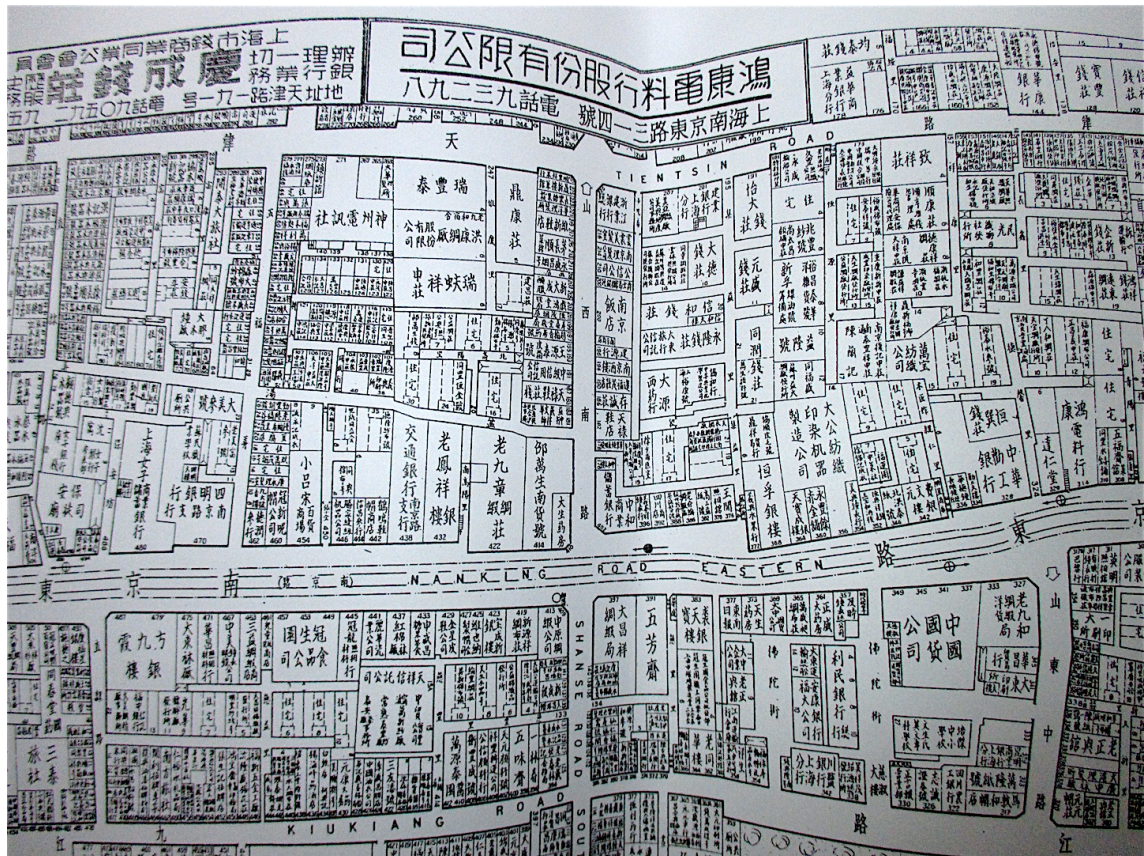


Fig. 2.2. Bird's eye view of the International Settlement.

In Tess Johnston's words:

The conventional wisdom of the day was that in the International Settlement the British would teach you how to do business, but in the French Concession the French would teach you how to live. Here the foreigners established their own schools and clubs, their many amusements and diversions for both foreigners and Chinese, their elegant restaurants and cafés and scores of cabarets, nightclubs and exotically named (and staffed) ballrooms.⁶

⁶ Tess Johnston and Deke Erh, *Frenchtown Shanghai: Western Architecture in Shanghai's Old French Concession* (Hong Kong: Old China Hand Press, 2000), 12.

Running through the Concession were such thoroughfares as Avenue Joffre (霞飛路) and Avenue Pétain (貝當路), quasi-Parisian boulevards lined with fashionable shops, mansions and high-end apartment buildings. Concession residents, venue operators and patrons included Americans, British, Chinese, French and Russians. (See figures 2.3 and 2.4.)



Fig. 2.3. The Concession and its sub-districts in 1938.⁷ The upper horizontal ‘artery’ is Avenue Joffre.

⁷ By the late 1930s, the Concession had these sub-districts: Pétain, Foch, Central, Joffre and Madang (including the Shiliupu Wharf on the Bund). The map in Fig. 2.3 is a reprint in *Shanghai Lishi ditu ji* [Historical Maps of Shanghai] (Shanghai: Renmin chubanshe, 1999).



Fig. 2.4. Avenue Joffre in the 1930s. (Now Central Huaihai Road.)

The ritzy character of the Concession, coupled with the regime of the FMC, brought about an intriguing situation with regard to the French existence in treaty port Shanghai. On the one hand, sites of entertainment and leisure flourished. On the other, live music in licensed cafés and restaurants came under strict control. The French Municipal Council promoted a specific ideology of sound—an attempted policing of the Concession’s soundscape. As an illustration: in response to an application to feature a symphony orchestra in the summer garden of a café-restaurant on Rue Admiral Courbet (古拔路), the FMC granted permission on three conditions.⁸ First, brass instruments were forbidden (‘aucun instrument de cuivre’); second, the performance was confined to European classical music for afternoon tea and dinner; and third, the orchestra had to

⁸ A useful source to cross-reference past and present street names is Xue Liyong, *Jiedao beihou: Haishang diming xunzong* [Behind the Streets: The Search for Shanghai’s Street Names] (Shanghai: Tongji University Press, 2008).

cease playing outdoors after ten at night.⁹ Further, the Municipal Police had the right to revoke the establishment's licence in the event that residents in the vicinity complained. Judging from the level of intervention, not least the explicit prohibition of brass instruments, the French officials dictated musical practices. Underlying their policy was territorial pride. Whereas the SMC reflected the self-bestowed prestige of British settlers in the treaty port, the FMC evinced the protectionism of French officials. These administrators saw it as crucial to maintain the Concession's exclusivity, and ultimately, to safeguard the French jurisdiction in Shanghai.

Through licensing, the FMC introduced a form of sonic regulation not found in the International Settlement or in Nationalist-run areas. Licensing functioned as a legal instrument (by way of the rights it granted to the licensee), and ultimately, as a prescription of the desired social order in Frenchtown, to borrow Tess Johnston's term. Targeted especially were commercial premises, for example eateries, dance halls and skating rinks, whose music (mostly live) functioned as an additional activity and was not the businesses' *raison d'être*. The licences were no ordinary contracts between the municipality and venue proprietors. They carried additional stipulations. Although the licences were for the establishments and not for music per se, the stipulations concerned music on site. These musical stipulations constituted the conditions upon which licences were granted. Often music was either curtailed or banned outright. The licence for an ice-skating rink with a café and restaurant on Route Doumer (杜美路) expressly prohibited the use of orchestras.¹⁰ The application for a restaurant, tea salon and

⁹ Shanghai Municipal Archives (hereafter SMA), U38-4-1370-0525.

¹⁰ SMA, U38-4-1319-2455.

confiserie-pâtisserie on Route Vallon (環龍路) was approved on the basis that music, whether played live or on the radio, was not permitted.¹¹

Evidently, the FMC intervened in the provision of live music in public venues. Yet, what kind of a soundscape was the French Concession in Shanghai?¹² However strictly governed was the Concession, the question merits attention. That the Concession was a semi-autonomous municipality, and that it was an expression of French territory in the city, did not mean that the FMC had complete control over music and sound. As Michael Bull and Les Back note: ‘Sound is no respecter of space.’¹³ To build on that statement, sound is no respecter of the social control of space. The following advertisement, appearing in June 1937 in *Le Journal de Shanghai* (法文上海日報), a major French-language broadsheet, serves to illustrate the point. The notice is for Arcadia, a restaurant and ballroom in the Concession.

Arcadia

VENDREDI 11 June à 21 heures

GRANDE SOIRÉE DE GALA

Mme. MARIETTE DECHESNE

Soprano du Théâtre de la Monnaie Bruxelles

M. MAURICE DUFOUR

Célèbre virtuose accordeoniste¹⁴

¹¹ SMA, U38-4-1370-0292.

¹² R. Murray Schafer, *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World* (Rochester, VT: Destiny, 1993).

¹³ Michael Bull and Les Back, eds., *The Auditory Culture Reader* (Oxford: Berg, 2003), 8.

¹⁴ *Le Journal de Shanghai*, 11 June 1937.

[Arcadia\Friday 11 June at 21:00\Great gala evening\Miss Mariette
Dechesne\Soprano from the Monnaie Theatre Brussels\Mr. Maurice Dufour\
Celebrated virtuoso accordionist]

The gala evening was scheduled to begin at nine at night, considerably later than the FMC's preferred times (afternoon tea and dinner). The soprano-accordionist duo of Dechesne and Dufour might not have adhered strictly to the FMC's stipulations to play only classical music. They would surely have programmed French and other popular songs. Nonetheless establishments such as the Arcadia were not penalised and continued to operate, though bribes may have been involved.

To be sure, the gap between regulation and compliance is anything but unique to licensed venues in Shanghai's French Concession.¹⁵ However, the disparity between municipal policy and musical practice is striking when one considers the extent to which the FMC, in contrast to the SMC and the Nationalists, sought to regulate the venues. How music should have sounded and how it did sound on the premises suggest that the Concession, while an outcome of the Unequal Treaties and a response to the Anglo-American alliance in treaty port Shanghai, was not tantamount to colonial rule. Indeed, the colonial appearance of the municipality—as an area and as a government—may lead to certain assumptions as to what the French quarter, from a current-day standpoint, represents. A fair amount of the existing scholarship, whether in Chinese or French, has focused on the activities of the French settlers, French urban planning and Sino-French relations.¹⁶ In other words, historians' interest lies primarily in France as a foreign

¹⁵ See, for example, *The Pub and the People: A Worktown Study* (London: Faber and Faber, 2009), originally issued by the Mass Observation Archive in 1943.

¹⁶ See, for example, Ma Xueqiang and Cao Shengmei, *Shanghai de faguo wenhua ditu* [The Cultural Map of France in Shanghai] (Shanghai: Shanghai jinxiu wenzhang chubanshe, 2010);

power in Shanghai. The Concession, though not a colony, is bluntly associated with the workings of French colonialism in the treaty port. Nevertheless, the everyday aspects of the municipality, notably the musical operations of licensed venues, warrant closer scrutiny. This is also where a musicological study of the Concession, which has yet to emerge, may prove fruitful. My emphasis on local sites is not dissimilar from that of Jonathan Sterne: ‘[W]hat of the contexts in which [sounds] happen, the ways of hearing and not-hearing attached to them, the practices, people and institutions attached to them?’¹⁷ The sonic regulation of the FMC and the musical entertainment of licensed venues reveal a state of affairs specific to the French Concession: official ideas and commercial ideas of sound coexisted in peculiar fashion.

My underlying point is that the Concession—the French existence in treaty port Shanghai—was more complex than it might appear. The local musical presence of licensed venues, though characterised by cultural registers no less French, did not chime with the administrative presence of the French, of which the FMC constituted an emblem. In order to tease out the tension between municipal policy and musical activity, my discussion is organised into three parts. The first considers the French Municipal Council’s position on live music in licensed venues (mainly eateries), as well as the stated efforts of operator-applicants to satisfy the authorities. The second examines musical entertainment in those venues, notably the ways in which it did not follow

Mou Zhenyu, ‘Jindai Shanghai fazujie chengshihua kongjian guocheng yanjiu (1849–1930)’ [A Study of Urban Culture, Space and Process in Shanghai’s French Concession] (PhD diss., Fudan University, 2010); Xue Liyong, *Shanghai yangchang* [Shanghai’s Foreign Venues] (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chuban she, 2011); Charles B. Maybon et Jean Fredet, *Histoire de la Concession Française de Changhai* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1929); Guy Brossollet, *Les Français de Shanghai, 1849–1949* (Paris: Editions Belin, 1999); Guy Brossollet, *Annuaire des Français de Shanghai (1842–1955): Identités, Professions, Familles, Dates de Séjour, etc.* (Paris: Editions Rive Droite, 2002); and Marie-Claire Bergère, *Histoire de Shanghai* (Paris: Librairie Fayard, 2002).

¹⁷ Jonathan Sterne, ed., *The Sound Studies Reader* (Oxford: Routledge, 2012), 1.

official requirements on the one hand and played out French, specifically Parisian influences on the other. Bringing the two parts together, the third and final part revisits the question: What kind of a soundscape was the French Concession? I draw attention to a soundscape at once ordered and disordered, which lays bare different notions of Frenchness and clouds meanings of the French existence in Shanghai. I engage with topography, place and space, which, I contend, better capture the ambiguousness of that soundscape than does colonial rule. Given the available archival materials (abandoned French municipal documents, stored subsequently in Communist archives), the focus of my chapter is on the 1930s and early 1940s, incidentally the last decade or so of the Concession.

Official sound: Musical stipulations of the French Municipal Council

The very banality of administrative papers, coupled with their apolitical content, is such that the records of departments such as Public Works (Les Travaux Publics) have survived fairly intact over the decades. They provide a foray into the FMC's ideology of music and sound in the 1930s and 1940s. Whereas the French Municipal Council did not produce documents on live performance in the Concession, licensing was its de facto music policy. Applications were reviewed carefully in a number of departments. In one case, the owner of an open-air dance hall on Avenue du Roi Albert (亞爾培路) was asked to furnish the building plans to Public Works for soundproofing assessment.¹⁸ In another, an application for a skating rink on Avenue Joffre, the Police recommended in an internal memo that music should be banned if the rink was not covered.¹⁹

¹⁸ SMA, U38-4-1373-0751.

¹⁹ SMA, U38-4-1319-2480 to U38-4-1319-2482.

Licensed eateries and other venues, many of which were operated by Russian émigrés who had fled the Bolsheviks and settled in Shanghai, employed migrant and refugee musicians, mostly of Russian and European origin. The entertainment was unmistakably ‘French’ in terms of the formats (revues, for example) and programmes (performances of chansons, for instance). The patrons were ethnically mixed and included the Chinese. It was a mainly middle-class clientele. The musical stipulations that typically accompanied the licences concerned the location and hours of performance, the type of music, and the size and instrumentation of the house ensemble. The stipulations reflected what was deemed appropriate by the FMC, and by extension, its attitudes towards live music on the premises.

Location, namely the distinction between indoor and outdoor performance, was an important criterion. The proposal for a Russian summer restaurant on Avenue Joffre was rejected outright because the presence of an orchestra outside was regarded as a disturbance to the neighbourhood.²⁰ With respect to B.M. Gerzovsky and her alfresco café-restaurant on Avenue Joffre, the licence was granted on the condition that orchestras were not permitted.²¹ Applicants couched their submissions according to the predilections of the FMC. When the proprietors of Tkachenko Frères requested in August 1931 to relocate their café-restaurant from 387 to 405 Avenue Joffre, they emphasised that music would only be offered inside the venue.²² Sonic regulation also meant monitoring the hours of performance. Again, operators made a point of following the expected policy in their applications. M. Novosseloff, who put in the paperwork for a summer restaurant at the Little Hotel on Route des Soeurs (聖母院路) in May 1931,

²⁰ SMA, U38-4-1370-0570.

²¹ SMA, U38-4-1370-0300.

²² SMA, U38-4-1370-0557.

assured the authorities that live music would not exceed mealtimes.²³ Similarly, D.S. Dvorjetz, owner of the proposed DD's Café-Restaurant on Avenue Joffre, stated upfront that the orchestra would stop playing at midnight.²⁴

The FMC specified classical music as the type of music allowed. Skating rinks, late-night cabarets and dancing hostesses were perceived as noise, which implied social distinction. Some residents looked upon the French Municipal Council as a 'protector' of the local soundscape. Consider the following correspondence from a Mrs. Helen Brock to the Iceland Skating Rink on Avenue du Roi Albert in 1938: 'I am very glad to see that you are taking these precautions against the noise. I hope that you will carry out all the conditions that you have made in your letter [and should] there be any complaints, I shall have to write officially [and] have this stopped.'²⁵ The so-called conditions—improvements suggested by the rink—resulted from an earlier complaint by Brock. They included using rubber-wheel skates instead of steel ones 'so as to make skating soundless'; partitioning in the form of large advertising boards, 'which would more or less block the spreading of sound in skating'; and closure at ten every night.²⁶ Brock added that she would go to the authorities should there be additional protests from the residents.

The presence of dancing hostesses was a nuisance to some locals in the French Concession, all the more so when compared with those living in Shanghai's other areas. A letter dated May 1942 from R.J. McMullen, Chairman of the Board of the Shanghai American School to the FMC is telling: 'My attention has been called to rumors

²³ SMA, U38-4-1370-0564.

²⁴ SMA, U38-4-1373-0747.

²⁵ SMA, U38-4-1319-2469.

²⁶ Ibid.

circulating in the community that a cabaret will soon be opened on a lot adjoining the Shanghai American School campus. The many Americans attracted to locate in the Concession are as interested as [the authorities] are in seeing that [the community] will not be invaded by cabarets or night clubs.²⁷ Operators were doubtless eager to assuage the concerns of the authorities and residents. S.F. Yong of the proposed Conkling Café-Restaurant on Route Ratard (巨籟達路) wrote: ‘No dancing girls or hostesses will be provided, but only classical and small-ensemble dance music [and] the music will be played on the premises [indoors].’²⁸

Last but not least, the FMC restricted house ensembles to small and non-brass bands. The Majestic Garden, a café-restaurant and dance garden on Avenue Haig (海格路) was licensed on the proviso that its orchestra have no more than six musicians.²⁹ DD’s Café-Restaurant added in its application that its ensemble would merely consist of string instruments, piano and accordion.³⁰ The prohibition of brass instruments was especially stressed whenever venues with outdoor dancing facilities like the Majestic Garden were approved. The performance of dance music on brass instruments, coupled with the anticipated noise of and from pleasure-seeking patrons, was considered undesirable in the locale. Judging from the stipulations, the French Municipal Council sought to maintain ‘peaceful silence’, to borrow Michael Bull and Les Back’s expression.³¹ They advocated a specific ideology of sound—defined by classical music during the day and by chamber ensembles stationed indoors. At a deeper level, the

²⁷ SMA, U38-4-1370-0310.

²⁸ SMA, U38-4-1373-0765.

²⁹ SMA, U38-4-1373-0844.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Bull and Back, *The Auditory Culture Reader*.

FMC's policing of the soundscape served to reinforce the French administrative presence in Shanghai.

Commercial sound: Musical entertainment in licensed venues

Although the licence paperwork affords some valuable insights into the FMC's policy, it does not constitute evidence of musical practice in the French Concession. Hence I turn to another cluster of sources: reports and daily advertisements in Shanghai's broadsheets. Their documentation of resident reactions and of programmes sheds light on the profusion of musical activity in an upscale if not most upscale part of the city, also highlighting the extent to which establishments adhered to municipal stipulations after the licences were issued. Indeed, the local musical presence of eateries was characterised by non-enforcement, non-compliance and commercial choices. A couple of illustrations are in order.

The first concerns the Majestic Garden, a café-restaurant and dance salon mentioned in the previous section. FMC officials banned brass instruments and limited the ensemble to six musicians. The following article in the *North-China Daily News*, published a month after the licence was approved, shows the determination of the FMC to give assurances to the residents:

M.E. Fauraz, acting Director-General [of the French Municipality] gave consideration to letters of protest concerning the opening of a dance hall [the proposed Majestic Garden] in a mainly residential district. The Commission [of the Municipality], he said, decided to grant permission for the opening of a café-restaurant and dance hall on the understanding that the establishment should be

of a high-class character, and that the music played should not be of such a nature as to annoy the neighbourhood.³²

The article went on to specify the ‘special conditions’ of the licence, notably instrumentation. However, the Majestic Garden tried repeatedly to modify those conditions. The ongoing correspondence between 1933 and 1936 indicates that the proprietor, Y.C. Vong, made a number of attempts to expand the house ensemble and to get approval to use brass instruments. For example, in February 1936 Vong applied to enlarge the orchestra to ten musicians, citing competition from places of entertainment nearby. The request was denied outright. In the following month Vong submitted another request, stating that he hoped to increase the ensemble from six to eight musicians (as opposed to ten), again to no avail.

The correspondence, involving a protracted series of applications and internal memos, reveals the unsuccessful attempts of the Majestic Garden to amend its licence. The FMC’s stipulations were not properly enforced either. Merely a week after the *North-China Daily News* covered the inauguration of the venue, the following appeared in the same paper:

It was laid down by the French municipal authorities as conditions of the issue of a permit [for the Majestic Garden] that the pavilion should be moved so as to be as far as possible from adjacent houses, that professional dancers should not be allowed, that the orchestra be limited to six, with no brass instruments, that the sides of the pavilion nearest the houses be closed by glazed partitions. According to a resident in one of the houses overlooking the garden, the pavilion was in its original position on Thursday night. A number of Chinese dance girls were

³² *North-China Daily News*, 2 August 1933.

present, and brass instruments appeared to be used. Sides of the pavilion were closed in by partitions, but the doors were left wide open.³³

Equally fascinating is the FMC's response in the latter half of the article:

M.E. Fauraz, Acting Director-General, French Municipality, stated that the authorities were now not insisting on the moving of the pavilion, in view of the fact that the Majestic Garden management had acquired the whole of the cadastral lot on which the dance hall stands. It had been noted that professional dancers were present on the opening night, and steps had been taken to prevent a recurrence of this. As to the music, this had been described to the authorities as 'very smooth'. He understood no brass instruments were used. A saxophone would not be regarded as coming in this category. It was a difficult matter to enforce the permanent closing of the sides of the pavilion.³⁴

Although the Majestic Garden was supposed to observe the 'special conditions' of the licence, the implementation of those conditions was another matter. Judging from the FMC's response in the newspaper, the authorities adopted a laissez-faire attitude. If anything, the FMC spoke in defence of the Majestic Garden. Fauraz's position stood in stark contrast to the resident's complaint and experience of the locale.

In order to attract customers in the nascent phase of its business, the Majestic Garden bypassed the municipal stipulations and went ahead with the dance entertainment that it had planned. Licensing was not only the FMC's way of dealing with music, but also a policy of social control, driven by a desire to engineer the Concession's soundscape and to differentiate it from the non-French sections of

³³ *North-China Daily News*, 9 August 1933.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

Shanghai. Yet the case of the Majestic Garden points to the inconsequence of that policy. The possible employment of brass instruments and musicians, coupled with non-enforcement and the likelihood of bribes, had the effect of weakening the authority of the FMC, thereby complicating the Concession as an imperial emblem in treaty port Shanghai. The Concession was anything but a straightforward extension of the French Empire.

My second illustration concerns the Tkachenko brothers and the eponymous café-restaurant Tkachenko Frères, whose application was mentioned in the previous section. The owners proposed relocating their establishment and assured the FMC that the musicians would play indoors only. But this turned out to be mere rhetoric, especially when contrasted with the advertisement that the Tkachenkos placed around the same time in *Le Journal de Shanghai*. The advertisement occupied a prominent space in the paper:

Le seul JARDIN D'ÉTÉ pour familles

TKACHENKO FRÈRES

CAFÉ EN PLEIN AIR

AUJOURD'HUI

PROGRAMME DE GALA

Nouveaux artistes

Nouveaux chansons

Nouveaux danses

G. FIDLON MUSIQUE CLASSIQUE

de 17h.30 à 19h. et de 20h. à 22h.

G. KAMINER MUSIQUE DE DANSE

à partir de 22h.

DEMAIN

CONCERT SYMPHONIQUE

35 musiciens³⁵

[The only summer garden for families\Tkachenko Brothers\ Open-air café
\Today \Gala programme\New artists\New songs\New dances\Classical music
with G. Fidlon\from 17.30 to 19.00 and from 20.00 to 22.00\Dance music with
G. Kaminer\from 22.00\Tomorrow\Symphonic concert\35 musicians]

Although the advertisement does not indicate whether the musical activities of Fidlon (a violinist) and Kaminer and the symphonic concert took place indoors, it conflicts with the careful wording in the Tkachenkos' original application, revealing particular ideas of sound in/and space. In their publicity, the Tkachenkos proudly billed their establishment as a summer garden for families with an outdoor café, and promoted various forms of music and dance entertainment. The Tkachenkos did not present just classical music. Dance music with Kaminer (and presumably his band) was also featured from ten at night. Moreover the owners repeatedly advertised their café en plein air and range of entertainment in the same newspaper.³⁶ The sum of these clues suggests that live music at Tkachenko Frères breached a number of the FMC's stipulations.

In fact, the Tkachenkos had long organised their own musical programmes, notably variety shows, prior to the relocation of the premises. An example can be found in their advertisement on the front page of *Le Journal de Shanghai* in May 1931:

³⁵ *Le Journal de Shanghai*, 22 August 1931.

³⁶ Similar advertisements appeared in *Le Journal de Shanghai* on 12 September 1931, 10 October 1931 and 24 October 1931.

Ouverture de notre JARDIN ÉTÉ et CAFÉ

GRAND CONCERT

à 17h.15

par le 2ème Battalion

‘Royal Scots Fusiliers’

avec l’aimable consentement de

Lt. Col. R.V.G. Horn

et officiers

SOIRÉE

à 19h.30

SPECTACLE DE VARIÉTÉS SPÉCIAL

K.L. SCHEMANSKY

(Chanteur d’Opera)

MILLES. GORSKAIA ET KAZANDJAY

TRIO AFANASIEFF

‘UKRAINA’ CHOEUR DE 30 ARTISTES

S. FIDLON

(Célèbre violoniste, chef de l’Orchestre Symphonique)

[Opening of our summer garden and café\Grand concert\ at 17.15\by the 2nd

Battalion\Royal Scots Fusiliers\with the kind permission of\ Lt. Col. R.V.G.

Horn and Officers\Evening\at 19.30\Special variety show\ K.L.

Schemansky\Opera singer\Miss Gorskaia and Miss Kazandjay\Trio Afanasieff\

Ukrainian choir of 30 artists\S. Fidlou\Famous violinist, orchestral conductor]

Clearly, the line-up of performers comprised a range of acts, extending from a British military band and a Ukrainian choir to an opera singer, a trio (of what kind is not clear) and a violinist. The employment of brass instruments and choral singers en masse, coupled with the Tkachenkos' frequent and extensive publicity in a major broadsheet, suggests that sonic regulation did not matter very much, whether to the officials, proprietors, musicians or patrons.

My third illustration concerns DD's Café-Restaurant. It will be recalled that in his application of July 1936, D.S. Dvorjetz cautiously proposed a five-piece ensemble consisting of string instruments, piano and accordion, stressing that the ensemble would play no later than midnight. In the first two years of its operation, DD's adhered to the FMC's requirements and contracted a piano duo. Yet the proprietor may not have remained so cooperative. Newspaper advertisements for the establishment from 1938 to 1941 show that DD's converted from a restaurant serving Russian cuisine to a restaurant *and* nightclub featuring Tino and his Orchestra. Since no application for DD's to be licensed as a nightclub could be located at the Shanghai Municipal Archives, it appears that the establishment may have simply disregarded restrictions on playing hours, ensemble size and musical genre.

The advertised musical activities of the Majestic Garden, Tkachenko Frères and DD's not only reveal non-enforcement and non-compliance, but also call into question the salience of a regime that appears to characterise if not define Shanghai's French municipality. Other factors came into play: they had less to do with expressions of territory and governance than with the preferences of venue operators, which ranged from the use of brass instruments to accompany dance, through the provision of big

band jazz and late-night entertainment, to the presentation of musical spectacles with extensive performing forces. How, then, might one make sense of commercial ideas of sound vis-à-vis official ideas of sound?

In my judgment, it would be far-fetched to interpret venues' musical practices of as acts of opposition in an environment heavily regulated by the FMC. Non-compliance did not mean subversion. Given the existing literature on music and societal control, such assessment might seem counterintuitive: scholars have and continue to take substantial interest in the ways in which music is purposed to oppress or to voice dissent.³⁷ My point here is not to critique studies of violence in and through music; rather, I draw attention to a more ambiguous state of affairs in the Concession. Notwithstanding municipal policy and the musical stipulations, licensed venues acted according to their own interests and flourished all the same. Advertisements for the establishments and their entertainment did not tend towards anything ideological, but rather, something much more rudimentary—sonic teasers to attract well-heeled patrons in an upscale area. In that sense, the local musical presence of licensed venues ran parallel to the administrative presence symbolised by the FMC. Official and commercial ideas of sound coexisted, amid and despite a social order imposed by the administration.

The unpredictable nature of sound in space made it impossible for any of the parties to have complete control over what ought and ought not be played and heard. Sara Cohen observes that 'as sound, music fills and structures space within us and around us, inside and outside'; 'music can appear to envelop us'.³⁸ In the French

³⁷ See, for example, Annie J. Randall, ed, *Music, Power, and Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

³⁸ Sara Cohen, 'Sounding out the City: Music and the Sensuous Production of Place', in *The Place of Music*, ed. Andrew Leyshon et al. (New York: Guilford, 1998), 443–444.

Concession, sound did not simply demarcate the spaces of licenced venues. There was more: although the venues themselves were not sites of resistance, the very complications of sound(s) in space arguably diminished French exclusivity.

To elaborate, I will discuss three more establishments and their musical advertisements. My first example is the restaurant at Hotel Le Normandie on Avenue Joffre. According to the restaurant's publicity in *Le Journal de Shanghai*, the size and instrumentation of the house ensemble conformed to municipal requirements. The ensemble consisted of three musicians and did not include brass instruments. Yet the sonic space of Le Normandie was not simply defined by chamber forces. For the passage of time confounded meanings of sound in space. The restaurant operated until two in the morning.³⁹ While the trio itself would have been satisfactory to the authorities, the hours it played not so. The example of Le Normandie presents an intriguing conundrum: music supplied on the premises was acceptable and also unacceptable. (Turn over for figure 2.5.)

³⁹ *Le Journal de Shanghai*, 1 March 1941.

TINO et son ORCHESTRE
 vous divertiront au


 RESTAURANT
 ET NIGHT CLUB

EXCELLENTE CUISINE RUSSE

618 Avenue Joffre ————— Téléphone 71609

“ LE NORMANDIE ”

HOTEL RESTAURANT
 394 AVENUE JOFFRE TEL. 84899

EXCELLENTE CUISINE FRANÇAISE
 Apéritifs, Vins et Boissons de 1ère qualité

CONCERT TOUS LES SOIRS A PARTIR DE 20h.
 Les Samedis et Dimanches, à partir de 17h.
 musique par le Trio
 Prof. Morini — Leistein — Simenauer

On parle français

OUVERT JUSQU'A 2h. DU MATIN.

843

Fig. 2.5. Musical advertisement for Hotel Le Normandie. The other is for DD's Restaurant and Nightclub, mentioned earlier in the chapter.

There is another paradox in the Concession's soundscape. The French cultural registers that took root locally were at odds with the predilections of the French Municipal Council. It will be recalled that the FMC preferred European classical music to other genres. Yet that requirement also entailed a de facto rejection of modes of amusement familiar to French expatriates and settlers, notably Parisian variety entertainment. The sounds that filled the spaces of licensed eateries were often the sounds of this entertainment, itself a colonial import. In propagating classical music, the FMC sought to reinforce the distinctiveness (and exclusivity) of the French sector—and refused vernacular practices that would arguably have constituted 'colonial public relations' all the same.

To 'hear' Parisian variety entertainment in situ, consider the following advertisement for Café Renaissance on Avenue Joffre. The regularity of the Renaissance's publicity in *Le Journal de Shanghai* also attests to the café's popularity.

Tous les soirs

CAFÉ RENAISSANCE

(Le café européen)

présente

M. Moonzeff

Chanteur bohémien

Francisca et ses danses espagnoles

Mlle. Regée

dans son répertoire de chansons populaires

et l'orchestre SCHWARTZLEDER⁴⁰

[Every evening\Café Renaissance\The European café\presents Mr.
Moonzeff\Bohemian Singer\Francisca and her Spanish dances\Miss Regée\in her
repertoire of popular songs\and Schwartzleder's orchestra]

The programme, which juxtaposed individual singers and their renditions of chansons with dance numbers, bore a resemblance to the sounds experienced in Parisian café-concerts and music halls in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Entertainment then included but was not limited to such genres as the sentimental romance, French and other national folk songs, military songs, opera arias, operetta excerpts, mélodies and jazz. Now, at the Renaissance, Moonzeff and Regée would possibly have performed their own tour de chant, described by Steven Whiting as an extended series of songs, 'a sort of spectacle put on by a single interpreter, who had to show enough talent and versatility to hold the stage by himself [or herself] for such a long time to the satisfaction of the public'.⁴¹ Taking into account the Spanish dance act, the double bill of a chanteur and chanteuse and an ensemble that was likely a dance orchestra (not just accompanying the singers, but also the patrons), entertainment at the Renaissance probably went on until the early hours of the morning. The café's activities not only transgressed the FMC's musical stipulations, but also threw into relief the disjuncture between French political authority and cultural influence in Shanghai.

Parisian musical practices were common in licensed eateries, many of which were located on major thoroughfares in the Concession. Let's turn to L'Art Café et

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Steven Moore Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian: From Cabaret to Concert Hall* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 28–29.

Music Hall (hereafter L'Art), also situated on Avenue Joffre.⁴² Similar to the Renaissance and other establishments that I examined earlier, L'Art advertised frequently in *Le Journal de Shanghai*. Here is a typical piece of publicity:

TOUS LES JOURS

GRAND PROGRAMME MUSICAL

REVUES, CHOEURS, DUOS

ET SOLOS

BALLETS

CHANSONS EN VOGUE

CHANSONS À SUCCÈS DES DERNIERS FILMS

LE MEILLEUR ORCHESTRE

[Everyday\Grand musical programme\Revues, choirs, duos\And

solos\Ballets\Songs in vogue\Hit songs from the latest films\The best orchestra]

Judging from the magnitude and spectrum of the performing forces, opulence of display and the programming of the most current songs, entertainment at L'Art was by and large modelled on contemporary Parisian music halls. Of revues in these venues, Whiting observes: 'Dance replaced dialogue [for example, topical commentary by a master of ceremonies], and the orchestra became ubiquitous. [T]he true "star" of music hall became the staging, supported by continuous orchestra music and by ensemble dancing—the whole bound by a principle of obligatory excess.'⁴³ Operating as a café and music hall, and presenting a line-up that was itself a spectacle, L'Art appeared to recreate the ambience and senses of a Parisian music hall in Shanghai. As in the

⁴² *Le Journal de Shanghai*, 10 March 1938.

⁴³ Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, 30–31.

example of Café Renaissance, the FMC's stipulations meant little to the operator, performers and patrons. Licensed venues like L'Art and the Renaissance were more interested in conjuring up Paris in Shanghai than they were in observing the municipal requirements. Yet, their offerings were no less 'French'.

The entertainment sounds in and of the Concession's licensed venues suggest this, then: the replication of the Parisian variety shows at once played out and complicated the French existence in Shanghai. The eateries re-enacted repertoires and formats popular to the local French community. The programmes were also enjoyed by other nationalities, as the patrons were mixed. The musical presence of licensed venues nuanced the administrative presence of the French Municipal Council—the very body set up to promote and to protect French interests in treaty port Shanghai. The venues' activities thus raise the question whether, at an everyday level, the French Concession was strictly defined by matters of governance. The municipality, though a monarchy, does not lend itself to a 'top-down' interpretation insofar as music, sound and policy are concerned.

The 'scape' of musical sound: Topography, place, space

My examination of official and commercial ideas of sound brings me full circle and back to the question: What kind of a soundscape was the French Concession? To conclude that it was a purely colonial soundscape risks being simplistic. An important finding is that the FMC and the licensed eateries articulated Frenchness in multivalent ways. A musicological study of the Concession urges one to reconceptualise the area. It cannot simply be pinned down as Shanghai's 'French quarter', safeguarded with territorial pride and with a sense of exclusivity. The Concession was not merely territory

on which the French settlers took advantage of the rights and privileges accorded to them under the Unequal Treaties. In toto, the documentary sources suggest a musical soundscape at once ordered and disordered. With that characteristic in mind, it makes sense to shift the emphasis away from France as an exploitative power in treaty port Shanghai. Given that the French were keen to carve out and to maintain their influence, the notion of France as a foreign aggressor doubtless has merits. Yet, such a notion gives a certain impulse to historical interpretation: that is, musical activity is understood predominantly as a contestation of the status quo. The evidence here, by contrast, points to the relevance and irrelevance of French colonial rule in Shanghai.

To contemplate further the Concession's musical soundscape is to cogitate about topography, place and space, rather than power per se. With regard to topography, Andrew Webber's work on twentieth-century Berlin seems instructive. He explains that the book's main objective is to 'track the relationships between the official or representative map of the city and the more shifting topographies that work in evidence in the representation of Berlin life in textual, and performance art'.⁴⁴ Drawing on Henri Lefebvre, notably his 'representations of space' and 'representational spaces', Webber proposes to 'follow the city history of the dominant ideological groupings [and] consider the key sites, zones and events of this "official" or "frontal" history and examine the constructions and controls that they put upon the metropolis'.⁴⁵ In addition he aims to look at 'sites of more localised or minority forms of culture [that, to quote

⁴⁴ Andrew J. Webber, *Berlin in the Twentieth Century: A Cultural Topography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 2.

⁴⁵ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 33; Webber, *Berlin in the Twentieth Century*, 4.

Lefebvre, are] “linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life, as also to art”’.⁴⁶

I have cited Webber at some length because I want to draw attention to the Lefebvrian dichotomy between official and un-official ways of locating the city. In this it is worth registering the political motivations behind Lefebvre’s work. Meredith Cohen and Fanny Madeline note that ‘Lefebvre’s Marxist convictions strongly coloured his theories, particularly in terms of the function of space as a social operative’.⁴⁷ Their reminder is certainly valid; an ideological interpretation of the French Concession means putting power front and centre. Consequently it may produce a charged reading of municipality and licensed venues, which is at odds with my observation that commercial ideas of sound paralleled but did not overtake official ideas of sound.

The Lefebvrian dichotomy between dominant and unruly historical actors is worth deliberating for another reason. Whether or not the dichotomy is effective in discussion hinges upon the medium under scrutiny. In his book Webber calls on ‘subversive kinds of allegory’, the alternative language and image systems of Berlin.⁴⁸ He focuses on visual artefacts to examine asymmetries of power. Yet music, especially live music, entails a rather different use of evidence. Momentary and intangible, music and sound require ancillary or alternative materials (for example documents) in order to be articulated and substantiated. Granted, Webber produces a sophisticated and complex topography of Berlin over a century, engaging with the real and the imagined—a

⁴⁶ Webber, *Berlin in the Twentieth Century*, 4.

⁴⁷ Meredith Cohen and Fanny Madeline, eds., *Space in the Medieval West: Places, Territories, and Imagined Geographies* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2014), 6.

⁴⁸ Webber, *Berlin in the Twentieth Century*, 6.

‘metapsychology of city life’.⁴⁹ But his approach, which combines psychoanalytic vocabulary with literary texts, essentially foregrounds a discourse of violence.

In contrast to twentieth-century Berlin, the French Concession in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai exposes less a politics of urban representation than a specific topography (arrangement) of place and space. But first, what do the words ‘place’ and ‘space’ mean? The ideas of Michel de Certeau are worth mentioning here. In *The Practice of Everyday Life*, he seeks to define place and space:

A place (*lieu*) is the order (of whatever kind) in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence. It implies an indication of stability. A space exists when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities and time variables. Thus space is composed of intersections of mobile elements. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it. In contradistinction to the place, it has thus none of the univocity or stability of a ‘proper’. In short, space is a practiced place.⁵⁰

de Certeau positions one against the other and employs such disparate terms as stability and mobility. Setting up an oppositional relationship between place and space, he describes them as ‘two sorts of determinations’: ‘a determination through objects that are ultimately reducible to the being-there of something dead, the law of a “place” [versus] a determination through operations which, when they are attributed to a stone, tree, or human being, specify “spaces” by the actions of historical subjects’.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Ibid., 5.

⁵⁰ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven F. Rendall (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 117.

⁵¹ Ibid., 118.

To be fair, de Certeau does note ‘the play of changing relationships’ between place and space.⁵² Regarding licensed eateries in the French Concession, it would certainly be unsatisfactory to cast place and space as entirely separate forms of existence. Judging from the ‘French dossiers’ at the Shanghai Municipal Archives, these two ‘determinations’ go hand in hand. Take DD’s, for example. In his application, the proprietor outlined his partitioning of the premises: ‘The ground floor will be occupied by a confectionary shop and café with a five-piece string orchestra. The first floor will be occupied by a bar and restaurant.’⁵³ Permission was subsequently granted. In that sense, DD’s various internal spaces defined it as a licensed place of eating and drinking. The proposed restaurant at the Little Hotel provides another illustration of place-and-space.⁵⁴ Planned as a summer restaurant, it was not only an outdoor extension but also a new and prime entertainment space (with live music and presumably dancing), re-characterising the Little Hotel as a licensed place of lodging.

My underlying point here—that place and space are co-constitutive—is neither specific to eateries in Shanghai nor unique to the French Concession. Nevertheless, the venue layouts that can be gleaned from the available evidence indicate: configurations of place and space are liable to shift. These changing ‘mini-topographies’ arguably explain the particularity of the Concession’s musical soundscape. Sounds associated with the eateries are by default distinct from the sounds inferred from the FMC’s musical stipulations. Further, this musical soundscape suggests an/other geography *within* the French Concession, amid and despite a colonial style of rule: a local geography characterised by strict regulation, non-compliance and by differing notions of

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ SMA, U38-4-1373-0747.

⁵⁴ SMA, U38-4-1370-0564.

Frenchness. That eateries' musical practices 'clashed' with the FMC's policy is not so strange a finding after all.

Although the French were anxious to safeguard their *terrain* and interests in treaty port Shanghai, their territorial pride only defined musical policy and not the musical practices of the venues under licence. The tension between municipality and musical venues thus underscores a foreign existence complex, many-sided and precarious. Moreover, the musical soundscape of the French Concession suggests that imperial agenda and local geography were inextricably intertwined—but also awkwardly misaligned. The Concession was simultaneously a French jurisdiction and a sonic no man's land, a twist which, for the historical record, confounds the *raison d'être* of French colonialism in Shanghai.

CHAPTER THREE

Japanese-Occupied Shanghai, ‘Die gute Unterhaltungsmusik’:

Landscape, Refugee Cafés, Sounds of ‘Little Vienna’

In the previous two chapters, I discussed the Shanghai Municipal Brass Band in the International Settlement and licensed musical venues in the French Concession. Now, my examination shifts from treaty port Shanghai to wartime Shanghai, specifically European Jewish cafés and their entertainment music in the Restricted Sector for Stateless Refugees during Japanese occupation.¹

‘Landscape is not merely the world we see; it is a construction, a composition of that world. Landscape is a way of seeing the world.’² So writes Denis Cosgrove in *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, a work dating from 1984.³ Similarly, in *Landscape and Power*, published in 1994, W. J. T. Mitchell interrogates ‘not just what landscape “is” or “means” but what it does, how it works as a cultural practice’.⁴ And in a 2014 review of the existing literature, Yvonne Whelan notes that landscape ‘pave[s] the way for a whole range of innovative readings of symbolic city spaces’.⁵ Spanning three decades, these comments, though cursorily presented, indicate a longstanding

¹ A variant of this chapter has been peer-reviewed and published as an article. See Yvonne Liao, ‘“Die gute Unterhaltungsmusik”: Landscape, Refugee Cafés, and Sounds of “Little Vienna” in Wartime Shanghai.’ *The Musical Quarterly* 98 (Winter 2015): 350–394.

² Denis E. Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes and Noble, 1985), 1.

³ The work was first published in 1984 (London: Croom Helm), followed by editions in 1985 and 1998 (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press).

⁴ W. J. T. Mitchell, *Landscape and Power* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 1.

⁵ Yvonne Whelan, ‘Landscape and Iconography’, in *Key Concepts in Historical Geography*, ed. John Morrissey et al. (London: Sage, 2014), 164.

critical engagement with ‘landscape’ as a concept going beyond the palpable surface of the earth.⁶

The present chapter does not entail a theoretical inquiry into landscape. However, the foregoing remarks serve as a prelude to a crucial point: landscape is at once concrete and abstract. By extension, landscape allows a purchase on the peculiarity of mass confinement, licensed cafés and the attendant sound worlds of *Unterhaltungsmusik* (entertainment music) in the Restricted Sector for Stateless Refugees.⁷ The area, also known as ‘Little Vienna’, was a European and primarily an Austro-German Jewish refugee zone, the outcome of a decree issued by the Japanese Army in February 1943.⁸ The decree was also an affirmation of the Axis alliance between Imperial Japan, Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy.⁹

In terms of examining café music in a segregated ‘Little Vienna’, ‘landscape’ is arguably more compelling than ‘geography’. The former may suggest multiple ways or levels of interpretation. The latter tends to imply a defined unit of analysis. In many ways, the Restricted Sector is more a nuanced landscape than a coherent geography. A patrolled ghetto and an urban quarter, it poses some striking ambiguities. The Sector was located within Shanghai. The refugees in question, who had fled homes and

⁶ For a discussion of symbolic readings of landscape, see Iain Robertson and Penny Richards, *Studying Cultural Landscapes* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2003).

⁷ In her article ‘Race Against Time’, published in *Survey Graphic* in March 1944, Laura Margolies wrote: ‘Chusan Road [eventually a thoroughfare in the Sector], once a typical Chinese lane, in 1941 looked like a little street in Vienna.’ Postwar writings referencing ‘Little Vienna’ include Horst Peter Eisfelder, *Chinese Exile: My Years in Shanghai and Nanking 1938–1947* (Melbourne, Australia: Makor Jewish Community Library, 2003).

⁸ According to the November 1944 census of the European Refugees Union in Shanghai, out of a total of 14,245 refugees in the Sector, 8,114 came from Germany, 3,942 from Austria, 1,248 from Poland and 236 from Czechoslovakia. The Germans and the Austrians thus constituted eighty-five percent of the total refugee population in the Sector at that point.

⁹ The Tripartite Pact signed between Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Imperial Japan in Berlin in September 1940 established the major Axis powers of the Second World War.

businesses in Nazi-occupied Europe in the late 1930s, were not divorced from or transported out of the city. They were, however, forced into a rundown neighbourhood that had long been accommodating poorer and deprived members of the city's Chinese and Russian populations. The area had witnessed the havoc of Sino-Japanese hostilities throughout the 1930s, notably the Battle of Shanghai, after which the Nationalist Government retreated to Chongqing in inland China.

Under military confinement, the refugees' liberties and movements were constrained. Everyday life was harsh, made all the more punishing in the depths of summer and winter. At the same time the Restricted Sector was not a labour camp, still less an extermination camp. Ex-refugee Alfred Kohn describes it: 'The Japanese were cruel, they were strict . . . [though they] did not believe in this business that a German who was a Catholic or Protestant is different from a German or an Austrian who's a Jew, and that was our luck. Otherwise we'd all be dead.'¹⁰ Steve Hochstadt observes that the Japanese attitude toward the Jews was an ambivalent one. The decree expressly targeted certain groups of European refugees who arrived in Shanghai in or after 1937. It did not affect the existing Baghdadi and Ashkenazi Jewish communities in the city.¹¹ Though the area was occasionally likened to Vienna before 1943, it witnessed a more

¹⁰ Steve Hochstadt, *Exodus from Shanghai: Stories of Escape from The Third Reich* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 138.

¹¹ Hochstadt, *Exodus from Shanghai*, 127. Following the Unequal Treaties, the Sephardic Baghdadi Jews ventured to Shanghai and other Chinese ports that had been forced to open for trade. Many found commercial success and volunteered aid to European Jewish refugees in the 1930s and 1940s. The Ashkenazi Jews constituted another group. Having fled tsarist Russia via Siberia, they based themselves initially in northeastern China, for example in Harbin, Dalian and Shenyang. In the 1920s (partly to do with the increasing Japanese military presence in the northeast) many moved farther south and settled in such cities as Tianjin and Shanghai. A parallel but also different movement was that of the Soviet Jews, who arrived in northeastern China in the early twentieth century to help construct railways. Again, a good number ended up in Shanghai, for example bandleader Oleg Lundstrom (whose father was a railway engineer), eventually a major figure in the city's jazz scene.

extensive Europeanisation after the Japanese military decree entered into force in May 1943. (See figure 3.1.)



Fig. 3.1. 'Little Vienna'.

The topic of a European Jewish zone in 1940s Japanese-occupied Shanghai has attracted considerable attention in scholarship and the media.¹² Historians in the People's Republic of China, notably Pan Guang, Tang Yating and Wang Jian have contributed

¹² See, for example, David Kranzler, *Japanese, Nazis and Jews: The Jewish Refugee Community of Shanghai, 1938–1945* (New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1976); Wayne Chang, 'Ho Feng Shan: The "Chinese Schindler" who saved thousands of Jews', CNN Asia, 19 July 2015 (accessed 26 July 2015), <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/07/19/asia/china-jews-schindler-ho-feng-shan/index.html>; Barbara Demick, 'China's Little Vienna', *Los Angeles Times*, 18 February 2012 (accessed 19 November 2014), <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/sep/18/world/la-fg-china-jews-20120918>; and Casey Hall, 'Jewish Life in Shanghai's Ghetto', *New York Times*, 19 June 2012 (accessed 19 November 2014), <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/20/travel/jewish-life-in-shanghais-ghetto.html>.

accounts of Jewish everyday and musical life in Shanghai.¹³ They cover wartime Jewish activities and artists primarily in terms of social events, for example concerts, religious ceremonies and fundraisers. Hitherto neglected, however, is the emergence of a refugee zone that was simultaneously a Restricted Sector and an imagined Vienna, which marks an especially intriguing site of inquiry.

Never explored are the twin phenomena of licenced refugee cafés and their presentations of live music, in particular *Unterhaltungsmusik*, which involved refugee-performers. Catering largely to refugees and operated by the refugees themselves, these Continental-style cafés proliferated in a sealed-off locale. The cafés' musical advertisements appeared daily in the *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle* (上海猶太日報; hereafter the *Chronicle*), one of the few newspapers available for circulation in the Sector. First published in 1939, the *Chronicle* became the de facto refugee paper.¹⁴ Despite the English title, it was a German-language publication and catered mainly to European Jews. Here is a typical example of a musical advertisement (turn over for figure 3.2):

¹³ Pan Guang, ed., *Jianku suiyue de nanwang jiyi* [Jewish Refugee Memoirs: Their Experiences in Wartime China] (Beijing: Shishi chuban she, 2015); Tang Yating, *Shanghai youtai shequ de yinyue shenghuo* [The Musical Life of the Shanghai Jewish Community] (1850–1950, 1998–2005) (Shanghai: Shanghai Music Conservatory Press, 2007); Wang Jian, *Shanghai youtairen shehui shenghuoshi* [The Social History of the Shanghai Jews] (Shanghai: Cishu chuban she, 2008).

¹⁴ Ex-refugee Liliane Willens notes that the paper operated without interference from the Japanese authorities, although it is possible that in order to survive the paper might have cooperated with the authorities. See Liliane Willens, *Stateless in Shanghai* (Hong Kong: Earnshaw Books, 2010), 156.



Fig. 3.2. Café Elite promotes its entertainment music on 16 January 1944.

Quasi-Viennese refugee cafés such as the Elite existed, featured in publicity and offered live music in a controlled environment ruled over by the Japanese military—an environment that was meant to uphold the Axis alliance. How and why, then, did refugee cafés and *Unterhaltungsmusik* thrive?

Landscape affords some useful insights into a perplexing state of affairs.¹⁵ The discussion that follows is informed by a series of landscapes. I seek to comprehend refugee cafés and their musical life from different but related angles. The first landscape is a jurisdictional and physical landscape, which explains the formation of the Restricted Sector vis-à-vis municipal shifts in 1940s Shanghai. The second is a cultural landscape. To adapt Cosgrove’s statement, landscape is not only a way of seeing the world (whether to those in it or studying it), but also a way of hearing that world. The

¹⁵ Landscape has and continues to feature in music studies. A notable example is Daniel Grimley’s work on the critical reception of Grieg, and the influences on it of representations of landscape. See Daniel M. Grimley, *Grieg: Music, Landscape and Norwegian Identity* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell, 2006).

proposed cultural landscape navigates the various sound worlds of refugee cafés through the available evidence. The third landscape represents a political landscape, which probes the *preconditions* of those sound worlds: how venues managed to open under licence and host live music. Finally, some broader reflections are offered in the historical landscape. Notably, in relation to the existing literature on live music in war—which takes a huge interest in the human purposing of music—I ask if it is necessarily the case that music bore deducible intents.¹⁶

The four landscapes are not meant to be reductive. Together, they constitute a critical model by which to address the peculiarity of the Restricted Sector. A baffling anomaly, the Sector complicates the meaning of incarceration. Patronised daily by the refugees, places musical and non-musical operated normally in an abnormal space. Proposed cafés were granted municipal licences, which gave them *carte blanche* to arrange and to advertise *Unterhaltungsmusik*.

The Restricted Sector was in force right up to the end of the Second World War in 1945. But the density of the surviving materials leads me to focus on the period from March 1943 to May 1944. My sources are categorised into two groups. The first contains the cafés' musical advertisements in the *Chronicle*. Whether or not the publicity materialised is of course a valid query. Nonetheless it is important to register the peculiar nature of a segregated area. Because of imposed and harsh restrictions,

¹⁶ Of music in wartime internment settings in the early decades of the twentieth century, an obvious area of scholarship is that concerning the Third Reich. See, for example, Shirli Gilbert, *Music in the Holocaust: Confronting Life in the Nazi Ghettos and Camps* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005); Eckhard John, 'Music and Concentration Camps: An Approximation', *Journal of Musicological Research* 20, no. 4 (2001): 269–323; and Tina Frühauf and Lily E. Hirsch, eds., *Dislocated Memories: Jews, Music, and Postwar German Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). Outside the Third Reich, see Minako Waseda, 'Extraordinary Circumstances, Exceptional Practices: Music in Japanese American Concentration Camps', *Journal of Asian American Studies* 8, no. 2 (2005): 171–209.

everyday choices were limited economically. Available options meant real-life options. Production and consumption followed a perfunctory model of supply and demand. In that sense the advertisements contained genuine daily information in and for a detained community. The second group of sources is a loose cluster of municipal records, namely departmental correspondences and license application forms filled in by refugee-operators.

The history I articulate here draws on and is informed more by archival materials than by testimonial literature. I concur with Shirli Gilbert, who points out in her work on music in the Holocaust that postwar witness accounts are, above all, trying to get to grips with what happened.¹⁷ These conceptions are subjective, and are entangled with emotion, pain, memory and distance. The resulting knowledge remains powerful nonetheless, because it conveys certain lessons of humanity from ‘history’. Indeed, refugee testimonies describing the Restricted Sector in Shanghai—vivid stories of survival, told or written—recount extreme living conditions and harrowing experiences of air raids. Yet, they do not detail what was actually performed and heard in street venues. Although scores and sheet music used at the time are not forthcoming, the dearth of conventional musicological source objects does not mean that one should shy away from the topic of live music in and of the past. There are pools of data, however disparate and dispersed, to tap into. In particular, documentary sources—seemingly repetitive printed advertisements and pedestrian municipal papers—can cast light on how the refugees’ proposed cafés became licenced establishments, how the cafés got into a position to organise *Unterhaltungsmusik* and what was programmed.

¹⁷ In *Music in the Holocaust*, Gilbert also cautions against interpreting musical life solely in terms of heroic resistance.

Straightforward access at the Shanghai Municipal Archives and the Xujiahui Library in Shanghai, the city's largest repository of foreign-language materials from before the Communist takeover in 1949, makes it all the more imperative to study these documents. Their accessibility is inextricably tied to the Communist historical position in the present. Shanghai is heralded as a haven and one of the few safe houses internationally that saved a great many European Jewish refugees during the Second World War. This particular position, or pride of position, has led to the preservation and museumfication of some ex-refugee buildings in Tilanqiao (提篮桥) in Shanghai's Hongkou District (虹口区). Influencing the policy is a sense of Chinese national victory over Japanese imperial aggression. Not surprisingly, Japanese-era paperwork occupies a distinct category in Communist archival catalogues.¹⁸ The informational architecture is part and parcel of what is deemed essential to the official (and Marxist) historical record. The period of Japanese occupation conveniently serves as a requisite phase in the lead-up to Communist rule. Regardless of the underlying ideology and politics of power, the availability of so-called enemy documents brings practical benefits, albeit inadvertently so far as music research is concerned.

I am careful not to unpack the word *café* or to overanalyse the taxonomy of eating and drinking establishments in the Sector. Such premises were not consistently categorised. The lack of a reliable classification was linked to municipal politics, which I will discuss later. Furthermore a number of establishments had multiple spatial functions, supported concurrently by primary (food on premises) and auxiliary (sale of

¹⁸ At the Shanghai Municipal Archives and in Chinese Communist parlance, the Japanese occupation period is referred to as the 'Illegitimate Japanese Era' (日伪时期).

confectionary) licenses. Café Louis on Ward Road (華德路) was also a confectioner.¹⁹ Garden Bridge on East Seward Road (東熙華德路) was a café-restaurant and Konditorei (a pastry and cake shop) that served the ‘best coffee’, the ‘finest Viennese cakes’ and ‘new bakery specialties’.²⁰ Similarly, the Bi Ba Bo on Tongshan Road (塘山路) called itself a café-restaurant, and the Splendid on East Broadway (東百老匯路), a café and bar.²¹

A Jurisdictional and Physical Landscape: The Proclamation and the Restricted Sector

The first landscape highlights the strangeness of a refugee zone that was militarily controlled on the one hand and commercially alive on the other. Here, jurisdictional and physical landscapes are paired together because the demarcation of a European Jewish refugee zone was linked to the citywide power of the Japanese military in Shanghai. A brief account of shifts in the city’s governance is necessary.

In order to regroup and fight the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945), the Nationalists under Jiang Jieshi (蔣介石) retreated from Nanjing in November 1937 and set up the wartime capital (or at least the city they recognised as such) in Chongqing in inland China. Meanwhile, Jiang’s political rival Wang Jingwei (汪精衛) negotiated an alliance with the Japanese. In March 1940, he was made the head of state of the Recognised National Government of China, a puppet regime. The administration in 1940s Japanese-controlled Shanghai was the Shanghai Special Municipality (上海特別

¹⁹ *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, 3 October 1943. The street names were those used when the Restricted Sector was in force.

²⁰ *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, 30 November 1943.

²¹ *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, 2 November 1943.

市政府), whose principal officials professed loyalty to the Japanese. Despite the expanding Japanese presence in the city throughout the 1930s, between 1937 and 1941—that is, before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the outbreak of the Pacific War—the International Settlement and the French Concession remained intact, while surrounding Chinese areas were occupied by the Japanese military. This period is also known historically as the ‘lone islet period’ (孤岛时期), given the seclusion of the International Settlement and the French Concession.

Following the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941, the Japanese military invaded the International Settlement and the French Concession. Thereafter these administrative areas existed in name only.²² In other words the treaty port status—which was characterised by the International Settlement and the British-dominated Shanghai Municipal Council; the French Concession and French Municipal Council; Chinese areas and the Nationalist government—changed with the full occupation that followed the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The city transformed, in principle at least, into a single municipality answerable to military authorities, their representatives and loyalists, however violent the competition for control remained among the Japanese, the Chongqing-based Nationalist government under Jiang Jieshi and the Wang Jingwei puppet regime.

²² In February 1943, the British-Chinese Treaty for the Relinquishment of Extraterritorial Rights in China and the U.S.-China Treaty for Relinquishment of Extraterritorial Rights were signed between the Nationalist Government under Jiang Jieshi, Britain and the United States. Although the treaties were not enforceable in Japanese-occupied Shanghai, in July of the same year the Japanese retroceded the Shanghai Municipal Council (previously the governing body of the International Settlement) to the Shanghai Special Municipality. In the same month, the Nazi-affiliated government of Vichy France handed the French Concession over to the Wang Jingwei government. The International Settlement and French Concession officially came to an end with the surrender of Japan, conclusion of the Second World War and the Nationalists’ resumption of sovereignty.

This, then, is the jurisdictional landscape from which the physical landscape of the Restricted Sector emerged. On 18 February 1943, the commanders-in-chief of the Japanese Army and Navy in Shanghai jointly announced a ‘Proclamation Concerning [the] Restriction of Residence[s] and Business[es] of Stateless Refugees’ (hereafter the Proclamation). The Proclamation coerced the refugees into a ‘Restricted Sector for Stateless Refugees’ (hereafter the Restricted Sector, the Sector or the Designated Area). Broadsheets in Chinese, English and French ran the news; the *Shanghai Times* gave it front-page coverage.²³ The Sector measured less than a square mile in size, bounded on the east by a line connecting Chaoufoong Road (兆豐路), Muirhead Road (茂海路) and Dent Road (鄧脫路); on the west by Yangtzepoo Creek (楊樹浦); on the south by a line connecting East Seward Road, Muirhead Road and Wayside (滙山路) Road; and on the north by the International Settlement.²⁴ (Turn over for figures 3.3 and 3.4.)

²³ These were the headline and sub-headline on the front page of the *Shanghai Times* on 18 February 1943. Newspapers that reported on the Proclamation include *Shenbao* (申報), *Xinwen Bao* (新聞報), and *Le Journal de Shanghai*. Similar to the *Shanghai Times*, *Le Journal de Shanghai* accorded front-page coverage to the Proclamation when it was officially announced. On 20 February 1943, the latter ran the news again on an inside page.

²⁴ *Shanghai Times*, 18 February 1943.

PROCLAMATION

Concerning Restriction Of Residence and Business of Stateless Refugees

(I) Due to military necessity places of residence and business of the stateless refugees in the Shanghai area shall hereafter be restricted to the undermentioned area in the International Settlement.

East of the line connecting Chaoufoeng Road, Muirhead Road and Dent Road;

West of Yangtzepoo Creek;

North of the line connecting East Seward Road, Muirhead Road and Wayside Road; and

South of the boundary of the International Settlement.

(II) The stateless refugees at present residing and/or carrying on business in the districts other than the above area shall remove their places of residence and/or business into the area designated above by May 18, 1943.

Permission must be obtained from the Japanese authorities for the transfer, sale, purchase or lease of the rooms, houses, shops or any other establishments, which are situated outside the designated area and now being occupied or used by the stateless refugees.

(III) Persons other than the stateless refugees shall not remove into the area mentioned in Article I without permission of the Japanese authorities.

(IV) Persons who will have violated this Proclamation or obstructed its enforcement shall be liable to severe punishment.

Commander-in-Chief of the
Imperial Japanese Army in the Shanghai Area.

Commander-in-Chief of the
Imperial Japanese Navy in the Shanghai Area.

February 18, 1943.

Fig. 3.3. The Proclamation in the *Shanghai Times* (上海泰晤士報).

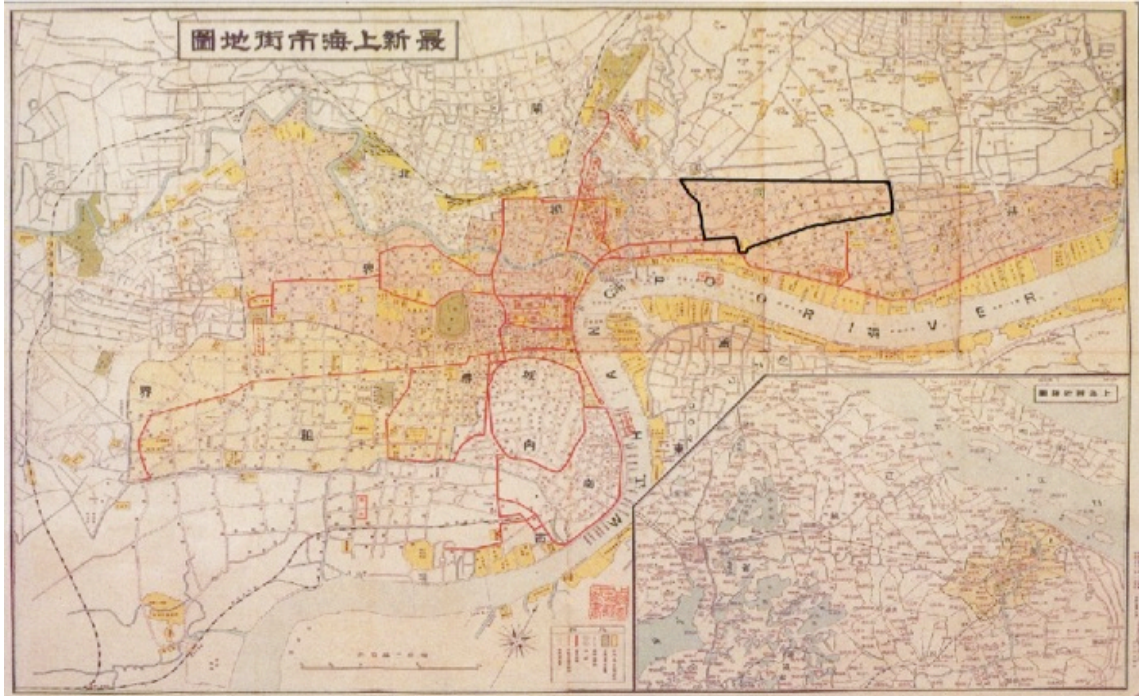


Fig. 3.4. The Restricted Sector (with black encircling) in relation to the rest of the city.

By ‘Stateless Refugees’, the authorities referred to those from ‘Germany (including former Austria, Czecho-Slovakia), Hungary, former Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, etc.’, who had been in Shanghai since 1937, and were deemed to have no official nationality.²⁵ The definition also targeted ‘any woman married to one of the abovementioned refugees’, who would be ‘subject to the same treatment as her husband’ and any refugee who sought to obtain a nationality subsequent to the Proclamation.²⁶ The military decree did not mention the word *Jew* but the refugees in question were without exception Jews who had fled Nazi-occupied Europe. The influx of European Jewish refugees into Shanghai from the late 1920s to the early 1940s, mostly by sea and land, was closely tied to contemporary political developments in Europe, such as the Nazis’ Nuremberg Laws in 1935, a de facto legislation of anti-Semitic and

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

discriminatory practices.²⁷ The refugees had little if any control over the fate of their legal identities. In July 1942, the German Consulate in Shanghai published a retroactive notice, stating that German nationals living in the city, classified as Jews, effectively lost their German nationality from 26 November 1941. Additionally, the letter *J* had to be added to the first page of their passports. The German Consulate notice was followed soon by an order of implementation from the Shanghai Special Municipality to the Police.²⁸ Japanese residents who had been residing in the new Restricted Sector were urged to move out. Stateless Refugees who had settled there before 1937 were prohibited from leaving. The Proclamation rounded up approximately 6,000 refugees, who were relocated alongside the 15,000 or more already living in the neighbourhood.²⁹ Persons found to have violated the Proclamation were liable to severe punishment under Japanese military law.

The callousness of the decree notwithstanding, the Axis alliance between the Japanese and the Nazis did not assume clear patterns in Shanghai. The Japanese opted not to enforce a distinction between a Jew and a German or an Austrian. They did not implement the ‘Final Solution’. They even took care to describe the Restricted Sector’s purpose as not to ‘oppress [the refugees’] occupation’ in Shanghai, but rather to

²⁷ That visas were not required to enter Shanghai meant that many European Jewish refugees ended up in the city, whether by choice or by chance. Between 1933 (when Hitler became Chancellor of Germany) and 1940, refugees boarded for Shanghai, among other destinations, from ports in Italy, France, the Netherlands and Belgium. Others made their way to the Balkans via the Danube and embarked on ships for Shanghai. Due to Italy’s declaration of war on Britain and France, the port option was no longer open after June 1940. The refugees then travelled by land—via Siberia, then northeastern China, Korea or Japan—before reaching Shanghai. When war broke out between Germany and Soviet Russia in June 1941, the last remaining route was cut off.

²⁸ Shanghai Municipal Archives (hereafter SMA), R1-4-174.

²⁹ Tang, *Shanghai youtai shequ de yinyue shenghuo*, 101. Tang estimates that approximately 15,000 to 18,000 European Jewish refugees were already in the area prior to the Proclamation. There might have been more. An accurate number is impossible to establish.

‘safeguard [their livelihood] so far as possible’.³⁰ To be sure, the military had its own agenda.³¹ Since the late 1920s, a number of European Jewish refugees had settled and been residing in the area. A Japanese memorandum dated August 1939 reported that the area had over 5,000 refugees.³² To the authorities it was a practical location to segregate the refugees en masse and to satisfy the Nazis. Technically the area belonged to the International Settlement at the time of the Proclamation, but it had come under the de facto control of the Japanese in the preceding years. A Japanese report in May 1939 expressed concern over the expanding Jewish community: ‘Various quarters are reported to be alarmed by this influx of Jews into Shanghai. Japanese residents are beginning to pay careful attention to this state of affairs.’³³ Placing the Restricted Sector in the same area facilitated enforcement; the authorities were able to keep close watch over the refugees on familiar territory. The Sector was also a strategic ploy in the context of the Pacific War: the Japanese took to depositing arsenals of weaponry and flammables there, a warning to the Americans as to the grave consequences of carrying out air raids on an area packed with refugees and civilians.

The jurisdictional and physical landscape of the Sector manifested itself in a number of ways. The area was patrolled by military and civilian guards elected among the refugees, and accessed via entry/exit points, which were staffed by the civilian guards, Japanese and Russian soldiers. Barriers were erected at certain checkpoints. Refugees who showed proof of work elsewhere in the city were allowed to leave the

³⁰ *Shanghai Times*, 18 February 1943.

³¹ It is beyond the scope of my research and expertise to explore such topics as propaganda in wartime Japan. See Barak Kushner, *The Thought War: Japanese Imperial Propaganda* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2007).

³² SMA, U1-14-3361.

³³ *Ibid.*

Sector during the day, on condition that they presented a permit and a form of identification. Identification was affixed to the bearer's clothing whenever he or she left the area. There were two types of permit: blue and pink. The former was valid for a month, and the latter for a week. Printed on the back of the permit was a map of the city, marked with crosses to specify the route to be taken to and from work, as well as the hours during which the bearer was allowed to be absent from the Restricted Sector.³⁴

Not only were individual liberties circumscribed, the reissuance of permits turned into a pernicious exercise of terror. Ursula Bacon and another ex-refugee, William Schurtman, recall the officers-in-charge: the calculating and dangerous Okura, and his counterpart Goya, who referred to himself as 'the King of the Jews', a title that 'gave him the right to torment' the refugees.³⁵ The words of the refugees stand in jarring contrast to the authorities' pacifistic rhetoric; horror was felt and real.

The new inhabitants likened the Designated Area to a ghetto. The term, originally Italian, bore specific connotations for them: it was associated with the confinement of Jews to a district in Venice back in 1516. Now, crammed into single rooms in lane houses and makeshift spaces, some of which were converted haphazardly from schools and barracks, Stateless Refugees faced abysmal living and sanitary conditions. Fuel, foodstuffs, amenities and other resources were severely limited. Relief organisations such as the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (known also as the JDC), the Committee for the Assistance of European Jewish Refugees in Shanghai and the International Committee for Granting Relief to European Refugees helped

³⁴ Ursula Bacon, *Shanghai Diary: A Young Girl's Journey from Hitler's Hate to War-Torn China* (Milwaukie, OR: Milestone Press, 2004), 171.

³⁵ Never formally published, William Schurtman's account is titled *Report On: The Jewish Refugee Community in Shanghai*, and dates from January 1954. It is available at the Leo Baeck Institute in New York; Bacon, *Shanghai Diary*, 170.

collect and distribute aid.³⁶ Committed as these organisations were, conditions in the Sector were dire.³⁷

Most Stateless Refugees were unable to retain their original jobs. Due partly to language problems, relevant opportunities were few or simply non-existent. Lawyers, economists, academics and other middle-class professionals sought alternative livelihoods as street vendors, shopkeepers and community workers. Artisan products such as sausages, meats, confectionary, soaps, candles, knitwear and leather goods were manufactured in mini-factories and workrooms. Small businesses—taverns, restaurants, tearooms, bakeries, jewellers, pharmacies, barbers, tailors, cobblers and so on—emerged and catered to the refugees.

Analytically, this is as far as my examination of the jurisdictional and physical landscape will go. It provides more of a background picture, describing the formation and general conditions of the Restricted Sector. Although the landscape provides a historical reconstruction of sanctioned refugee activity in a confined environment, it only partially explains the Designated Area, and does not enable one to press further and understand critically the cafés and their music-making. A discussion of a second—cultural—landscape is thus required.

³⁶ The International Committee for Granting Relief to European Refugees had been operating well before the announcement of the Proclamation. In August 1938 the committee contacted the Shanghai Municipal Council and promoted itself as an organisation formed to give aid to refugees who ‘owing to race, creed or political convictions had to leave Europe due to developments there in the past few months’. The letter also suggested that the Council consider recruiting skilled refugees into the Police and Public Health Departments. See SMA, U1-14-3361.

³⁷ Ex-refugee Liliane Willens estimates from memory: ‘During their two-and-a-half years of confinement in the Designated Area approximately 1,500 elderly and very young children died from malnutrition, lack of medication, cold and damp winters in unheated rooms and tropical diseases unknown to Europeans.’ See Willens, *Stateless in Shanghai*, 156.

A Cultural Landscape: *Unterhaltungsmusik*, refugee cafés, an imagined Vienna

This section is not concerned with whether or to what extent *Unterhaltungsmusik* in the Restricted Sector had Chinese features: there are no clear signs that the Chinese and other non-refugee groups living in the vicinity, who were among the poorest members of Shanghai's population, had an indelible influence on the musical culture of the refugees. Language was a major barrier. In his account Schurtman speculates that less than one percent of the refugee community was able to speak and write Chinese properly. Nor were many refugees fluent in English, the other common language in Shanghai at the time. Small wonder, then, that eatery staff and patrons, at least in the quasi-Viennese cafés, were composed almost entirely of refugees. Judging from donated pictures in such archives as the Werner von Boltenstern Shanghai Photograph and Negative Collection, the Chinese presence in the European Jewish zone was more movement- than culture-driven, characterised mainly by pedestrians and rickshaw drivers crossing the Sector.³⁸ Locating the Restricted Sector in relation to the rest of Shanghai, the limited presence of Chinese meant that, though the Sector was situated within the city, the area developed its own pulse and identity apart from it.

It is certainly important to examine other European refugee groups and their musical activities in the Sector, however the *Chronicle* advertisements present a fascinating case of Continental sounds in the East.³⁹ Hence I concentrate on the Austro-

³⁸ The Werner von Boltenstern Shanghai Photograph and Negative Collection is housed in the William H. Hannon Library at Loyola Marymount University.

³⁹ My study is not one of diaspora. Although the notion of diaspora helps to examine refugees' cultural survival, it does not sufficiently explain local and oft-unforeseen circumstances of music making. Worth mentioning, however, is Marcia Ristaino's detailed survey of Jewish and Slavic communities in early twentieth-century Shanghai. See Marcia Reynders Ristaino, *Port of Last Resort: The Diaspora Communities of Shanghai* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001).

German demographic of the refugee population. Indeed, the refugees maintained their Germanic tastes and bourgeois sensibilities. According to Schurtman, the Sector's street scene and shop-front windows were reminiscent of Austro-German cities and towns. Ex-refugee Liliane Willens recalls: 'The most popular places to meet and spend time with friends during the summer months were the open-air cafés. People could drink tea and coffee (although of very poor quality) or simply hot water, or eat the delectable Viennese *Sachertorte* (chocolate cake filled with marmalade) prepared by professional bakers in Hongkew', which is where the Restricted Sector was.⁴⁰ In his study *Japanese, Nazis and Jews*, David Kranzler writes: 'One shop after another opened up, especially restaurants, open-air cafés, provision stores, snack bars and bars, which proliferated and stood side by side where there was previously but a single coffeehouse.'⁴¹

As a matter of interpretation it would be unrealistic to separate Jewish identities from Austro-German ones. As Anthony Kauders observes in his discussion of Weimar Jewry, the notion that "'Germans" and "Jews" were mutually exclusive entities' is driven by hindsight. If anything, 'Weimar's Jews felt German and Jewish (and local)'.⁴² In *Jewish Music and Modernity*, Philip Bohlman makes a similar argument. Of the interchange of Jewish and Viennese identities at the turn of the twentieth century, he notes that the genre known as *Wienerlied* 'bears direct witness to the specific influences of Jewish dialects'.⁴³ By extension, Stateless Refugees in Shanghai, many of whom

⁴⁰ Willens, *Stateless in Shanghai*, 156.

⁴¹ Kranzler, *Japanese, Nazis and Jews*, 117.

⁴² Anthony D. Kauders, 'Weimar Jewry', in *The Oxford Short History of Germany: The Weimar Republic*, ed. Anthony McElligott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 239.

⁴³ Philip V. Bohlman, *Jewish Music and Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 101.

were born and raised during the Weimar years, were simultaneously Austro-German and Jewish.

Judging from accessible issues of the *Chronicle* at the Xujiahui Library in Shanghai, refugee cafés frequently billed their musical offerings as *Unterhaltungsmusik*.⁴⁴ Traceable and recurrent on record are approximately ten cafés, including the Bi Ba Bo on Tongshan Road; the Roy on Wayside Road; the Elite, the Emperor and Zum Weissen Rössl on Ward Road; the Imperial and the Rex on Muirhead Road; and the Windsor on Kungping Road (公平路).⁴⁵ Names like the Emperor invoked Continental sentiments, implying a sense of nostalgia and need for temporary escape.

Music in the Restricted Sector was not synonymous with refugee cafés. But the intriguing point is that the sound worlds of cafés were fundamentally different from those of ticketed venues in the Sector, such as the Eastern Theatre. Even if café patrons had to pay to get in in some cases, live music was ultimately offered at the discretion of the operator.⁴⁶ Patrons derived entertainment from the overall ambience of eating, drinking and socialising in convivial surroundings. This very quality became controversial under the Nationalist regime after the war, the subject of the next chapter.

Who were the café musicians and how did they sound in the Restricted Sector; is it possible to follow individual musicians in situ and observe their local movements?

⁴⁴ The Xujiahui Library (藏书楼) holds issues of the *Chronicle* from July 1943 to March 1944, some in a state of disrepair.

⁴⁵ The site of Zum Weissen Rössl was demolished in 2009. A replica building was later constructed to promote local tourism, at another address, on Changyang Road, opposite the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum. The interior contains some of the original features, for example the staircase handrail.

⁴⁶ An example of a charged musical event is that featuring singer-entertainers Raja Zomina, Herbert Zernik and pianist Siegfried Sonnenschein at Café Roy on 23 November 1943.

Little consistent information is available about the refugee-performers themselves. There is particular mention, however, of Herbert Zernik, an active and seemingly popular Sector entertainer. According to Irene Eber, who in 2008 published a selection of poetry and prose by Jewish refugees in wartime Shanghai, Zernik started his professional career in Berlin at the age of sixteen, was incarcerated in Buchenwald for some time, and upon release, went to Shanghai.⁴⁷ But Eber does not state her source, which may call into question the credibility of her information, and certainly highlights the difficulty of verifying it. Moreover, profiles of refugee musicians in Shanghai—which show up now and then online—focus on strictly classical and pedagogical activities. For example there is the story of musician Wolfgang Fränkel, who reportedly taught composition and music theory.⁴⁸ It is unclear how and whether these refugees contributed to the Sector's café music scene. Consequently I do not adopt a biographical approach when talking about the musicians involved in *Unterhaltungsmusik*. And I cannot consider reception because reviews of musical events in the cafés do not exist. Thus my focus is on the programmes, repertoires and performers publicised in café advertisements.

To segue into the *Chronicle* advertisements, it is worth inspecting the term *Unterhaltungsmusik*, which literally denotes 'entertainment music'. The term also brings to the fore the seemingly entrenched divide between 'serious music' (*ernste Musik*) and 'light music' (*leichte Musik*) that was part and parcel of discourses on taste, class and

⁴⁷ Irene Eber, ed., *Voices from Shanghai: Jewish Exiles in Wartime China* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 104. Eber translated Zernik's poem 'Eine Affe wurde Mensch' (A Monkey Turned Human), which involves sarcastic wordplay regarding the Japanese official Goya.

⁴⁸ Shanghai Jewish Entertainment, 29 April 2015 (accessed 5 January 2016), <http://shanghai-jewish-entertainment.tumblr.com>.

society in the nineteenth century. Derek Scott notes: ““Serious” is the dominant term, and “light” is defined negatively against it, as music *lacking* seriousness.”⁴⁹ However the distinction was never entirely clear-cut. William Weber observes that definitions of high and low ‘are simply whatever the members of a society (or even just some of them) say they are—and that can change fast’.⁵⁰ In another context—a study of music and mass culture in Weimar and Nazi Germany—Brian Currid similarly calls attention to the porous interflow between ‘popular’ and ‘classical’ musics. He notes that *Unterhaltungsmusik* ‘was understood to include not only the new *Schlager* [hit song] and dance music but also forms of musical practice that in the modern sense could easily be considered “serious’ music, if not at least “art music”’.⁵¹

What is immediately striking about the cultural landscape of the Restricted Sector is that longstanding connotations of *Unterhaltungsmusik* clashed with new meanings. On the one hand, there were so-called serious and lighter performances. On the other, and perhaps more significantly, concerts in fixed-seat venues such as the Eastern Theatre and musical presentations in the cafés were not socially contradictory. The divide between art and entertainment, associated with nineteenth-century Europe, lost traction somewhat in an eastern Wien in the early 1940s.

Musical advertisements in the *Chronicle* were for two types of establishment in the Restricted Sector: cafés and ticketed venues. The latter included the Eastern Theatre, the S.J.Y.A. (Shanghai Jewish Youth Association) School on East Yuhang Road (東有

⁴⁹ Derek B. Scott, *Sounds of the Metropolis: The Nineteenth-Century Popular Music Revolution in London, New York, Paris, and Vienna* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 87.

⁵⁰ William Weber, *Music and the Middle Class: The Social Structure of Concert Life in London, Paris and Vienna between 1830 and 1848* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2004), 12.

⁵¹ Brian Currid, *A National Acoustics: Music and Mass Publicity in Weimar and Nazi Germany* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 121.

恆路) and the Alcock Theatersaal on Alcock Road (愛爾考克路). These venues regularly presented recitals of arias (from operas by Handel, Verdi, Tchaikovsky, etc.), Lieder (of Schubert, Mendelssohn, Brahms, Wolf, etc.), chamber music and concerto performances.⁵² The Eastern Theatre also staged operettas, for example Johann Strauss II's *Die Fledermaus* and Lehár's *Der Graf von Luxemburg*, with reputed refugee-singers such as Lotte Sommer, Herbert Zernik and Gerhard Gottschalk. The community's production of Leonhard Märker's jazz operetta *Warum lügst Du, Cherie . . . ?* (Why Do You Lie, *Cherie . . . ?*), featuring singers Lily Flohr and Fritz Freiser, led by 'Gino and Geza' on two pianos and accompanied by their jazz orchestra—was popular and lasted a great many performances, as demonstrated by the endurance of the advertisements.⁵³ Typically, tickets for dedicated venues were available from the Wayside Bazar on Wayside Road, and occasionally, from the Emigrants Thrift Shop on Nanking Road (南京路) in the International Settlement and Avenue du Roi Albert (亞爾培路) in the French Concession.

The cafés placed musical advertisements noticeably more often than the fixed-seat venues. In the *Chronicle*'s October 1943 issue, the percentage of café advertisements for musical events exceeded ninety percent, and the percentage of venue advertisements, well under ten percent. In the November 1943 issue, it was eighty-five percent and fifteen percent respectively. In the February 1944 issue, the percentages

⁵² Some examples from the *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle* are the 15 November 1943 advertisement for Louis Levine's recital on 21 November 1943 at the Alcock Theatersaal; the 18 January 1944 advertisement for a concert on 23 January 1944 at the S.J.Y.A. School, with a programme of Beethoven's Violin Concerto as well as Lieder and arias, featuring Alfred Wittenberg on the violin, Hans Bär and Erich Marcuse on the piano, tenor Hans Bergmann and baritone Hersch Friedmann; and the 9 February 1944 advertisement for a recital on 19 February 1944 at the S.J.Y.A. School, with a programme of Lieder by Wolf, Wagner and Richard Strauss.

⁵³ The production was first advertised in the *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle* on 12 January 1944.

were seventy percent and twenty-five percent. After all, venue concerts would have cost more to organise, hence were comparatively infrequent. Cafés only needed to install a piano and find a player, or secure a small band. That said, performers crossed fluidly between cafés and fixed-seat venues. For example, Zernik was a regular act at Windsor but also appeared at the Alcock Theatersaal. The audience—comprising mostly the same group of refugees, save a few Chinese, Japanese and European patrons from outside the Designated Area—did not seem to distinguish between what was ‘high’ and what was ‘low’.

This is not to say that *Unterhaltungsmusik* in the Restricted Sector was an completely unique phenomenon, however dislocated it was from Europe. Rather, it extended from regular practices of urban musical entertainment in such metropolises as Berlin and Vienna in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Of music in the Jewish theatre at the time, Bohlman finds that *Salonorchester* (salon orchestras) or *Salonkapellen* (salon bands) were active in cafés, dance halls and entertainment establishments throughout the Leopoldstadt in Vienna and the Scheunenviertel in Berlin.⁵⁴ What is fascinating, however, is the combined and even blurred sense of continuity and change as *Unterhaltungsmusik* took root in 1940s Shanghai.

The conflation of continuity and change is nowhere more apparent than in the ways in which *Unterhaltungsmusik* played out as a familiar musical style in unfamiliar surroundings. The German music dictionary *Das große Wörterbuch der Musik* labels *Unterhaltungsmusik* as a ‘collective term’ (*zusammenfassende Bezeichnung*), one that

⁵⁴ Bohlman, *Jewish Music and Modernity*, 214.

naturally lacks a precise definition.⁵⁵ The advertisements in the *Chronicle* similarly bear out the nature of *Unterhaltungsmusik* as a style of sorts, reflecting motley forms of café entertainment in the Sector: the tea dance (*Zu Tee und Tanz*) and 5 o'clock tea (*Zum 5 Uhr Tee*); the Viennese waltz and other traditional dances such as the *Ländler* and polka; Viennese dialect songs; popular dance music and 'Weimar jazz'; operetta evenings; the *Künstler Konzert* (artist concert); and folkloric and themed soirées with singer-entertainers. These sound worlds were simultaneously novel and constant, novel in that they filled the emergent locale that was the Restricted Sector, and constant in that they would not have differed from what was performed and heard in cafés back in Europe.

Below is a sample selection of the cafés' advertisements. The advertisements are listed chronologically and I will discuss them collectively. The ad copy is reproduced as accurately as possible. Line translations are provided where necessary:

The Imperial, October 1943

Jeden Sonntag 5.30–7.30 Uhr

Moderne und Konzertmusik

Violine: Leo RUFF

Klavier, Akkordeon: Hans LEVINSOHN⁵⁶

[Every Sunday 5:30–7:30pm\Modern and Concert Music]

The Rex, October 1943

Heute 5 o'clock Tea

⁵⁵ Ferdinand Hirsch, *Das große Wörterbuch der Musik* (Weyarn, Germany: Seehamer Verlag, 1996), 499.

⁵⁶ *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, 10 October 1943.

mit Hans Reiss

Jeden Donnerstag

gemütlicher Heuriger Abend!⁵⁷

[5 o'clock Tea today\with Hans Reiss\Every Thursday\Cosy Tavern Evening]

The Roy, October 1943

Heute, 8.30 p.m.

Operetten-Abend

EINTRITT FREI⁵⁸

[8:30pm, today\Operetta Evening\FREE ENTRY]

The Windsor, November 1943

Windsor bringt Ihnen täglich

ab 7 Uhr

PEPPI am Klavier

[Windsor brings you every day\from 7pm\PEPPI on the piano]

Morgen, Mittwoch, 8 Uhr

‘Wiener Heuriger’

mit

ALEXANDER FEIN und TONI BAUMGARTEN⁵⁹

⁵⁷ *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, 17 October 1943.

⁵⁸ *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, 21 October 1943.

⁵⁹ *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, 2 November 1943.

[Tomorrow, Wednesday, 8pm\‘Viennese Tavern’\with\Alexander Fein and Toni Baumgarten]

The Rex, January 1944

HEUTE NACHMITTAG 4.30 UHR

5 Uhr-Tee

CHARLES ALBERT

Mit

Hans Reiss Nazi Rosenblatt Bob Butch⁶⁰

[4:30pm TODAY\5 o’clock tea]

Zum Weissen Rössl, January 1944

Morgen, Sonntag 4 Uhr

TANZ-TEE

Harry Fischer and his Band⁶¹

[Tomorrow, Sunday at 4pm\DANCE TEA]

The Barcelona, January 1944

Heute und morgen

Nachmittag und abends

Konzert

AB MONTAG täglich abends Konzert

Paul WIENER⁶²

⁶⁰ *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, 22 January 1944.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

[Today and tomorrow\Afternoons and evenings\Evening concerts from Monday onward]

The Emperor, February 1944

Heute und morgen 5 Uhr Tee

Täglich abends Unterhaltungs- u. Tanzmusik

Es spielt

OTTO RUFF (Geige)

W. KAMM (Klavier u. Akkordeon)

M. KATZ (Saxophon)

M. OSCHITZKI (Schlagzeug)

*Das einzige Konzert-Café Hongkews mit erstklassiger Kapelle*⁶³

[5 o'clock tea today and tomorrow\Entertainment and dance music every evening\ Hongkew's best concert-café with a first-class band]

The tea dance and 5 o'clock tea were offered in a number of cafés, for example the Emperor, the Rex and Zum Weissen Rössl. Violinists Otto Ruff, Ferry Ehrlich and Willy Rosner (all at the Emperor) were active teatime musicians. Ruff led a quartet consisting of a pianist and accordionist, a saxophonist and a drummer. At the Rex Hans Reiss provided teatime entertainment on the piano and the accordion. In addition, Charlie Albert and his Band alternated with Reiss. Social dances such as the foxtrot went hand in hand with the various 'exotic'-sounding bands in the Sector, for example Harry Fischer and his La Conga Band at Zum Weissen Rössl; Herbert Ruff and his Argentina Band at the Roy; Eric Porges and his Arizona Band plus Royal Quintette at

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, 5 February 1944.

Zum Weissen Rössl and also at the Roy. It is reasonable to infer from the available advertisements that such numbers as ‘*Leider bist du reizend*’ (Unfortunately You Are Lovely), a song in the manner of a foxtrot and from the aforementioned jazz operetta *Warum lügst Du, Cherie . . .?* would have been the kind of music to dance to in a café environment.

The jazz played and heard live among the refugees would likely have been so-called ‘Weimar jazz’. J. Bradford Robinson observes that Germany became culturally isolated from the rest of western Europe in the aftermath of the First World War; the local jazz that emerged was ‘grafted onto [German commercial musicians’] own tradition of salon dance music’; almost all of the celebrated German jazz bandleaders were violinists with Hungaro-Slavic names.⁶⁴ In the context of my discussion, the brand purity of Weimar jazz is not a key point of interest. Rather I highlight the prominence of violinist bandleaders and their ensembles in cafés in the Restricted Sector. Their presence and activities point to the lingering of Weimar-influenced jazz in early 1940s Shanghai.

The Roy put on free operetta evenings as well as the *Café-Konzert* and *Künstler Konzert*—salonesque and spatially intimate occasions of live music that kept refugee-patrons entertained as they ate and drank in cordial surroundings. The establishment scheduled back-to-back artist concerts: an afternoon one (from 4:30 pm to 7:30 pm) in its popular and frequently advertised *Dachgarten* (roof garden; see figure 3.5), then an

⁶⁴ J. Bradford Robinson, ‘Jazz Reception in Weimar Germany: In Search of a Shimmy Figure’, in *Music and Performance during the Weimar Republic*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 114–115.

evening one (from 8 pm to 11 pm) on the first floor of its premises.⁶⁵ The concerts were also free of charge.

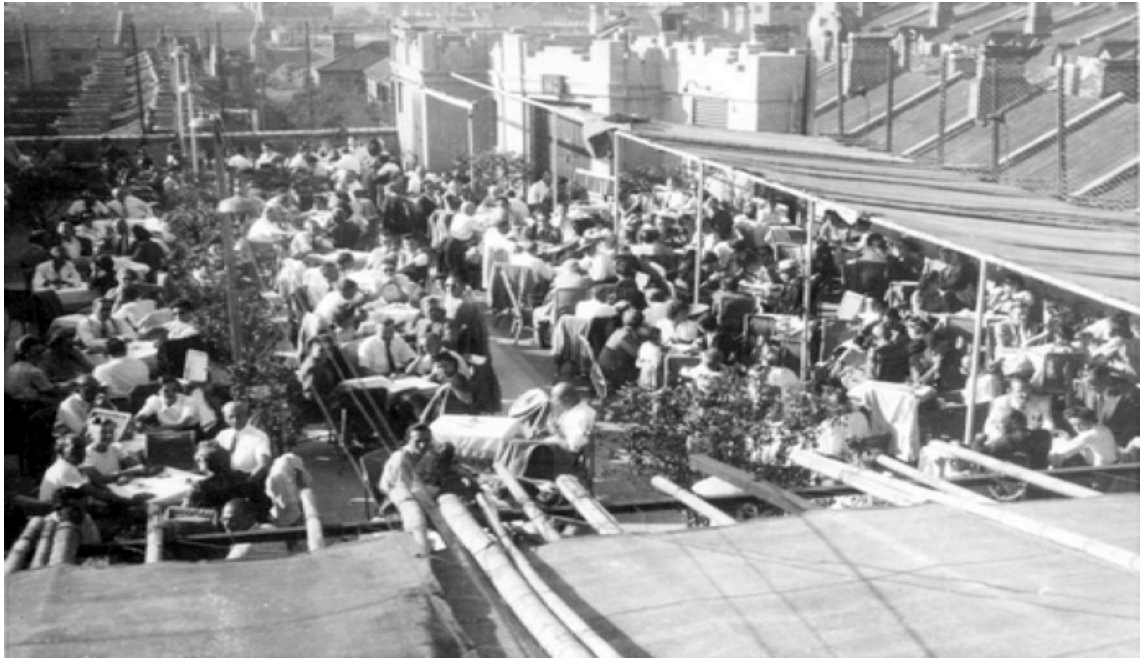


Fig. 3.5. Roof garden, Café Roy.

Although the advertisements do not indicate which pieces were played in the cafés, the repertoire performed at ticketed venues in the Restricted Sector suggests additional clues. As an illustration, *Ave Maria* by Bach-Gounod, *Zigeunerweisen* by Sarasate and *Liebeslied* by Kreisler appeared in concerts at the S.J.Y.A. School, a ticketed venue. These popular pieces, whether original compositions or arranged from such sources as operas, could and would have been easily recycled outside of the fixed-seat venues. First, the violin-and-piano duo was logistically straightforward to set up. Second, it emerges that some of the cafés featured the violin-and-piano duo as their musical centrepiece. As one of the sample advertisements shows, the Imperial hired violinist Leo Ruff and pianist-accordionist Hans Levinsohn to perform in Sunday concerts. The Roy,

⁶⁵ *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, 3 October 1943.

meanwhile, presented Meisterduo Ehrlich-Klein—violinist Ferry Ehrlich and pianist Ferry Klein.⁶⁶ And the Barcelona hosted pianist Paul Wiener; given the versatile nature of the piano, Wiener's programme would likely have been a potpourri of tunes heard in the Sector, including but not limited to operetta excerpts, for example, '*Niemand liebt dich so wie ich*' (Nobody loves you the way I do) from Lehár's *Paganini*, which was staged at venues in the Sector.

Folkloric soirées also took place regularly. Throughout November 1943, the Windsor presented *Wiener Heuriger* (Viennese tavern) evenings with singer-entertainers Alexander Fein and Toni Baumgarten, who were preceded by pianist Peppi Schlesinger, also known as PEPPI. (See figure 3.6.) The Windsor would have evoked local Austrian taverns serving seasonal wine and produce, with live background music from *Heurigersänger*, who accompanied themselves on the double-necked contraguitar and the button accordion. The Rex introduced a similar concept. Throughout October 1943 it staged its 'cosy tavern evening' on Thursdays. In recreating tavernesque sounds and senses recognisable to the refugees, the cafés in the Restricted Sector conjured up a nostalgic imagination of Wien—a Vienna that was and was not.

⁶⁶ The duo was listed in the Roy's *Unterhaltungsmusik* advertisements in October and November 1943. Ehrlich also led a band at the Imperator.

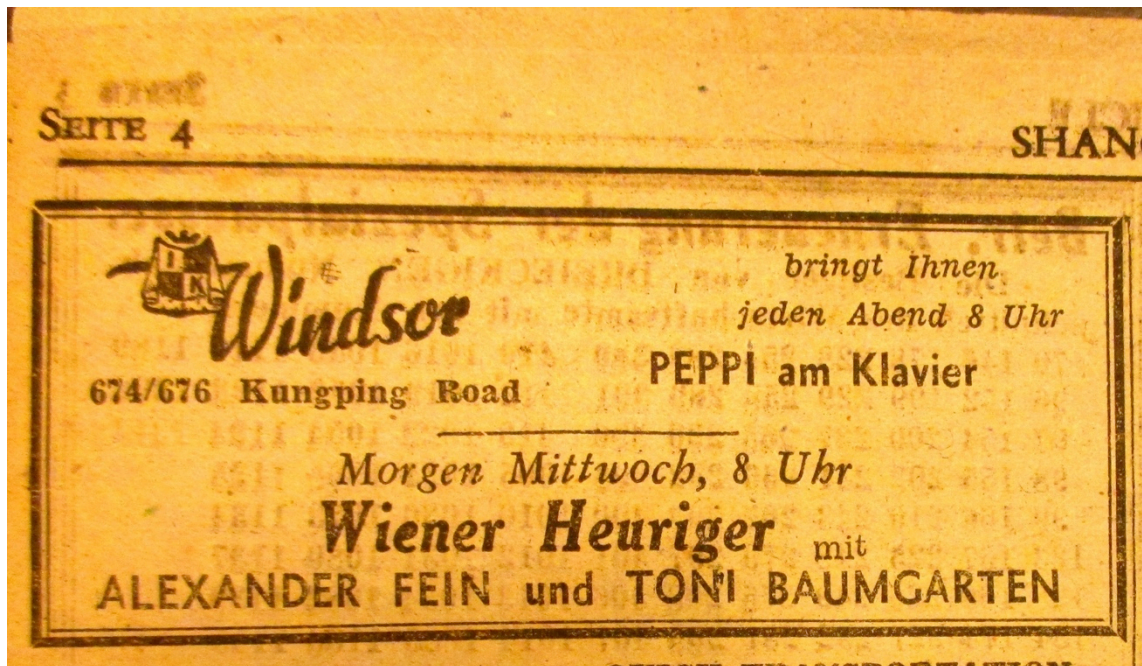


Fig. 3.6. Musical advertisement for the Windsor.

Additionally, the cafés organised themed nights, whose essence of charm, frivolity and gaiety would have appealed to and been understood by the refugee-patrons. Aside from the Viennese tavern evenings, Windsor presented *Berliner Humor und Wiener Stimmung* (Berliner Humor and Viennese Moods), a culturally inflected music-cum-comedy show with singer-entertainer Herbert Zernik and, again, PEPPI on the piano.⁶⁷ The Emperor rehearsed the same theme with violinist Willy Rosner, pianist Felix Liebmann and drummer Max Oschitzki.⁶⁸ Similar to the tavern evenings, the *Humor und Stimmung* nights stirred up sounds and senses of home.

The cafés' musical events in wartime Shanghai and the attendant elements of nostalgia highlight native musical activities on non-native territory. An important question emerges: how might one make sense of *Unterhaltungsmusik* as an ex-European and dislocated cultural phenomenon? At this point, I weave in Pierre Bourdieu's concept

⁶⁷ *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, 25 January 1944.

⁶⁸ *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, 15 January 1944.

of habitus, in particular his emphasis on habitus as a system of dispositions, as discussed in 2000 at a conference, ‘Habitus: A Sense of Place’, which took place in Perth.⁶⁹ Bourdieu stressed that ‘the word disposition, being more familiar, less exotic, than habitus, is important to give a more concrete intuition of what habitus is, and to remind [us] what is at stake in the use of such a concept. . . . The habitus, as the Latin indicates, is something *non natural*, a set of *acquired* characteristics which are the product of social conditions’.⁷⁰

As a theory of social power, habitus trades on impermanence and process, and by extension, on the play of human agency. Here ‘play’ refers to the ever-changing dynamics between agents (individuals, groups and institutions), and also between agents and their environment, as they perform their objectives in that environment. Habitus transforms, but is also transformed by the environment with which it interacts. The human dispositions, values and choices of everyday life are socially constructed *and* reconstructed.

In emphasising that habitus is not a static concept, and that it does not simply apply to stable societies, Bourdieu raised the possibility of utilising the concept to understand and explain situations of rapid change.⁷¹ The Restricted Sector and its refugee community make a fascinating test case, for rapid change occurred there in several ways. The refugees fled homes and businesses in Nazi-occupied Europe, and relocated from a familiar to a strange environment. In Shanghai, they had to relocate again, as they were rounded up and detained. Once in the Sector, the refugees

⁶⁹ Italics are Bourdieu’s. There followed a conference volume. See Jean Hillier and Emma Rooksby, eds., *Habitus: A Sense of Place* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2002).

⁷⁰ Hillier and Rooksby, *Habitus*, 27–29.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 27.

encountered yet another abrupt change in their daily living conditions. In light of these dramatic circumstances, the refugees' habitus—or system of dispositions—would have retained considerable consistency but also undergone change. After all habitus transforms but is also transformed by the environment in which it is situated, which in turn highlights the impermanence of dispositions.

Did the refugees' dispositions shift, though? Were such dispositions transformed by confinement and by the environment of the Restricted Sector? The Sector adds an interesting dimension to Bourdieu's theory of habitus. That the Designated Area was not conceived as a labour or an extermination camp—and that the Japanese military put out a formal, though vacuous, statement of safeguarding the refugees' livelihood—enabled the refugees to retain their customs and habits to one degree or another. In the above examples of *Unterhaltungsmusik*, notably the reenactment of the *Tanztee, Künstler Konzert, Operetten-Abend, Wiener Heuriger* and *Humor und Stimmung* evenings, it transpires that the refugees materially altered the environment in which they were segregated, more so than the reverse, harsh conditions notwithstanding. Refugees had a palpable local and localising impact. Underlying this transformation of their environment was their ability to go about social and cultural activities as if normally. Cafés, street stalls and other shops turned a sector decreed by the military into a locale with specific urban and Continental registers, registers that were familiar to the detainees. The irony of non-penal living in a segregated zone meant that detainment did not erode preferred lifestyle choices, as long as these choices were viable on the ground. Refugee cafés and their music played and sounded 'Vienna', or any European metropolis for that matter. Though *Unterhaltungsmusik* resulted from the dis- as well as

re-orientation of environment, it continued to trade on such characteristics as Weimar jazz and violinist-led bands. In other words, the refugees' dispositions did not have to shift. Hence the peculiarity of the Restricted Sector: the cafés' provision of entertainment music both arose in response and gave rise to a time-space that was physically partitioned by the Japanese military, but sonically defined by European Jewish refugees.

In comparison with other local music scenes in 1940s wartime Shanghai, the Restricted Sector was not unique in terms of supply and demand. Venues in the city, whether in the (former) French Concession or the (former) International Settlement, offered tea dances, shows, and in some cases, sexual services to Japanese soldiers and local civilians alike. Eating and drinking establishments carried on as before, and in many ways thrived as an antidote to the violence and chaos of military occupation. A great many performers were initially refugees or subjects of exile. For example, Russian musicians and dancers who had fled the Bolsheviks settled in Shanghai, and found employment in cafés in the French Concession. Yet the very *practice* of Austro-German music in refugee cafés was, in and of itself, distinctive. Prior to the enforcement of the Sector, *Unterhaltungsmusik* was neither prevalent nor fundamental to Shanghai's music venues. Contemporary ears were arguably more attuned to such attractions as quasi-Parisian revues and Chinese popular singers. The Designated Area created sound worlds not heard or featured anywhere else in the city, before or during the war.

A Political Landscape: Municipal licensing, refugee cafés, preconditions

The cultural landscape explains how the cafés catered to the refugees. By extension, it speculates what might have been programmed, performed and heard. However, the cultural landscape does not account for the *preconditions* of those sound worlds: how venues managed to open under licence and organise live music. Thus a discussion of a third—political—landscape proves necessary.

The political landscape highlights a complementary relationship between the authorities' containment of refugees, and the refugees' success in setting up cafés after the Proclamation entered into force. This landscape is particularly striking because eating and drinking establishments elsewhere in Shanghai were not subjected to the same regulation. Although there is no evidence that the Japanese military censored live music in the Restricted Sector, that alone does not explain how street cafés came about and got into a position to present live music. Whereas licensing in the French Concession, the subject of the last chapter, sheds light on the colonial regulation of the French Municipal Council, licensing in the Restricted Sector exposes internal politics and uncoordinated administrative procedures. Christian Henriot and Wen-Hsin Yeh note that the Chinese War of Resistance against the Japanese in the Shanghai area was fought 'in the name of competing claims for legitimacy' among members of the military and secret services.⁷² On a smaller scale, but in similar terms, municipal units battled with one another for the ultimate say on questions of licensing.

Having focused on newspaper advertisements, I now shift attention to a loose cluster of municipal records dating from March 1943 to May 1944, prepared and typed

⁷² Christian Henriot and Wen-Hsin Yeh, eds., *In the Shadow of the Rising Sun: Shanghai Under Japanese Occupation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 14.

in English by the authorities, or translated into English as the official version if the original language was different. Found across various files at the Shanghai Municipal Archives, the records—internal correspondence and application forms—concern the licensing of eating and drinking establishments in the Designated Area. They involve numerous parties: the Public Health Department, the Revenue Office of the Finance Department, the Secretariat or Council Chamber of the Shanghai Municipal Council, the First District Administration (whose purview included the Restricted Sector), and last but not least, refugee-applicants.

Officials did not see eye to eye on whether licences should be issued to Stateless Refugees. Protracted correspondences within the Public Health Department and between the Department and the Revenue Office bring to light marked differences of opinion. Consider a report titled ‘Unlicensed Premises’, from W. Wagner, Deputy Chief Health Inspector in charge of Markets, Bakeries and Licensing, to his superior, I. Nagai, Deputy Commissioner of Public Health:

In response [to] the Proclamation of the Imperial Japanese Army and Navy Authorities regarding the Segregation of Jewish Refugees in the Eastern Area, a large amount of license applications for various establishments were received during the last few weeks.

At present the following mentioned ‘Food-On’ Premises are not being licensed as per Instructions from the Secretariat [of the Shanghai Municipal Council] to the Revenue Office:

Chinese Eating Houses

Public Hotels

Private Hotels

Foreign Lodging Houses

Restaurants

Tea Rooms and

Taverns.

Obviously the Secretariat must have good reason for suspending these licenses, [and] it is doubtful whether it is the right procedure to allow these applicants to apply for licenses for the establishments, if there is no likelihood that these licenses [will be] issued.⁷³

Wagner emphasised the power of the Secretariat of the Municipal Council over the Revenue Office. He proposed that ‘the Shanghai Municipal Council publish a Notification that “Food-On” Premises not be licensed at all, and that the Revenue Office will not receive any applications for this kind of establishments’, for ‘this would clarify the situation and these refugees would not have to go into considerable expense to secure premises, for which they, in the long run, could not obtain Shanghai Municipal Council licences’.⁷⁴ Wagner did add that ‘special consideration be given to “Licence Transfers”, i.e. to people who have operated establishments and were licensed by the Shanghai Municipal Council for the last few years, but have to shift their premises to conform with the recent Proclamation’.⁷⁵ Nonetheless the overall tone was sceptical. His report, ‘Unlicensed Premises’, immediately highlighted the (perceived) illegitimacy of the ventures. Wagner argued that there would be no need for a large number of taverns in the Restricted Sector.

⁷³ SMA, U1-4-2356, 3 May 1943.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

In many ways Wagner's attempt to do things the conventional way and to contain the Revenue Office was to be expected. The Public Health Department had always had a prominent role in the regulation of eating and drinking establishments. In the municipal notification on tearooms back in December 1938, close to half of the conditions had to do with public hygiene and sanitation, all subject to approval by the Public Health Department.⁷⁶ Of course, in light of the Japanese occupation, the Shanghai Municipal Council, formerly the governing body of the International Settlement, had nothing but token power in 1943. The structure of the Council did remain more or less the same, however. For example, the Public Health Department and its key posts (such as the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner) stayed in place. Less clear, though, was the authority of the Secretariat, the central administrative unit of the Shanghai Municipal Council. It used to be a clearing-house and an intermediary between members of the Council, the various municipal departments (ranging from Public Works to the Orchestra and Band) and departmental committees (composed of one to three members of the Council, plus a handful of outsiders).

Regardless of how the Secretariat functioned, Wagner hung on to the status to which he was accustomed, which pitted him against his Japanese superior Nagai as well as E. Fujise, Deputy Treasurer of the Revenue Office, another Japanese official. When Nagai forwarded Wagner's report verbatim to Fujise, the cover letter was extremely brief and sounded neutral: 'Early attention will be appreciated as the Proclamation regarding segregation will come into force on May 18.'⁷⁷ Equally fascinating is Fujise's

⁷⁶ SMA, R22-2-595, December 1938 (precise date unknown).

⁷⁷ SMA, R22-2-595, 8 May 1943.

response, addressed to Y. Tashiro, Commissioner of Public Health. Fujise did not agree to Wagner's proposal, nor did he necessarily subscribe to the authority of the Council:

Although the Council has the power to refuse the issue of a 'Food-On' licence, it has no authority to refuse acceptance of an application for [this] licence. As an alternative, therefore, I suggest that a notification be promulgated in the press warning persons contemplating opening such establishments to satisfy themselves that there is a likelihood of a licence being issued before entering into any obligation or financial outlay.⁷⁸

The tussle between municipal departments did not end there. If anything it remained unresolved. Less than a week after the Revenue Office responded to the Public Health Department—and the day on which the Proclamation came into force—Wagner wrote to his superior again.⁷⁹ Even more acerbic in this report, Wagner specifically targeted eating and drinking establishments. Again Nagai served as a middleman. He passed the letter on to his superior Tashiro. The latter forwarded the entire set of reports to the Secretary to the Shanghai Municipal Council, simply stating that 'the matter apparently concerns several departments [and that] coordination would be desirable'.⁸⁰

In fact the Revenue Office did not wish to answer to the Public Health Department. The former directly contacted the Council Secretary regarding what was to be done with licence applications from Stateless Refugees. In that letter the Revenue Office listed four groups of applications. The last comprised eating and drinking premises in the Designated Area, and the Revenue Office sought the Council's ruling.⁸¹

⁷⁸ SMA, R22-2-595, 12 May 1943.

⁷⁹ SMA, R22-2-595, 18 May 1943.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

The Council in turn deferred to the Japanese Consulate in Shanghai. The trail stops there: it is not known whether the Consulate responded, or whether any kind of a directive followed.

What emerges, then, is a chaotic state of affairs in a purportedly controlled environment: a battle of power in which departmental officials jockeyed with one another for the upper hand, in the absence of a central command. Not only does their correspondence highlight fundamental disagreement and fragmented authority, the officials—whether existing or newly appointed—proffered their own understanding of what licensing meant and should mean in relation to the Proclamation, Restricted Sector and Stateless Refugees.

Certain authorities took the matter into their own hands, which rendered the municipal position on licensing all the more diffuse. Stateless Refugees could apply for interim licences as early as March 1943—just a month after the announcement of the Proclamation.⁸² The Revenue Office played a central role in the process. The Public Health Department was sidelined. The former liaised with the First District Administration, and then requested final instructions from the Council Chamber.

Surviving and completed application forms merit special attention as a documentary source. Linking the completed forms to the cafés gives a more holistic sense how these cafés, without which *Unterhaltungsmusik* would not have flourished, came about. Although the application forms do not name the proposed cafés, only the refugee-applicants and the proposed addresses, it is possible to match addresses with the advertisements in the *Chronicle*. Consider the approved application of Moritz Zuckermann, who originally registered at the German Consulate when he arrived in

⁸² Refugee application forms dated March 1943 can be found in SMA, R22-2-564.

Shanghai, and applied in March 1943 to open a tavern at 123 Muirhead Road. From the address I am able to pin down Zuckermann's establishment as the Imperial, which, as mentioned earlier, featured violinist Otto Ruff and pianist-accordionist Hans Levinsohn. The form is reproduced below in its entirety, including the fields filled in by the refugee-applicant. The requested information was typed onto the form (not handwritten).

To the SECRETARY,

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL,

I, Moritz Zuckermann, a native of Stateless, registered in the German Consulate of this port, and residing at No. 123 Muirhead Road, beg to make application for a licence to conduct a Tavern at the premises No. 123 Muirhead Road.

I agree, that in the event of an interim licence being granted, I have no right to make any claim for compensation should such licence not be confirmed at the next Annual Licensing Session, and I hereby undertake, if a licence is granted, to pay the requisite fees and to observe the conditions in force for the time being for the control of such establishments.

March 30, 1943.

[Signature of the applicant]

CONSULAR ENDORSEMENT [This section was often left blank/unsigned, as most of the applicants in question were deemed Stateless.]

The above application is approved

[Signature of Consul-General]

REMARKS BY DEPUTY TREASURER-REVENUE

Forwarded for instructions as to issue of an interim licence.

Notification of application will appear in Municipal Gazette of July 30, 1943.

(Draft notification attached.)

Closing date for objections 12 noon on Saturday, August 7, 1943.

July 22 1943.

[Signature of the Deputy Treasurer-Revenue]

DIRECTIONS FOR REVENUE OFFICE

Application approved subject to compliance with departmental requirements.

August 7, 1943.

[Signature of the Secretary-General of the Council Chamber]⁸³

Another example is the application of Leopold Berger, who also registered in Shanghai's German Consulate and applied in April 1943 to run a tavern at 133 and 135 Muirhead Road. The application was approved at the same time as Zuckermann's, and the tavern became Café Rex. The Rex offered the tea dance and 5 o'clock tea, with music from pianist-accordionist Hans Reiss and Charlie Albert and his Band. Yet another example is the application of Julius Katz, who applied in May to run a tavern at 674 and 676 Kungping Road. Once approved, Katz opened the Windsor, which, as mentioned earlier, held Viennese Tavern evenings with Alexander Fein, Toni Baumgarten, and pianist PEPPi throughout November 1943.

The application form came with a caveat, however. On the reverse side was an addendum titled 'Warning', which the applicant had to sign and date. Refugee-applicants were warned not to secure premises until after their interim licences were

⁸³ SMA, R22-2-564.

approved. Municipal licences were issued, but accompanied by requirements and provisions that were stricter than normal:

Applicants are hereby warned:

1. That applications for the issue of the licences are heard and determined at the Annual Licensing Session held in March each year:
Hotel
Tavern
Restaurant with liquor at meals
Beer for consumption on the premises
2. That pending the hearing of such application at the Annual Licensing Session, interim licences only are issued. Interim licences are subject to confirmation or refusal at the first Annual Licensing Session following their issue.
3. That notification in the Municipal Gazette of an application to conduct a licensable establishment does not imply that, [and] providing no public objection is received by the Council, the issue of an interim licence is assured.
4. That it is imprudent to enter into commitments as regards premises etc., before the applicant has received the Council's written assurance that an interim licence will be issued subject to compliance with departmental requirements. In this connection it is particularly stressed that the issue of an interim licence carries no implication that the licence will be confirmed at the Annual Licensing Session.

I have read and understand the warnings set out above.⁸⁴

Did the addendum really take effect, though? Consider the application of Ignatz Rok in December 1943 to operate a tavern at 47 Ward Road. The authorities did not process the application until March 1944. However the *Chronicle* advertisements show that Rok's proposed establishment—the Elite—was already in full swing in January, presenting 'die gute Unterhaltungsmusik' every afternoon and evening.⁸⁵ Though Rok duly signed and submitted the Warning alongside the application form, he went ahead with his business regardless. Rok's application was dealt with all the same. There are no signs to indicate that he was penalised due to the unlawful opening.

During my research I did not locate information on the Annual Licensing Session, so it would be unrealistic to discuss the fate of the refugee cafés beyond their interim licences. That said, the above findings are telling in a number of ways. Analysed through the lens of municipal licensing, the political landscape of the Sector exposes disarray and confusion that enabled refugee cafés like Zuckermann's Imperial, Berger's Rex and Katz's Windsor to establish themselves and to put on live music. The inception and proliferation of refugee cafés happened amid administrative chaos and uncertainty. Whether eateries in the Restricted Sector ought to be licensed, and the extent to which they would be controlled were questions contingent upon the individuals involved. The authorities' attempts to regulate eateries post-Proclamation were thus both relevant and irrelevant. Although certain municipal officials were determined to ban new eateries or, at a minimum, to implement interim licences with specific terms and conditions, there was no clear process for application and no uniform policy toward the licensing of

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ *Shanghai Jewish Chronicle*, 16 January 1944.

eateries in the Sector. Municipal governance, though answerable to the Japanese military, the puppet regime and their representatives, was anything but monolithic. Rather, the political landscape was constantly in flux. Uncoordinated procedures meant that refugee cafés, the sites of *Unterhaltungsmusik*, were able to operate and thrive.

A Historical Landscape: Interpretations of live music in time of war

Quasi-Viennese cafés and musical offerings in the Sector were doubtless reminiscent of environments from which the refugees were cruelly dislocated. But the cafés were not merely sites of nostalgia. Nor did they exist underground or in private. They were officially recognised establishments. On the ground, such factors as municipal politics had a direct bearing on refugee-proposed eateries and their live music. Even more significantly, the cafés and their *Unterhaltungsmusik* were borne out of a combination of military force (segregation), contested power (politics of licensing) and cultural practice (native musical activities on non-native territory). What emerges is a historical landscape with two profound implications.

The first concerns the way one draws on the ‘raw data’ when thinking about café culture and music in the Restricted Sector. In principle, one could take the Proclamation as the frame under which to analyse cafés and their *Unterhaltungsmusik*. That is to say, the military decree is the *sine qua non* for discussions of live music. The Proclamation becomes the ‘cause’, and the café music scene the ‘effect’. In addition, one could focus on the refugees and their temporary healing through music. With the help of such sources as witness accounts and newspaper advertisements, it is possible to investigate musical life in the community, and explore music as a form of self-affirmation and spiritual strengthening under military confinement. However, judging from the available

information, refugee cafés were not passive or helpless responses to the brutality of the Japanese decree. And though communal practice is a key consideration in the context of the Designated Area, a likely risk is that zooming in exclusively on the refugees and their recreation of home does not relate their musical activities back to the wider human environment in which those activities were able to take place.

As a matter of historical analysis, not only does landscape as a metaphor help to uncover the complexities of licensed refugee cafés and their music, it also unearths the empirical potential of two seemingly different and unrelated source groups: the *Chronicle* advertisements and the municipal records. Patchy as the available archival materials may be, they offer valuable interpretative insights. Surviving evidence of municipal politics dialogues with that of cafés and *Unterhaltungsmusik*. What this dialogue highlights is that the licensing of refugee cafés, the cafés' organising of entertainment music and the emergence of Continental sound worlds in Japanese-occupied Shanghai went hand in hand.

The second implication of a historical landscape of the Sector draws on but also goes beyond 1940s Shanghai to contemplate what I raised at the beginning of the chapter. Is it necessarily true that live music in time of war bears deducible intents? The case of licensed refugee cafés and Austro-German entertainment music arouses considerable curiosity as to what this music was doing there, even though it was aimed at and circulated among refugee-patrons in a segregated zone. As I have come to observe, there was more to the phenomenon of *Unterhaltungsmusik* than a transplanted cultural practice.

Studies of music in the Holocaust and other internment settings are often interested in the human purposing of music—in the ways in which music becomes an instrument of terror and/or a source of hope. The Restricted Sector and its puzzling status, however, beg the question whether it is plausible to distinguish ‘music’ from the ‘purposing’ of music. There was cultural, emotional and social maintenance in such activities as the *Tanztee* and *Wiener Heuriger* evenings, but live music in the refugee cafés also played casually to ordinary tastes and pleasures. In that sense, music was more than a coping mechanism. Of course, it was still a ‘tool’ in that it contributed to the cafés’ being. Music complemented the overall ambience; it was part and parcel of the mix of food, beverages and surroundings. Yet beyond its cultural and emotional touchpoints, live music in these cafés was not explicitly geared toward intents or purposes, and therefore was not necessarily a means to an end.

This brings me full circle back to the perplexing and bizarre quality of the Restricted Sector—characterised, on the one hand, by the ‘imposed’ street boundaries that delineated it, and on the other, by a semblance of normalcy. The peculiarity of the Designated Area cannot be stressed enough: the everyday, quasi-commercial provision of *Unterhaltungsmusik* suggests that this music was bound up with but also operated despite conditions of suffering and dislocation. The various soundings of the cafés flourished of their own accord. Here my point is similar to Tia DeNora’s emphasis on studying music as it “acts” within actual social settings, eras and spaces, and in real time’.⁸⁶ There is something else for the music historian to take away, which is that: entertainment music trading on an odd currency of cruel confinement and sanctioned

⁸⁶ Tia DeNora, *After Adorno: Rethinking Music Sociology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 39.

commerce is an ambiguity to acknowledge rather than a quandary to resolve. Through a nuanced, critical understanding of military segregation and refugee cafés, and clues from archival materials, the case of 'Little Vienna' makes an unusual addition to interpretations of live music in time of war. Not only does the case examine the largely forgotten sites, sounds, operators and performers of a café musical culture amid oppression, it also excavates various documents from an ostensibly buried past. Surely such intervention offers a welcome counterpart to testimony-based histories, in music studies and beyond.

CHAPTER FOUR

Nationalist Shanghai, ‘Nightclub Café’:

Taxable Eateries and Claims of a Distinct Musical Sound

‘To say that taxes reflect forms of rule and government is to miss an opportunity; taxes *are* forms of rule and government.’¹ So begins a study of taxation in the Russian Empire and the early Soviet Republic. Although the statement concerns neither music nor Shanghai, it applies aptly to the last of my four main chapters. In what follows, I consider the Nationalist municipality and entertainment venues in late 1940s Shanghai. The venues, which hired swing bands, western chamber ensembles and/or solo performers, were subjected to stringent taxation due to a crippling economy. Entertainment taxes were an expression of the Nationalists’ governing power, and of their attempts to cling on to power amid ongoing and bitter conflict with the Communists.² Venues were taxed according to the nature of the business (dancing versus eating and drinking establishments), hours of the day with music and the sections of the premises with music.

¹ Yanni Kotsonis, *States of Obligation: Taxes and Citizenship in the Russian Empire and Early Soviet Republic* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 3. Kotsonis’ italics.

² Ideologically opposed, the Nationalists and the Communists were engaged in military conflict from 1927 to 1949. Prior to 1937, the skirmishes went on intermittently. In 1937, the two sides joined forces temporarily to fight against the Japanese. Following Japan’s surrender in 1945, the civil war resumed. Michael Lynch notes: ‘It was under American auspices that in August 1945 Chiang Kaishek [Jiang Jieshi] and Mao Zedong met personally for the first time in twenty years. The two leaders agreed on a truce, but it is doubtful whether either of them intended it to last. It was no surprise, therefore, that within a few months such agreement as had been reached had broken down. Formally, negotiations still continued, but by June 1946 the two sides were openly fighting each other again. The Americans—who had previously not fully grasped the depth of the GMD-CCP [Guomindang-Chinese Communist Party] animosity—abandoned their role as mediators and by January 1947 had withdrawn from China, although they continued to provide the GMD with military advisers and equipment.’ See Michael Lynch, *The Chinese Civil War 1945–49* (Oxford: Osprey, 2010), 9.

The period in question lies between the conclusion of the Japanese occupation and Japan's surrender in 1945, which marks the end of the Second World War, and the Communist takeover in 1949, at which point the Republican era draws to a close.³ The period saw resumption of the civil war between the Chinese Nationalist Party (also referred to as the Guomintang or GMD) led by Jiang Jieshi, and the Chinese Communist Party under Mao Zedong, after which the Nationalists withdrew from Mainland China to Taiwan.⁴ On the one hand, the post-Japanese, pre-Communist years can simply be described as the final years of Guomintang rule on the Mainland, characterised by violent warfare and widespread chaos. On the other, doing so risks honing in on political events at the expense of everyday life in the late 1940s.

Continuing my socio-musicological inquiry, I attend to a seemingly pedestrian topic: the taxation of cafés, restaurants and bars in Nationalist Shanghai. The topic has yet to be studied in English- or Chinese-language scholarship. Especially fascinating are debates—in a single municipality no longer dominated by foreign agenda—regarding the presence of live music and of organised sound in eateries. There is more, then, to taxes as ‘forms of rule and government’. Despite hyperinflation, rampant corruption and factionalisation of the Guomintang, the surviving administrative correspondence reveals an ongoing and citywide discourse involving Nationalist authorities, eating and drinking establishments, and their guilds.⁵ (See figure 4.1 overleaf.)

³ The People's Liberation Army entered Shanghai on 27 May 1949.

⁴ Following the Nationalist withdrawal to Taiwan and the Communist success on the mainland in 1949, there emerged two de facto states, the Republic of China (ROC) and the People's Republic of China (PRC), both claiming to be the legitimate government of China. The ROC represented China at the United Nations until 1971, after which it was replaced by the PRC.

⁵ Of corruption in the Guomintang, Michael Lynch describes how: ‘Far from being a party of the people, the GMD under Chiang [Jiang] became a party of China's small and political elite. It drew its support from the bankers and merchants of urban China, who tended either to despise or

4492-上海市財政局

上海市政府財政局中區捐稽徵處

娛樂稅科

事由	擬	辦	說	明	批
<p>為查明萬壽山酒樓設有電台播送音樂并供客跳舞備餐是否應酌 按娛樂稅率納稅報請 核示由</p>	<p>有能年得府府征娛樂稅批</p>	<p>批照辦</p>	<p>批照辦</p>	<p>批照辦</p>	<p>批照辦</p>
<p>中華民國 附件如 中華民國</p>	<p>收又</p>	<p>中華民國</p>	<p>中華民國</p>	<p>中華民國</p>	<p>中華民國</p>

中華民國二十一年十月廿八日

市財局

Fig. 4.1. The Shanghai Finance Bureau's assessment of musical broadcasts and dancing in the Summer Palace Restaurant (萬壽山酒樓), which will be discussed later.

ignore the impoverished peasants of the countryside. The consequence was that the GMD government, reliant on deals with the shady elements in Chinese society, became essentially corrupt, gaining an unenviable but deserved reputation for nepotism and partiality.' See Lynch, *The Chinese Civil War*, 84.

Well-preserved sources at the Shanghai Municipal Archives facilitate the study of such discourse. Also pertinent are census forms, held now at the Hongkou District Archive Shanghai (上海虹口区档案馆).⁶ In contrast to the municipal archives, district archives were until recently closed to the public but are now accessible to researchers. And in addition to the extant documents, relevant literature such as that on music as a device of social occasioning and on the café as a social space is available to historians.⁷

This ‘paper trail’ begs a fresh interpretation of the post-Japanese, pre-Communist years—one that ventures beyond the long-analysed conflict between the Nationalists and the Communists. In his work on the Chinese Civil War, Odd Arne Westad points out: ‘The late 1940s was a period of great transformation in China, not just in terms of changing political power, but also through more subtle changes in the way people perceived their own roles in society, in public forums, at work, or in the family.’⁸ Clearly, Westad is conscious not to make the civil war an overarching frame. In understanding how and why live music in Shanghai’s eateries was contentious, one deals with the period of 1945 to 1949 in and of itself: not as a transitional phase between the end of the Japanese occupation and the beginning of Communist China, and not as a time wholly determined by turmoil and hostility. Nor in this scenario is the conclusion of the Republican era (1911 to 1949) or the founding of the People’s Republic of China

⁶ At the time of research, the census forms were made available in their original state; there were no immediate plans to digitise the materials.

⁷ Of music as a device of social occasioning, see Tia DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 109–150. Of the café as a social space, see *The Viennese Café and Fin-de-siècle Culture*, ed. Charlotte Ashby et al. (New York: Berghahn, 2013).

⁸ Odd Arne Westad, *Decisive Encounters: The Chinese Civil War, 1946–1950* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 1.

(1949) over-emphasised. One takes a step back from the defining events and attends to an oft-ignored moment.

Frank Dikötter cautions against a historical vocabulary couched in terms of the downfall of the Nationalists. He argues that ‘the cosmopolitan experience of the Republican era has been overlooked’, himself depicting the early decades of the twentieth century as ‘a golden age of engagement with the world’ in a book titled *The Age of Openness: China before Mao*.⁹ Although I have doubts about making so resolute a judgement of pre-Communist liberties and about the ‘rescuing’ of the Republican era—whose consequence may be to create an acritical portrayal and nostalgia for the period—I subscribe to an approach that does not trade so fixatedly on cause (Nationalist incompetence in the late 1940s) and effect (the Communist takeover). The notion that Nationalist rule encompasses all things nefarious can detract from the latent possibilities of research into the post-Japanese, pre-Communist years.

An equally important reason for particularising the moment is the Guomindang’s regaining of sovereignty after the Second World War. Shanghai was previously characterised by foreign-and-Chinese municipalities (the treaty port period), and by the Japanese occupation—settings examined in the foregoing chapters. Although the city was and is not reflective of China as a whole, it remained the country’s most diverse place of living after the war. Post-Japanese Shanghai presents scholars with a certain wealth of documentary sources concerning everyday life, a reminder that the Chinese Civil War, coupled with the ‘inexorable lead-up’ to Communist success, is but one mode of interpreting the late 1940s.

⁹ Frank Dikötter, *The Age of Openness: China before Mao* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2007), 1–2.

How and why might Nationalist entertainment taxation be germane to a musicological study? Worth highlighting here is the authorities' association of music with sex—an attitude not found in the records of the earlier municipalities. According to Steve Brown, 'music has the effect of homogenising social behaviour within groups, especially in ritual contexts. Music reinforces codes of behaviour'.¹⁰ For the Nationalists, music *affected* social behaviour. Live music was deemed an invitation to debauchery. It ran counter to the authorities' aims of restoring governance and of inculcating national moral values in the aftermath of imperialist aggression and foreign control. Because of music's ability to stimulate bodily movement and to immerse patrons in hedonistic behaviour, the Nationalists suppressed music in venues of entertainment. Live music was regarded as indulgent, excessive and corruptive amid an ailing post-war economy, to which Shanghai, a major city, was supposed to make a substantial contribution. Westad observes:

By early 1946, the Guomindang government was getting desperately short of cash with which to fund its plans for the civilian and military buildup of post-war China. The money from cheap U.S. wartime loans was running out, and corruption and the lack of an efficient civil service prevented tax money from reaching the central government [in Nanjing].¹¹

Indeed, bribes and defaulted payments were common. At the same time, protracted disputes between the authorities, eateries and their guilds from 1946 to 1949 suggest that taxation was not meaningless and that live music was hotly debated. After all,

¹⁰ Steven Brown, 'Introduction: How Does Music Work?', in *Music and Manipulation: On the Social Uses and Social Control of Music*, ed. Steven Brown and Ulrik Volgsten (New York: Berghahn, 2006), 4.

¹¹ Westad, *Decisive Encounters*, 73–74, 86–87.

Shanghai remained relatively unscathed by the fighting between the Nationalists and the Communists elsewhere in the country. The city was not lawless; urban entertainment came under scrutiny. In February 1946, less than a year after Japan's surrender, cinemas, dance halls, skating rinks, concert halls and *tanci* houses (彈子房) were all required to submit new paperwork and to obtain up-to-date licences.¹² To be sure, entertainment taxation in Shanghai was not unprecedented. Andrew Field observes that 'excessive and arbitrary taxes' were levied on cabarets and similar industries during the Japanese occupation.¹³ Yet, in the late 1940s the *presence* of live music was targeted alongside the clampdown on vices. Whereas the French Municipal Council approved chamber ensembles in licensed venues, and the Japanese administration sanctioned refugee cafés with *Unterhaltungsmusik* in the Restricted Sector, the Nationalist regime was hostile to music on the premises.¹⁴

Whether or not musical sound was perceived to blend in was thus a concern for Chinese and Western eateries in the city.¹⁵ Unlike concert halls and theatres, which existed *because of* musical events, these venues felt obliged to justify their performances amid stringent taxation. The situation became all the more ambiguous as impromptu

¹² Shanghai Municipal Archives (hereafter SMA), S325-1-24. The regulations were announced in February 1946. *Tanci* was a popular vocal art form consisting of both spoken storytelling and sung ballads. The Nationalist materials that this chapter draws on, including administrative documents, were mostly handwritten. They have been scanned by the SMA staff over the past two decades or so and may be accessed on computers at the Archives. Unlike the SMA's microfilms for such institutions as the Shanghai Municipal Council, there are no uniform page numbers in the Nationalist materials.

¹³ Andrew David Field, *Shanghai's Dancing World: Cabaret Culture and Urban Politics, 1919–1954* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2010), 225–232.

¹⁴ I discuss the French Municipal Council in Chapter Two and the Japanese administration in Chapter Three of my thesis.

¹⁵ Here I refer to the cuisine served and not to proprietorship. The membership structure of the Shanghai Commercial Guild of Chinese Restaurants provides a useful indication of the taxonomy of regional and local cuisines at the time, such as Guangdong (廣幫), Suzhou (蘇幫), Anhui (徽幫) and Native Shanghai (本幫). See S323-1-8-1.

dance floors appeared in some of the establishments. With or without dance floors, cafés, restaurants and bars sought to convince the authorities that music played on their premises was ‘subdued’.

Despite the efforts, claims of a distinct musical sound were in a number of cases primarily rhetorical. The establishments’ rationales did not always hold true in reality. The fact that the administrative correspondence lasted throughout the late 1940s—virtually right to the time the Nationalists lost hold and the People’s Liberation Army (the Communists) entered Shanghai—shows, however, that the perceived problem of live music mattered to operators and officials alike, some hollow words notwithstanding. The claims of the eateries, whether credible or not, reflect the manner in which these establishments explained the presence of live music. The letters reveal *how* they argued—in order for the authorities to ‘hear’ them the way they wanted.

Having outlined the parameters, my investigation will proceed in four steps. First, the mechanics of Nationalist entertainment taxation: I will factor in such details as tiered rates, which had an impact on establishments with live music. Second, the claims themselves: to be examined are eateries’ rationales and articulations of identity. Third, I will assess the extent to which these establishments produced a distinct musical sound. The final section will deliberate the significance of a ‘local’ history of live music, particularly in relation to the historiography of twentieth-century China.

Nationalist entertainment taxation

Let’s consider the Nightclub Café in 1946.¹⁶ The Shanghai Finance Bureau initially charged the higher entertainment tax rate of forty percent. This normally applied to

¹⁶ SMA, Q432-2-1542.

nightclubs and commercial dance halls. The Nightclub vehemently protested against the decision, maintaining that it was just a café: ‘Nightclub’ (夜總會) was nothing more than a name.¹⁷ The establishment thus sought to differentiate itself from the real nightclubs, which ‘specialised in the provision of entertainment’ (專資娛樂).¹⁸ Live music at the Nightclub, by contrast, was ‘supplied merely as an adornment’ (供點綴而已). Music was restricted, from 3pm to 6:30pm and from 7pm to 11pm.¹⁹

The Northern District (滬北區) Tax Office accepted this reasoning and advised the Finance Bureau that the Nightclub’s primary purpose was as a purveyor of food and beverages. The Finance Bureau agreed to reassign it to the lower rate: restaurants and cafés whose music did not exceed half of the daily hours of operation paid only the thirty percent tax. But, the approval was on the condition that the venue’s name must be changed. The higher rate would be reintroduced if the venue did not comply.

Nightclub Café: nightclub or café, then? Here I am less interested in adjudicating between accounts than in highlighting the nature of tax correspondence in late 1940s Shanghai. The establishment’s defence suggests that it was desperate to play down the presence of live music and to remove assumptions that it was a nightclub. Because of the imposed distinction between nightclubs and dance halls, on the one hand, and cafés and restaurants, on the other, the latter—whether or not they really functioned as eateries—tried to talk themselves down to the thirty percent rate. What emerged was a

¹⁷ I provide original English names of the establishments (where available) and/or original Chinese names (where available). In the event that English names are not available, Chinese names are either translated or transliterated using the *pinyin* method.

¹⁸ SMA, Q432-2-1542.

¹⁹ Ibid.

war of words among the Shanghai Finance, Social and Police Bureaux, district tax offices, eating and drinking establishments and their guilds.

The higher tax rate shows a punitive stance towards dance. The censure of licentious conduct can be found, for example, in the Shanghai Social Bureau's restriction of tea dances to Sunday afternoons in March 1948, which was part and parcel of a wider initiative to ban dancing in successive phases and to revoke licences issued to taxi hostesses.²⁰ In *Shanghai's Dancing World*, Andrew Field explains: '[S]tarting in 1945 the Nationalist government took a heavy hand to the city's nightlife and entertainment industry', which led to a nationwide ban on cabarets and the 'Dancers' Uprising' in Shanghai in 1948.²¹ Note, though, that Field's work focuses on cabarets; it does not consider the ambivalence of musical sound that was specific to the eateries.

In the late 1940s, the major localities with tax offices were the Central (中區), Northern and Hongkou (虹口) Districts, areas that encompassed the International Settlement during the treaty port era; and Madang (馬當) District, previously the French Concession. Tax rates were tiered as follows:

Before 1 February 1947

- i) Entertainment tax (娛樂稅) applicable to dance establishments: 40%
- ii) Entertainment tax applicable to establishments whose music time did not exceed a half of their daily hours of operation: 30%

²⁰ SMA, Q6-10-373. Other examples include: the Shanghai Police Bureau's proposed regulation of waitresses in bars and cafés in March 1946, the concern being that the waitresses were de facto dance hostesses and did not have the required licences either (see SMA, Q109-1-407); and the instruction dated March 1949 from the Police Bureau to the Finance Bureau, asking the latter not to grant new licences to eateries with music and dance floors, a mere two months before the Communists officially assumed control of the city (see SMA, Q432-2-1281).

²¹ Field, *Shanghai's Dancing World*, 234.

- iii) Feast tax (筵席稅) applicable to establishments with no music: 20%

From 1 February 1947

- i) Entertainment tax applicable to dance establishments: 50%
- ii) Entertainment tax applicable to establishments whose music time did not exceed a half of their daily hours of operation: 25%
- iii) Feast tax applicable to establishments with no music: 15%²²

The increase from forty to fifty percent can be read as a measure to exert tougher pressures on dance venues. Judging from the other rates, the authorities discouraged music—whether played live, on the radio or from records—as much as possible. The tax categories had other connotations too. Live music in nightclubs and dance halls, with their swing orchestras and grand spectacles, signified sensory stimulation and sexual gratification. However, time-limited performances in eating and drinking establishments, featuring smaller ensembles or soloists ‘in the background’, were more acceptable, though the differences were never clear-cut. There were instances in which nightclubs and eateries appeared more similar than the latter would have the authorities believe. Local tax collectors made reference to promiscuous behaviour at the Sun Light Café, for example. They reported that, during the music hours from 7pm to 11pm, waitresses became bargirls.²³

Indeed, nightclubs, dance halls, cafés, restaurants and bars were all ‘intimate cultures’, to borrow Tia DeNora’s phrase.²⁴ But it was precisely this quality that the Shanghai Commercial Guild of Cafés and Restaurants (上海市西菜業同業公會) and

²² SMA, Q432-2-1931.

²³ SMA, Q432-2-1542. The Hongkou District Tax Office made the report to the Shanghai Finance Bureau in September 1946.

²⁴ DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life*, 111–121.

the Shanghai Commercial Guild of Chinese Restaurants (上海市酒菜商業同業公會) attempted to diminish, in and through the downplaying of music. Operators and guilds were concerned about the conflation of eating and drinking establishments with commercial dance venues. They argued specifically for the limited taxability of cafés, bars and restaurants in comparison with nightclubs, ballrooms and dance halls.²⁵ Given the tiered rates, eateries were doubtless driven by financial considerations. It would be simplistic, however, to assume that the lower tax rate was the *sole* cause of self-validation. There was something more fundamental to how and why cafés, restaurants and bars sought to justify live music on their premises: reputation and identity mattered to them, considering that many had been in business since the treaty port years. Eateries projected the idea that their aural environments were unique and that they furnished nothing more than ‘musical wallpaper’. They positioned themselves as taxable, non-dancing venues. To investigate further, I will consider various rationales put forth to the authorities.

Claims of a distinct musical sound

I begin with a petition from 1949, addressed to the Shanghai Social Bureau, from eateries located in different administrative areas of the city, such as the Renaissance Café in Madang District and the Palace Hotel (滙中飯店) in the Central District.²⁶ The Renaissance was an active establishment during the treaty port years; I discussed its

²⁵ Renamed in December 1945, the Shanghai Commercial Guild of Cafés and Restaurants was formerly the Shanghai Foreign Restaurant Guild. See SMA, S325-1-1-30. For the by-laws, see SMA, S325-1-9-1. For the by-laws of the Shanghai Commercial Guild of Chinese Restaurants, see SMA, S323-1-8-1.

²⁶ SMA, S325-1-24. The Palace is now the Swatch Art Peace Hotel.

Parisian entertainment in Chapter Two. Representatives of the eateries protested against the decision of the Municipal Assembly to re-categorise cafés and restaurants with dance floors and live music as dance halls. The representatives offered three main arguments. First, unlike commercial dance halls, the primary purpose of cafés and restaurants was to sell food. Second, they were not trying to evade entertainment tax, since they continued to pay taxes for the times and sections of the premises with live music. Third, and crucially, the music and dance floors were ‘merely to enhance pleasure’ (僅為顧客助興). (See figure 4.2 overleaf.)

Bars in the city were also unhappy with the ruling of the Municipal Assembly. In a separate but no less fervent plea, over a dozen bars, including May Lung Bar, Star Bar and Swan Bar (mostly on Broadway in the Central District) stressed that they were members of the Shanghai Commercial Guild of Cafés and Restaurants, and not the Shanghai Commercial Guild of Dance Halls.²⁷ (See figure 4.3 overleaf.) The bars pointed out that they did not have dance floors, that they only supplied ‘simple, unfussy music’ (簡陋之音樂), and that this music ‘alleviated loneliness’ (聊解寂寞). Clearly, the establishments were anxious to cite their differences from the dance halls.

²⁷ Ibid.

市參議會日復議否決事
以向，抄原文。並附上海市參議
我業等因奉此查屬會業所
其目的僅為顧客助興招徠營
有舞池音樂設備另向顧客收
與舞廳業之專供人跳舞操
有舞池音樂之設備絕對不能

上海市檔案館
★
檔案

Fig. 4.2. Eateries' petition to the Shanghai Social Bureau.

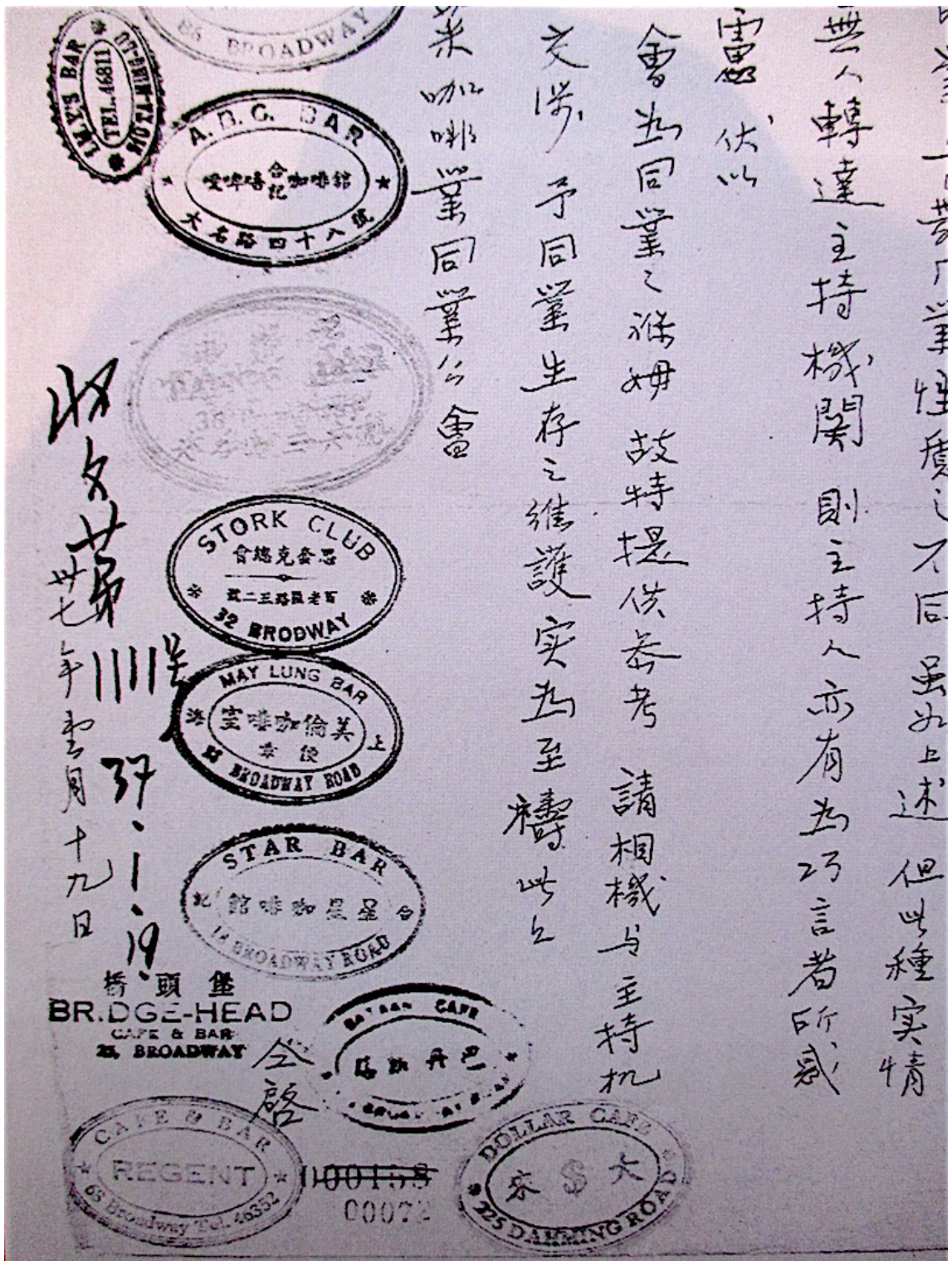


Fig. 4.3. Bars' petition.

In addition, the Shanghai Commercial Guild of Cafés and Restaurants and the Shanghai Commercial Guild of Chinese Restaurants held a joint meeting in the wake of the authorities' decision.²⁸ The minutes indicate that member establishments present at the meeting unanimously objected to the re-categorisation of eateries as dance halls. They also proposed that the establishments collectively abandon their musical offerings and dance floors if their protests went unheeded.²⁹

Fundamental to the rhetoric of the guilds and their members was this: live music in eateries and bars simply set the mood and enriched the patron's overall experience. Music was more a matter of enhancement than of entertainment. Eateries' employment of small ensembles seemed to reinforce the assertion. Questionnaires circulated by the Shanghai Commercial Guild of Cafés and Restaurants to member establishments in August 1946 prove a telling source of information, specifically the enumeration of house musicians.³⁰ Figure 4.4 shows an example of a completed questionnaire, but first, Table 4.1, which offers a brief summary of the questionnaires returned to the Guild:

Establishment	Musicians
Arcadia Café and Restaurant, Rue Admiral Courbet (古拔路)	8
Argentina, Avenue Haig (海格路)	4
Atlanta Bar and Restaurant, Route Père Robert (金神父路)	2
Browning Café, Ming Hong Road (闽行路)	3
D.D.S. Café, Avenue Joffre (霞飛路)	5

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ SMA, S325-1-24-1.

Daisy Bar and Café, Broadway (百老匯路)	2
Fuluola (富羅拉) Café, Yu Hang Road (有恆路)	3
Golden Gate Café, Rue du Consulat (領事館路)	3
Golden Valley Restaurant, Thibet Road (西藏路)	5
Honolulu Café and Bar, Avenue Joffre	3
Jazz Café, Thibet Road	5
Jingmei (精美) Restaurant, Nanking Road (南京路)	5
Kavkaz, Avenue Joffre	7
Kiev Restaurant, North Szechuan Road (北西川路)	4
Nanyang Garden Restaurant, Si Nan Road (思南路)	6
New Deal Bar, Route Père Robert	2
Nightclub Café, North Szechuan Road	4
Qichongtian (七重天) Café, Nanking Road	4
Restaurant Senet, Rue Lafayette (辣斐德路)	3
River Bar, Broadway	3
Silk Hat, Rue des Soeurs (聖母院路)	5
Sun Sun Sky Terrace Restaurant, Nanking Road	7
Welcome Café, Yu Yuen Road (愚園路)	4
YAR Café and Restaurant, Route Cardinal Mercier (邁爾西愛路)	2

Table 4.1. Summary of house musicians based on completed guild questionnaires.

上海市西餐咖啡商業同業公會 有音樂設備狀況調查表			
會員名稱	第(00)咖啡館	地址	林森中路1-5
音樂時間	每日自下午五時起至下午十一時止共五小時		
樂隊名稱或領班姓名	FRED FABOO. (領班名同)		
樂師人數	五人	是否供給膳食及其他情形	是
待遇情形	以前最抵之數額	按月計	U.S. \$ 1885.50
	現在所付數額		U.S. \$ 1885.50 -
	有無要求及其他情形		無
商號蓋章		負責人	(簽名蓋章)
填報日期		中華民國卅五年八月八日	

Figure 4.4. Questionnaire dated 8 August 1946 and completed by DD's, an establishment in the former French Concession (discussed in Chapter Two).

One notes an average of four house musicians per establishment, which stands in stark contrast to dance venues. Publicity images of Filipino Bandleader Contreras and his Swing Orchestra at the Paradise Ballroom show a good fourteen musicians, for example.³¹ Although the questionnaires do not give details of instrumentation, it is fair to infer that the ensembles would typically have consisted of such 'softer' instruments as piano and violin, and not the brass instruments that constituted jazz bands. In that sense, the chamber setup in eating and drinking establishments contributed to a distinct sonic character, which differed from that in nightclubs and dance halls with their larger musical forces.

³¹ The images were published in the dance magazine *Wufeng* (舞風). See *Wufeng* 1 (1937).

How and why was sonic character important? In an ethnographic study of music in high street shops, Tia DeNora observes that ‘music was employed as a resource for creating and heightening scenic specificity, for imparting a sense of occasion’.³² Although her findings concern late 1990s England and do not apply directly to late 1940s Shanghai, the underlying idea of music as a device of social occasioning and as a generator of affect is instructive. In distinguishing themselves from commercial dance halls, eating and drinking establishments in Shanghai made the case for an unobtrusive sound and for a musical presence not entirely dissimilar to that DeNora discerns in retail stores. Eateries’ assertion was that live music was introduced primarily to shape the ambience—an act of social occasioning, in other words. Performances accompanied the core activities in which patrons engaged, notably dining, drinking and chatting. Music functioned as a supplement, lending a specific aesthetic texture to social encounters, to echo DeNora’s expression.³³ The rhetoric of eating and drinking establishments in Shanghai, particularly their claims of ‘enhancement’ (versus entertainment) and of ‘simple, unfussy music’, carried a fundamental message: the atmosphere of performances mattered more than the performances themselves. In rendering explicit their containment of sound, these establishments sought to demonstrate *control* of their aural environments and to persuade the authorities of their distinct identity.

Some eateries deliberately scaled back on live music in an attempt to strengthen their case. The example of the Comluck Restaurant (康樂大酒樓), a Chinese restaurant in the Central District, illustrates how musical performance was intentionally repurposed

³² DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life*, 138–139.

³³ *Ibid.*, 110.

and reorganised.³⁴ Objecting to the decision of the Finance Bureau to charge the fifty percent rate across the board and the 50,000,000 Yuan bill (amid hyperinflation) to cover the shortfall in taxes (applied retroactively), the restaurant informed the authorities that it had moved its ‘musical meals’ (音樂餐座) from the original location in the foyer—the main section of the restaurant—to a tiny area on the first floor. The foyer no longer hosted live music and was instead rented out during the day for business functions. Although the Comluck possibly wanted to talk its way out of the fifty percent rate, it did appear to restrict musical performance to a less prominent area. With that spatial adjustment, the operator emphasised that the restaurant was not providing the kind of entertainment associated with dance halls, ballrooms and nightclubs.

Also worth mentioning is how, on the one hand, eateries made light of their musical offerings, and on the other, promoted music as a social good. Consider the rationales presented by the Shanghai Recreation Club (上海俱樂部) to the Madang District Tax Office regarding its ‘musical teas’ (音樂茶座).³⁵ They were depicted as of value to the community: taking place in the club’s canteen, the musical teas were said to accompany civic events. The teas reportedly boosted the club’s reputation as a meeting point for the locals.³⁶

Local tax investigators occasionally endorsed the venues’ claims. In a letter to the Finance Bureau, the Madang District administrators stated that the Honolulu Bar on

³⁴ SMA, Q432-2-1543, Q432-2-1931 and Q432-2-1933. Letters between the Comluck, the Shanghai Guild of Chinese Restaurants and the Finance Bureau lasted over a year, from February 1947 through to May 1948. There is no mention what regional or local cuisine was served at the Comluck.

³⁵ SMA, Q432-2-1933. The documents were dated July 1948.

³⁶ According to the Shanghai Recreation Club, the canteen ‘served western food and iced drinks at economy prices’. See SMA, Q432-2-1933.

Avenue Joffre—a thoroughfare in the former French Concession—had ‘only’ a gramophone record player and no other regular provisions for music.³⁷ It also noted that performers were employed on a strictly ad hoc basis, not exceeding ‘two to three musicians’ when American navy fleets stopped over in Shanghai.³⁸ The thirty percent rate was thus suggested to the Bureau. Similarly, the same district tax office notified the Finance Bureau that live music at Café Victor was a restrained affair: there was no dance floor or house band; the piano was used by patrons only.³⁹ The final ruling of the Bureau, that the Victor was eligible for the thirty percent rate, confirmed its status as a café, a ‘self-regulated’ aural environment in which music functioned as an extra. Not only did the Honolulu and the Victor benefit from the decisions, but the establishments were also not heard by the authorities as dance venues.

Due to entertainment and feast taxes that were tiered if not convoluted, cafés, bars and restaurants in late 1940s Shanghai were anxious about their liabilities, notably the higher rate levied on dance venues. At the same time, my analysis confirms that more than finances were at stake. In order to set themselves up as taxable eateries, the establishments and their guilds presented various assertions. In and through sustained exchanges, they sought to impress upon the Nationalist authorities that i) their musical sound was typified by enhancement of ambience; ii) they had valid and specific reasons for providing live music in the background; and iii) they should not be placed in the highest tax band, but rather, in the middle band.

³⁷ SMA, Q432-2-1543.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ SMA, Q432-2-1542. The letters and ruling were dated September and October 1946.

The ir/relevance of the claims

A good number of eateries seemed to demonstrate successfully how they ensured a distinct musical sound. Yet, the administrative correspondence between them, the municipal bureaux and the district tax offices was also characterised by contradictions. However convincing were the rationales, factors such as impromptu dance floors, and temporary partitioning between music and non-music sections, complicated the aural environments of the eateries. Such elements proved a jarring note to the musical sound with which cafés, bars and restaurants associated themselves. Conversely, some restaurants opted to eliminate live music altogether. In other words, the arguments that some of the establishments put forward were not necessarily a reliable reflection of what transpired overall.

Let's consider the Summer Palace Restaurant (萬壽山酒樓), a Chinese eatery on Thibet Road in the Central District. According to the tax collector, a section of the second floor was rented out to a civic organisation, specifically a radio station.⁴⁰ The station 'played songs occasionally' in addition to spoken broadcasts.⁴¹ The area was supposedly glassed off. But dancing was reported among restaurant patrons. To prevent that from reoccurring, the Summer Palace filled the impromptu dance floor with tables and chairs. Although the restaurant later succeeded in retaining the lower feast tax, its aural environment—given the radio station, unexpected musical broadcasts and dancing—was far removed from the subdued atmosphere with which eating and drinking establishments were keen to identify themselves.

⁴⁰ SMA, Q432-1-1933. The documents were dated October 1948. There is no mention what regional or local cuisine was served at the Summer Palace.

⁴¹ SMA, Q432-1-1933.

The example of the Summer Palace points to a marked contrast between eateries' declarations and their physical settings. At the Palace Hotel (滙中飯店), a curtain and a railing were apparently installed—for tax reasons—to partition the grill room and the tea lounge, which had a band stage.⁴² (See figure 4.5.)

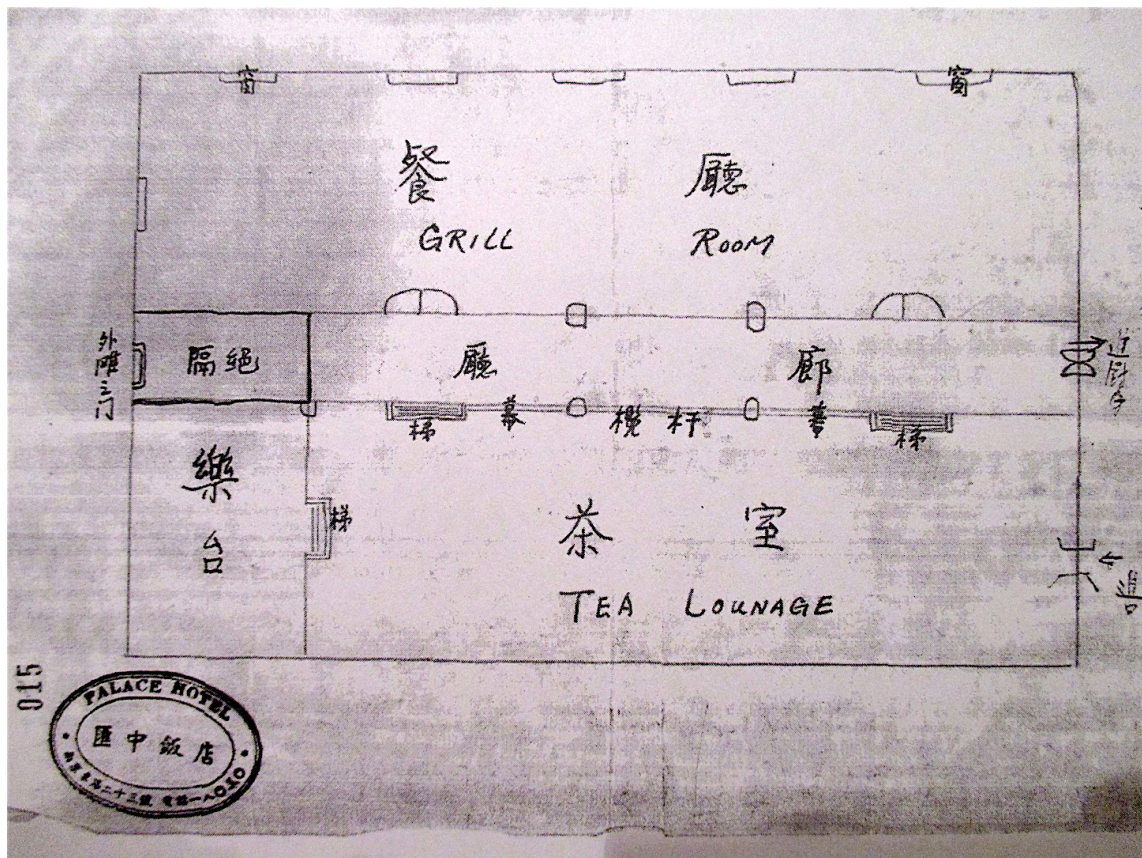


Fig. 4.5. Floor Plan of the Palace Hotel in 1949.

Judging from the proximity of the two areas on the surviving floor plan, it is doubtful that the makeshift arrangement did much to contain music in the tea lounge, which was offered from 5pm. Diners in the adjacent grillroom would likely have heard the performers well enough. However much the Palace monitored its musical provisions in

⁴² SMA, Q432-2-1934. The documents were dated March 1949.

and for the tea lounge, the fact that live music easily traversed the ‘boundaries’ was at odds with the floor plan supplied by the hotel to the authorities.

The Summer Palace and the Palace both tried to highlight that music was kept to a minimum, albeit to no avail. By contrast, establishments like the Sun Sun (新新) Sky Terrace Restaurant in the Central District had other priorities. They did not appear perturbed about tiered tax rates. In its post-war publicity the Sun Sun touted a good twelve hours of music everyday, a continuation of what the restaurant offered back in the early 1940s.⁴³ Then, the Sun Sun presented musical programmes that ran back to back, notably the Jazz Tiffin, Gentlemen’s Tea and Midnight Serenade, which featured flashy swing orchestras such as Apollo Gauchos and his Band and Abie Santos and his Band.⁴⁴ A year after the Nationalists’ resumption of sovereignty, tax officials documented that the playing time at the Sun Sun actually totalled fewer than twelve hours each day and did not exceed a half of the restaurant’s operating hours. Whatever the truth, the Sun Sun had its own rhetoric—one that was more about self-promotion than about self-justification, amid and despite an anti-music tax policy.

Jewish-operated bars in Hongkou District present another fascinating case, notably the extent to which claims of a distinct musical sound were all-encompassing. Hongkou was the area in which refugees who fled Nazi-occupied Europe were segregated during the Japanese occupation—a phenomenon that I discussed in Chapter Three. Foreign Census Forms (外僑戶口調查表) from the late 1940s indicate that a

⁴³ SMA, Q432-2-1542. The documents were dated August 1946.

⁴⁴ The Sun Sun Restaurant belonged to the Sun Sun Hotel, which was operated by the Sun Sun Department Store. Advertisements for the restaurant can be found in *Xindou Zhoukan* (新都周刊), the hotel’s weekly magazine. Refer to volumes 1–5, 7, 14, 25, 27 and 28, all published in 1943.

good number of the surviving refugees stayed in the neighbourhood.⁴⁵ Having investigated over a dozen bars there, the Finance Bureau reported that musical instruments excepting pianos were ‘cannily hidden away’ whenever tax officials inspected and that the Jewish proprietors themselves could often play instruments, which suggest that live music had a more prominent role than the bars admitted.⁴⁶

In the previous chapter I considered how and why Austro-German refugee cafés became active sites of *Unterhaltungsmusik* (‘entertainment music’). Some, including the Emperor and the Elite, remained in operation after the war. Judging from the census forms and the endurance of these establishments, the same musical practices probably continued. The perpetuation of a continental culture and of *Unterhaltungsmusik*—characterised by such features as operetta presentations, ‘Viennese Tavern’ evenings and the *Tanztee*—indicates that the refugee bars that had emerged in Hongkou were still vibrant places of communal activity and mini concert venues in the late 1940s. This ‘carryover’ of European Jewish musical culture contrasted with the argument that music in cafés, restaurants and bars was ‘background music’.

Contrariwise, some establishments, having taken great pains to assure the authorities that music was peripheral, ended up eliminating it altogether. Citing an operating deficit, the Hundred Pleasures (百樂廳) at the Pacific Hotel (金門大酒店) in the Central District informed the authorities that it had terminated the services of its resident ensemble, asking to be re-categorised as an eating establishment with no

⁴⁵ Hongkou District Archive, 48-116, 48-164, 48-165, 48-366, 48-377.

⁴⁶ SMA, Q432-2-1543. The documents were dated September 1946. The bars in question were: Acropolis, American, Delphi, Elite, Golden Sun, Emperor, Merry, Monti Caro, Moon Palace, Moka Efti, Rex, Rio, Take It Easy, Victory and White Bear.

music.⁴⁷ The Carter (卡德) cancelled live music and downscaled from a restaurant to an ice-cream parlour.⁴⁸ In a letter to the Finance Bureau, the owner enclosed a new menu, with ice cream, juices, sundae, iced drinks, limited cakes and sandwiches. It was attached as proof that the Carter had recast itself as a no-frills eatery.⁴⁹ Music was not even a supplement. Places like the Hundred Pleasures and the Carter did not see the point in retaining their musical offerings, let alone in justifying them to the authorities.

In yet other settings, dancing was introduced and music had a prominent role, even if only in designated parts of the premises. The investigative chart prepared by the Central District Tax Office for eateries and bars under its purview, listing such details as added dance floors and the sections and hours with music, shows that a good number of the establishments made arrangements for patrons to dance.⁵⁰ (See figure 4.6.) The chart makes a telling source in that the whereabouts of the music can be determined according to the location of the dance floor. For example, the Jazz (爵士) Café on Thibet Road had live music in the basement but not on the ground floor.⁵¹ At the N.K. Restaurant (南國酒樓), a Chinese restaurant on Yunan Road (雲南路), live music was available on the first floor but not on the ground floor or on the second floor.⁵² Although the eateries stressed that they did not hire taxi hostesses and that they established music and non-music sections, the popularity of social dancing there begs the question whether they only hosted social and not sexual encounters.

⁴⁷ SMA, Q432-2-1933. The documents were dated July 1948. According to the restaurant the proposed cancellation was scheduled to take effect from 1 August 1948.

⁴⁸ SMA, Q432-2-1542. The documents were dated July 1946.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ See SMA Q432-2-1931. The chart was dated April 1947.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid. There is no mention what regional cuisine was served at the N.K. Restaurant.

市中區有音樂設備商調查表						
商名	地址	營業時間		有音樂部份	隔離部份	有否其他設備
		日	夜			
鐘商名	地					
東豐樓	南平路 690 號		7:00-10:00	全部	有	有
七重天	" 677 號	4:30	11:30	全部	有	有
新牙樓	" 720 號	1:00-2:00	6:30-9:30	全部	無	有
新都	" 720 號	1:00-2:00	7:00-9:45	現已停業		
五層樓	" 830 號	1:00-2:00	7:00-9:30	前部	及屏皮 層間	有
精美	金華街 25 號	4:00-6:00	7:00-9:30	樓下	樓上	有
酒中	南平路 23 號	1:00-2:00	4:00-6:00	全部	無	有
紫屏山	西康路 210 號		7:00-9:30	三樓 (有舞廳)	樓下二樓	有
翠士	" 242 號	4:00-6:00	9:00-11:30	樓下	樓上樓面	有
南國	三南路 300 號	3:00-5:30	6:45-11:00	二樓	樓下三樓	有

Fig. 4.6. Investigative chart of the Central District Tax Office.

Albeit located a long way away, *The Viennese Café and Fin-de-siècle Culture*, an edited volume in which contributors discuss the café as a social space, affords some useful insights. Although the present chapter is not concerned with questions of urban modernity or with related developments at the turn of the twentieth century, cafés in Shanghai—a major metropolis—were western/-influenced establishments, a phenomenon explored in recent years by such scholars as Chen Wenwen and Zhou Siyu.⁵³ Particularly striking in *The Viennese Café* is this observation by Charlotte Ashby, one of the co-editors: '[The café despite its appearance as a public space] is an informal space, in that socialising between figures from different social backgrounds and the bending of rules in regards to extra-marital or pre-marital relationships with women are condoned.'⁵⁴ The relaxed atmosphere and the temporary suspension of barriers easily led to licentious behaviour.

Though situated in fin-de-siècle Vienna, Ashby's remark raises the question how much some of the musical cafés in late 1940s Shanghai really differed from dance halls. In and through their rhetoric, eating and drinking establishments declared themselves as venues of ordinary pleasure and not of sexual escapade. Yet, according to commentaries in contemporary magazines this was not necessarily the case. One praised cafés in the Central District as better alternatives to dance halls, noting that pretty women lingered around and that customers could dance with them without the financial and temporal

⁵³ Chen Wenwen, '1920–1940 Niandai Shanghai kafeguan yanjiu [A Study of Cafés in Shanghai between the 1920s and 1940s]' (Master's diss., Shanghai Normal University, 2010). Zhou Siyu, '*Shanghai kafeguan yu wenxue* [Shanghai Cafés and Literature]' (Master's diss., Southwest University, 2014). See also Wang Min, Wei Bing, Jiang Wenjun and Shao Jian, *Jindai Shanghai Chengshi Gonggong Kongjian* [Public Urban Spaces in Modern Shanghai] (Shanghai: Cishu chuban she, 2011).

⁵⁴ Charlotte Ashby, 'The Cafés of Vienna: Space and Sociality', in *The Viennese Café and Fin-de-siècle Culture*, 22.

constraints of a dance ticket.⁵⁵ In another piece on cafés in Hongkou District, the author, writing under the pseudonym ‘Precious Swallow’ (珍燕), drew attention to ‘café-dance halls’ (咖啡舞廳).⁵⁶ The choice of quasi-taxi partners in these ‘hybrid’ establishments, to take a cue from Precious Swallow’s description, ranged from Chinese, Korean to Japanese, whose communities, alongside that of the European Jewish refugees, had been residing in Hongkou. Judging from the report there were hostesses galore in so-called cafés in the area, catering to both East Asian and European male patrons.

Sex and gender were indeed dominant tropes in contemporary writings. Of the Gaole (高樂) Café in Hongkou, one magazine waxed lyrical about the attractive waitresses and about female guest singers like ‘Miss Cai Yun’ (彩雲小姐) or ‘Miss Colourful Cloud’, an evocative stage name.⁵⁷ ‘Colourful Cloud’ was said to perform Chinese and Western popular songs to great acclaim. The article appeared on the front page of the publication, accompanied by an eye-catching photo of the singer. Female café patrons were also a topic of interest. Reference was made to lavishly dressed widows and married women, who sat alone puffing cigarettes and waiting to be courted.⁵⁸

Aside from essaying sexual innuendos, the commentaries bemoaned the demise of proper cafés in the city. A piece from 1946 lamented the loss of quietude and ambience in the cafés, and complained that they were no longer a suitable destination for couples. Insinuating that Shanghai’s cafés and parks had turned into sites of

⁵⁵ *Haitian* (海天), 6 (1946): 9.

⁵⁶ *Huguang* (滬光), 1 (1946): 11.

⁵⁷ *Qiuhaitang* (秋海棠), 18 (1946): 1.

⁵⁸ *Haitao* (海濤), 38 (1946): 7.

transgression and promiscuity, this critic likened the city to ‘filthy land’ (上海竟沒有一片乾淨土).⁵⁹ With regard to eating establishments in the Central District, such as the Hong Mei Restaurant (紅梅酒樓) and the Sky Terrace Restaurant at the Park Hotel (國際飯店), another writer slammed their excessive entertainment. According to the critique, some six to seven types of amusement, from magic to comedy shows, were presented everyday.⁶⁰ The eateries’ professed division between enhancement and entertainment was thus blurred. Noise in and of the cafés was also observed in the commentaries, for example the ‘creaking volume of the radio set’ (收音機開到軋軋大響), shouting wait-staff and the crude accent of Pudong (浦東) folk from east of the river Huangpu, whose leisure visits to the city, located west of the river (Puxi), were frowned upon.⁶¹

Judging from the magazine articles and other documentary sources examined earlier, the rationales presented by eateries in Nationalist Shanghai had some but ultimately limited traction beyond the war of words with municipal officials. The conflicting priorities of cafés, bars and restaurants reveal: claims of a distinct musical sound meant different things to different establishments, an oppressive policy notwithstanding. At a deeper level, this ambiguity exposes a particular state of affairs: the explicit cancellation of live music in some eateries, and the conspicuous introduction of dance floors and/or of taxi hostesses in others. However persuasive were measures to

⁵⁹ *Haitao*, 38 (1946): 6.

⁶⁰ *Haitao*, 21 (1946): 6. The Park Hotel still operates in the current day, but not the Sky Terrace Restaurant.

⁶¹ *Xianghai Huabao* (香海畫報), 9 (1946): 104. Pudong was farmland at the time and not deemed a part of the city. The writer sneered at Pudong natives as ‘small countrymen going to Shanghai’ (小浦東到上海).

ensure a semi- as opposed to a fully taxable venue, eating and drinking establishments were not always entirely discernible from dance halls, ballrooms and nightclubs. Live music in the aforementioned cafés, restaurants and bars were complicated by spatial and/or social factors, such as the partitioning of premises, the continuation of communal music-making in an ex-refugee area and on-site radio broadcasts.

The variance of documentary sources here, notably between the administrative letters and contemporary magazines, produces an intriguing hearing of eating and drinking establishments in Nationalist Shanghai. The ambience depicted in the magazines was at odds with the soft atmosphere portrayed by these establishments in their correspondence with the authorities. As much as the operators and guilds tried to emphasise small ensembles, ‘enhancement’ (versus entertainment) and ‘simple, unfussy music’—such features did not apply across the board. Although rigorous efforts were made to ‘brand’ musical sound on the premises, the attendant claims were liable to shift or lose relevance even. Therefore, eateries’ assertions were at times ‘written off’ by other factors that had nothing to do with preserving identity, so forcefully argued by these establishments and their guilds.

Live music, local history, historiography

Although some eateries reduced or eliminated musical provisions, the frequent and heated disputes between eating and drinking establishments, guilds and officials in Shanghai from 1946 to 1949 is clear indication that the discourse on live music was extensive, even if its connection to practice was approximate. Indeed, discussion between the parties was shrill. Establishments claiming to offer music as a supplement to their core activities were of concern to guilds and municipal authorities alike. The

presence of live music was hotly contested, remaining controversial throughout the late 1940s. In some establishments, live music amounted to nothing more than background music. In others, it did not correspond at all with operators' depictions of 'ambience'.

As a matter of interpretation, trying to reconcile eateries' claims and their deeds misses a more significant point. Here I would like to draw and reflect upon the well-established notion of discourse. In the words of sociologist Tammy Smith: 'In examining how meaning builds from communicating partners, analysis of discourses sensitises us to the frameworks with which actors enter into communication, and subsequently how these frameworks may be employed and altered within communication.'⁶² By the same token, the discourse—'acts of language'—on live music in late 1940s Shanghai signified more than its ostensible content. The tension between the Nationalist tax policy ('framework') and individuals ('actors') had the effect of writing and rewriting the terms—'changing the framework'—under which music was made available in cafés, restaurants and bars. The optional quality of performance in eateries meant that their musical provisions were monitored as well as debated, in a regulatory environment hostile to live music, but that did not ban it entirely. And although the attempts of the authorities to control music and the rationales of the establishments for employing it were sometimes trivial, they were part of an ongoing battle of and for power. Entertainment taxes imposed by a new administration and the vehement objection of local operators *co*-produced the reality—one in which the 'communicating partners' were vocal in their respective statements of position, but unable to dominate. The prolonged correspondence between municipality, proprietors

⁶² Tammy Smith, 'Discourse and Narrative', in *The Handbook of Cultural Sociology*, ed. John R. Hall et al. (London: Routledge, 2010), 130–149.

and guilds conditioned what it meant to musick in cafés, restaurants and bars in post-treaty port and post-occupation Shanghai.

The notion of discourse thus provides a means by which first to open the gap between rhetoric and reality, and second to close it up again, having understood the permeability of the two. The wealth of administrative letters and of contemporary commentaries—a conspicuous ‘paper trail’ for music historians—also suggests how everyday life in late 1940s Shanghai was and was not affected by government policy. Social control and cultural activity went hand in hand. Judging from writings in the magazines, members of the public continued to avail themselves of various possibilities of leisure and entertainment. Such writings, coupled with records pertaining to Shanghai’s eating and drinking establishments, produce an alternative understanding of the late 1940s, amid but not wholly determined by hyperinflation, turmoil and the bitter conflict between the Nationalists and the Communists. What broader practical implications are there, then, for music historians of twentieth-century China?

While the inauguration of Communist China in 1949, the nation-state that is known in the present day, has become a fulcrum of the history of modern China, the year 1949 is anything but a complete watershed. Eateries in Shanghai operated well into the mid-1950s, citing financial difficulty when they finally had to terminate the services of resident musicians and close down.⁶³ Not only is the late 1940s a period worthy of attention, it is also not as disconnected from the 1950s as it may appear. Of the porousness of a seemingly compartmentalised past, Jeffrey Wasserstrom observes this in the context of the new millennium: ‘Shanghai locals in a more nostalgic frame of mind

⁶³ See SMA, B128-2-855-11 for an example of a termination agreement. The example here is dated July 1952, three years after the Communist takeover.

have begun to pay more attention to parts of the early Mao and post-Mao periods.

[T]here will be an increase in this fascination with periods such as the 1950s and 1980s.’⁶⁴ By extension, the ostensibly clear-cut division between one era and another at once clarifies and confounds conceptions of time. That division is not accidental either, and Dikötter offers some trenchant remarks:

When we turn to the history of modern China, one of the most pervasive approaches in popular and scholarly accounts written during the Cold War was to take revolution as the key to historical change, so much so that ‘revolutionary China’ and modern China were often synonymous. Teleology held this approach together. Because so much of the history of the twentieth century seemed to have been about revolution, students tended to look for the ‘causes’, ‘roots’, ‘stages’ and ‘origins’ of communism. Revolution provided the key for deciding which facts were historically relevant and which were not, a grid through which a unitary understanding of modern China could be created. As a result, we have a historiography rich on ‘exploitation’.⁶⁵

It must be pointed out, however, that revolution, upheaval, continuity and change have been and still are salient guidewords. The crux lies in being mindful that such guidewords do not get pressed into the service of an ideologically tethered history or into a sweeping declaration—calling the Republican period an unprecedented era or communism the panacea for China’s ills.

On the surface, enacting a ‘local’ history of live music may risk dissociating it from a ‘general’ history of China in the twentieth century. Jo Guldi and David Armitage

⁶⁴ Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, *Global Shanghai, 1850–2010: A History in Fragments* (London: Routledge, 2009), 132.

⁶⁵ Dikötter, *The Age of Openness*, 1–2.

warn: '[M]icro-history that fails to reconnect to larger narratives may court antiquarianism.'⁶⁶ In my assessment, the discourse on live music in Shanghai traverses the 'micro' and the 'macro'. The controversy surrounding entertainment taxation, eateries and musical sound not only highlights the distinctiveness of the moment, but also alerts one to the seeming singularity of a so-called general history of twentieth-century China. Although political events such as the Communist takeover remain significant, the topic of live music in late 1940s Shanghai reminds us how conceptions of 'China' have been influenced by the establishment of the People's Republic and by Cold War politics. The options for historical study are, crassly, 'Communist China' and/or 'pre-Communist China'. Yet imperialist aggression, war and internal conflict, potent as they are, do not entirely define what is a plural, layered, and above all, messy history. The broader contribution of hitherto neglected phenomena is that, they relate to but also trouble dominant narratives (whether produced from Marxist or Cold-War perspectives), testing them against new findings. In that sense, examining eateries and their claims of a distinct musical sound has the virtue of writing and rewriting history. Administrative correspondence and other writings from the late 1940s provide an opportunity to reflect further on the historiography of twentieth-century China.

In this chapter, I have scrutinised late-Republican paperwork that has survived on the Mainland. Not surprisingly, documents regarded as unimportant were left behind when the remaining Nationalists retreated in haste. The documents were of similarly limited use to the Communists, other than in showing that the Nationalist administration was incompetent and unsympathetic to ordinary people. Precisely because this material

⁶⁶ Jo Guldi and David Armitage, *The History Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 120–121.

is mundane, it enables historical contemplation unperturbed by high politics and must not be underestimated. On that note it is only fitting that I conclude by going back to the material.

‘Cafés on Thibet Road come to an end!’⁶⁷ So laments a magazine headline in 1947. The author describes a scenario of despair in Shanghai, which may even endorse the idea of the late 1940s as a time of deterioration and decline. But if one reads the piece alongside other contemporary commentaries (a number of which were discussed in this chapter)—not to mention the copious letters circulating among municipal units, eating and drinking establishments and their guilds on live music alone—one observes culture amid chaos and chaos amid culture. Granted, the concomitance of culture and chaos can be found elsewhere. That musical sound was fervently discussed in Nationalist Shanghai reveals a particular tension, nonetheless, between an all-Chinese municipality, an anti-music policy and quotidian practices carried over from decades associated with and oft-dominated by foreign agenda.

The late 1940s mark the final and continually corrupt years of Nationalist rule. There is more to them than degeneracy, though. The contention of Nightclub Café may simply be interpreted as a self-serving statement from a period of hostility and warfare. Nevertheless, the Café’s assertion hints at something more complex: situated in its original context, the Nightclub’s claim, however rhetorical and fallible, invites music historians to probe taxable venues that were not commercial dance halls. What transpires is a nexus between abandoned documents, local history and twentieth-century historiography, political change notwithstanding.

⁶⁷ *Xingguang* (星光), 2 (1947): 8.

EPILOGUE

Beyond '1930s and 1940s Shanghai':

Reproduction Maps, Repositories, Archival Musicology

The thesis' inquiry into western music, municipal policies and ideas of sound highlights coexisting as well as shifting areas of governance in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai. The sectionalised city that the thesis sets out to trace nuances the familiar image of Shanghai as a global metropolis. What, then, are the implications of the inquiry as a whole?

Judging from the findings in the British, French, Jewish/Japanese and Chinese case studies, none of the historical actors—administrators, proprietors, musicians or patrons—proved dominant. Rather, these forces functioned in tandem, albeit inadvertently. The documentary sources discussed in the preceding chapters suggest that, fundamentally, the tension between musical venues and municipal policies, between official and other ideas of sound did not differ much from one municipality to another.

This is not to say that the four main chapters lead to a straightforward conclusion on western music and municipality in Shanghai *over time*, especially given the peculiar dis/unity of the city. Indeed, what makes each case study distinct is the specificity of the historical moment in which the actors are situated. There is considerable variance in terms of how they planned, debated and perceived live music in venues whose *raison d'être* was not 'music' per se. For example, whereas the French Municipal Council's licensing of eateries and preference for classical music throughout the 1930s were part of French political authority in Shanghai, the Nationalists' taxation of the same establishments in the late 1940s, coupled with the authorities' control of live music on

those premises, was an expression of their sovereignty in the post-treaty port and post-occupation years.

Yet, Shanghai's musical venues and municipal policies also highlight fascinating ambiguities in its administrative geography. With regard to the Shanghai Municipal Brass Band in the 1930s, the British presence in the International Settlement, though pervasive and longstanding, was increasingly challenged by Japanese territorialism in the Settlement and in the city at large. And with regard to European Jewish refugee cafés during the Second World War, the enforcement of the Restricted Sector pointed at once to the new regime of the Japanese military and to the existing structure of the once-British Shanghai Municipal Council. In other words, Shanghai of the 1930s and 1940s was characterised by a certain degree of continuity amid change in its administrative geography. Musical venues, their practices and attendant ideas of sound were inextricably linked to Shanghai's treaty port layout—and to what became and did not become of that layout, despite such shifts as the Japanese occupation.

With that observation in mind, the Epilogue ventures beyond '1930s and 1940s Shanghai' as a matter of music history in order to explore further the ambiguities of Shanghai's geography as a matter of historiography. Moreover, the Epilogue seeks to understand Shanghai of the 1930s and 1940s in terms of historical attitudes in the present towards former foreign presences. In the Prologue, mention is made of a particular penchant in the city for the Anglo-European attributes of its past—which arguably has the effect of restoring that past. But how, for what reasons and with what implications for music researchers?

Asking about the past in the present certainly matters. The past is never a predefined story; ‘time’ itself does not come to a standstill. The need to traverse back and forth in the process of understanding the past suggests that historical attitudes are, ultimately, embedded in the present. History is at best a form of depiction. In the words of John Lewis Gaddis: ‘[T]he past is something we can never have. For by the time we’ve become aware of what has happened it’s already inaccessible to us: we cannot relive, retrieve, or rerun it as we might some laboratory experiment or computer simulation. We can only *represent* it.’¹

The discussion that follows examines the complexities of historical representation—specifically what Shanghai of the 1930s and 1940s *signifies* in local reproduction maps, and in how official repositories manage source documents from Shanghai’s era of foreign settlements. Then, some further directions for an archival musicology are outlined.

The maps in question are old maps of Shanghai from 1932, 1937, 1941 and 1948.² Reproduced in the 2000s by the Chinese Cartographic Society and by the Shanghai Academy of Surveying and Mapping for general retail, these reprints shed light on the ways in which the city was represented in the 1930s and 1940s. In addition, the originals, when juxtaposed with the reprints’ added commentaries, throw into relief a

¹ John Lewis Gaddis, *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 3. Gaddis’ italics.

² The 1932 and 1948 maps belong to the *Shanghai Old Maps Series* (上海老地图系列) of the Chinese Cartographic Society (中华老地图系列). The maps were first reprinted in 2006. A fifth reprint followed in 2013. The 1937 and 1941 maps belong to *Reviewing Shanghai from Maps* (图溯上海), an initiative of the Shanghai Academy of Surveying and Mapping (上海市测绘院). The maps were reprinted in 2015.

memorialisation in which single sovereignty takes precedence over plural municipalities.

At first glance, the maps bear more dissimilarities than similarities. Involving various cartographers and languages (Chinese, English and Japanese), the maps use different proportions and scales. Nevertheless, they share a common characteristic. While the maps come with particular biases and agenda—they are arguably imprints of treaty port history. In the 1932 version, the main divisions of treaty port Shanghai, namely the International Settlement, French Concession and the Nationalist districts, are rendered palpable. Included is a larger-scale map of the central business district—a close-up of the International Settlement and of the perceived nucleus of Shanghai. The cartography here is essentially similar to that of the 1931 map shown in Chapter One. The 1937 version (see figure E.1) includes the Nationalists' 'Greater Shanghai Plan' (大上海計劃), an ambitious though futile 'satellite town' project aimed at building an alternative power base away from the foreign-controlled city centre. Yet the leased areas that had developed and expanded since the mid-nineteenth century remain the principal focus of the map. The 1941 version (see figure E.2) is attributed to a cartographer (馬場日良) based in Tokyo; the overall image, despite Japanese occupation, continues to be that of a 'split' Shanghai. The 1948 version is a display of Chinese sovereignty, with newly plotted and smaller-sized administrative districts such as Jingan (靜安) and Putuo (普陀). However the indentations of a city of cities are still noticeable; what is visible from the zoning is that these districts redefined but did not erase the spaces of the now-defunct International Settlement and French Concession. The contours of 1930s and 1940s Shanghai are virtually synonymous, then, with the land partitions and street grids

of the Anglo-American and French municipalities. Although the Japanese occupied Shanghai for a number of years and the Nationalists regained territory after the Second World War, the city was still delineated along the same lines or in reaction to those lines (as was the case in the late 1940s). Political upheaval and plural municipalities notwithstanding, the underlying contours of Shanghai remained constant throughout the 1930s and 1940s. (See figure E.1 and figure E.2 overleaf.)

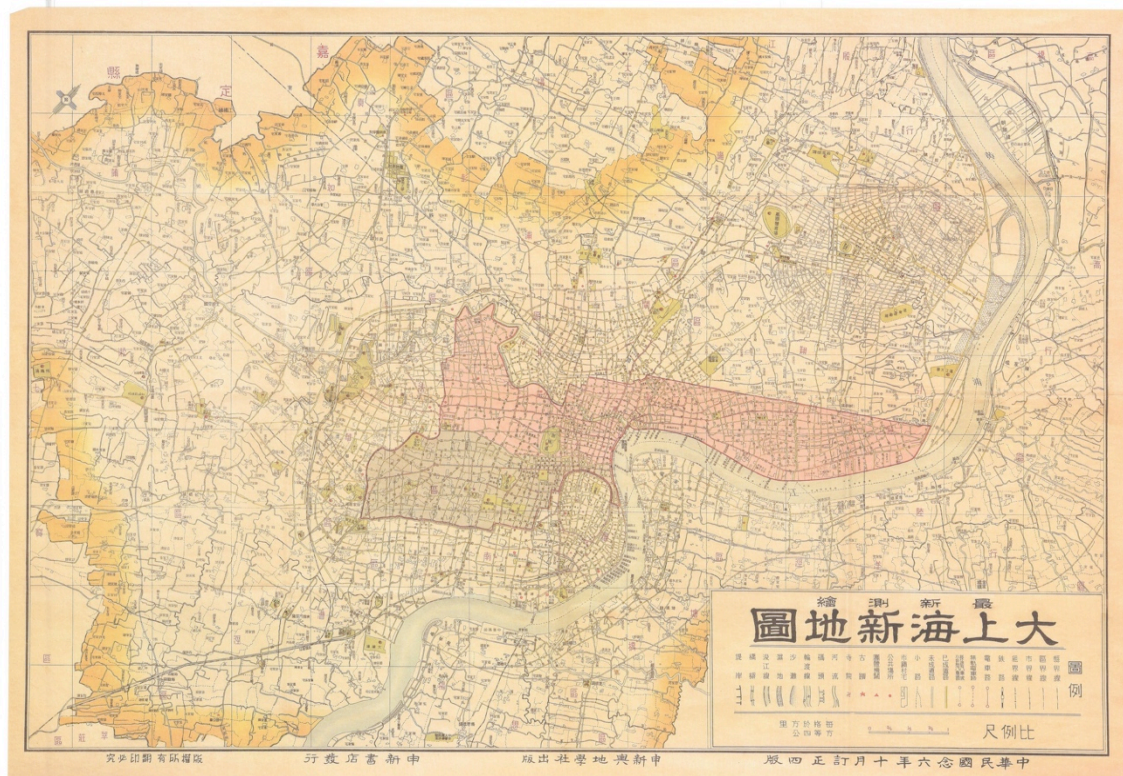


Fig. E.1. 1937 map with the Nationalists' 'Greater Shanghai Plan' (the sector northeast of the International Settlement, near the top right corner).

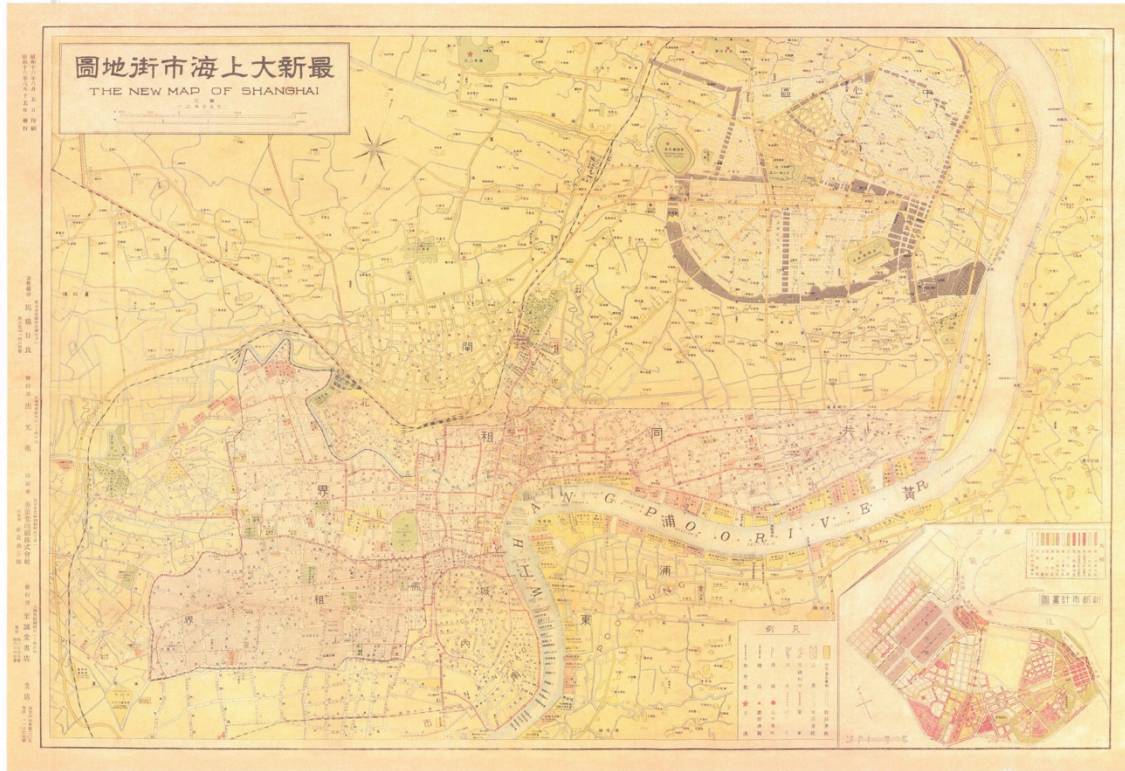


Fig. E.2. 1941 map prepared by a Japanese cartographer.

The reproduction maps bring a certain historical geography to the fore. Here I am less concerned with the politics of cartography in the 1930s and 1940s than with the maps themselves. Granted, it is important to probe the ideologies and motives behind the preparation of maps. In a collection of essays on imperial cartography, for example, James Akerman notes that ‘unequal power relationships between communities produced maps that represent weaker polities for the exclusive benefit of the stronger’.³

Akerman’s edited volume takes its cue from John Brian Harley, who observes that ‘maps are pre-eminently a language of power’.⁴ Yet, the very reproduction of old

³ James R. Akerman, ed., *The Imperial Map: Cartography and the Mastery of Empire* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 9. See also Anne Godlewska and Neil Smith, eds., *Geography and Empire* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994); and Morag Bell, Robin Butlin and Michael Heffernan, eds., *Geography and Imperialism, 1820–1940* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995).

⁴ John Brian Harley, ‘Maps, Knowledge, and Power’, in *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography*, ed. Paul Laxton (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2001), 79.

maps—despite their varied original agenda—are especially striking from a present-day vantage point. They reveal a specific visualisation of the city in the 1930s and 1940s. The maps are more connected than they appear, collectively exhibiting the demarcations or vestiges of a foreign-and-local city. This indicates that musical venues and their practices were part and parcel of a distinct urban layout—treaty port Shanghai. As an illustration, the Nationalist taxation of musical eateries, though introduced in the context of newly established districts, was in effect enforced along geophysical lines (roads and streets) previously constitutive of the International Settlement and the French Concession. The musical practices of Shanghai’s eateries and parks were not only bound up with its various municipalities, but also with the city’s changing and non-changing configuration.

The reproduction maps expose a subtext yet more intriguing. According to the new commentaries accompanying the maps, provided by the Chinese Cartographic Society and by the Shanghai Academy of Surveying and Mapping, the 1930s and the 1940s are cast as an/other period, with such features as the Nationalists’ (failed) Greater Shanghai Plan and the conversion during the Japanese occupation of existing street names to Kanji. One detects an imposed albeit subtle divide between pre-1949 Shanghai and post-1949 Shanghai. The purported difference between pre-Communist and Communist Shanghai is one of uncertainty (‘then’) versus certainty (‘now’). Strikingly, this particular historical imagination—which reinforces the separateness of the past—is at odds with the visual cues presented by the maps themselves. The originals suggest a certain continuity, during as well as *beyond* the two decades in question: the remnants of

foreign-and-local areas are to this day evident in Shanghai, whether topographically or architecturally.

What the subtext of the reproduction maps reveals is that the Communist takeover in 1949 can become the sole trope in historical representation, rendered all the more symbolic due to the ‘single’ value assigned to the pre-Communist past by these maps and their added commentaries. One possible consequence is that the establishment by the Communists of an absolute sovereignty, giving the impression of a clear-cut chronology, may conceal the very infrastructure of Shanghai as an historically uncoordinated city. Indeed, ‘1930s and 1940s Shanghai’ does not refer merely to Shanghai before Communist rule—but also to contemporaneous patterns of the city, which are no less traceable in the present. The transformation and non-transformation of Shanghai’s geography, coupled with its multiple and rival municipalities, must not be overlooked.

I have ruminated about reproduction maps at length because, given the wealth of ‘Old Shanghai’ paraphernalia, one may be tempted to restore primary colours to that past instead of attending to its shades of grey. 1930s and 1940s Shanghai is characterised by various local governments and their politics, and at a deeper level, by the intersection of imperial (treaty port), administrative (municipality) and physical (street) geographies. In that regard, the maps have an important function: they highlight the ways in which the urban layout of 1930s and 1940s Shanghai re-manifests in the present as historical geography—and the nuances that may be submerged in and as a result of official memorialisation.

Let's proceed to source documents from the 1930s and 1940s, originally associated with foreign and Nationalist municipal presences, and consider how they have come to exist and be managed as archival holdings in later decades. To some extent, the materials survived by chance, having been left behind by the Nationalists and fallen into Communist hands. Nonetheless, the very availability of the materials merits attention. After all, these materials do not come 'pure'. They are not merely sources of evidence, and rather crucially, are reflective of the environments in which they are preserved and accessed. The present section explores the correlation between repositories in current-day Shanghai and the historical representation of pre-Communist Shanghai.

On the surface, the fate of extant documents after the Communist takeover appears straightforward: the documents of so-called enemy polities inadvertently became the catalogued properties—informational assets—of the prevailing regime. The documents acquired additional currency *ex post facto* not only because of their new status as historical sources, but also because of the perceived value of the materials to Chinese-Marxist historiography. They lent and continue to lend credibility to the familiar official version of history, which is that of 'necessary progression' from the treaty port era and Japanese military occupation, to the Nationalist years and finally the Communist assumption of power. But the fortunes of the documents potentially mask the milieus in which they are located and curated. It is worth venturing beyond the materials themselves and thinking about ostensibly neutral environments of preservation.

Here the literature concerning the politics of the archive, notably of the colonial archive, seems a logical first port of call. Although only one repository in Shanghai is connected to foreign settlements in the city—the Xujiahui Library has its origins as a French Jesuit reading room in the mid-nineteenth century—this scholarship usefully calls attention to the constructedness of historical knowledge. In her project *Into the Archive: Writing and Power in Colonial Peru*, Kathryn Burns comments:

Imperial bureaucrats' desire for control at a distance produced protocols of control over information: of recording, archiving and retrieval. The result is the Foucauldian panopticon writ large, with archives all about knowledge, surveillance and control. The emphasis is on centripetal movement: bureaucrats' data-gathering impetus, and their tendency to draw things towards imperial institutions (e.g., the British Museum or Public Record Office).⁵

Burns' remarks point not only to control over information, but also to control over what is deemed to constitute information—how that information gets to be inscribed, framed and disseminated. The stuff that accumulates and survives is no mere storage, then. By the same token, the repository is no ordinary edifice, but rather, a social institution, operated and regulated according to the policies and practices of those wielding power. Francis Blouin and William Rosenberg issue the reminder that 'archives hold particular pieces of the past that are selected on the basis of particular definitions of utility and importance', adding that 'archives are thus spatially bounded as places of un-covering and re-covering, as sites of concealment and suppression as well as of expression,

⁵ Kathryn Burns, *Into the Archive: Writing and Power in Colonial Peru* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 11.

projection and revelation of individual and social pasts and futures'.⁶ In a similar vein, and in reference to colonial archives in the Netherlands Indies, Ann Laura Stoler contends that they 'are not simply accounts of actions or records of what people thought happened. They are records of uncertainty and doubt in how people imagined they could and might make the rubrics of rule correspond to the changing imperial world'.⁷ The life of these repositories is inextricably linked to ideology, control and violence.

With regard to pre-Communist materials in Shanghai's archives, one finds a more uncertain state of affairs. Given the city's administrative geography in the 1930s and 1940s, information is not affiliated with one hegemonic (let alone colonial) polity or agenda. Further, how information comes about in the first place is visibly distinct from how it is subsequently organised, re/categorised and made available to the public. There is a disparity between information as everyday document (in the past) and as archival source (in the present). As an illustration, whereas once venue licences with musical stipulations were administrative permits to regulate eateries and to exercise colonial rule in the French Concession, now they appear in another guise—as a somewhat inconspicuous series of dossiers at the Shanghai Municipal Archives—microfiches that are stowed unless retrieved by users, and subsumed under the general header 'French Municipal Council'. Banal as this observation may be, it highlights the incongruence between the initial production of information and the site holding that information. In that sense, 'historical knowledge' is contextual and contingent on where it is disseminated. The conditions under which extant materials are presently accessed matter

⁶ Francis X. Blouin and William G. Rosenberg, eds., *Archives, Documentation, and Institutions of Social Memory: Essays from the Sawyer Seminar* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2006), vii–viii.

⁷ Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 4.

as much as the original circumstances surrounding those materials—a point that becomes all the more apparent when one takes into account the multiple polities to which Shanghai bore witness in the 1930s and 1940s.

In what ways are operations in and of Shanghai’s archives shaped by the surrounding political culture? Just as reproduction maps expose certain perceptions in the new millennium of Shanghai’s pre-Communist past, asking this question helps to reveal curatorial attitudes and underlying views towards foreign history as identified by the record keepers: the century during which foreign presences were ubiquitous, the 1840s through to the 1940s. In order to probe the question further, I weave in the key points of an oral interview with Xu Jinhua (徐锦华), an archivist at the aforementioned Xujiahui Library (藏书楼), the city’s most extensive repository of foreign-language materials from before the establishment of the People’s Republic of China (or the PRC). It also houses a substantial collection of Chinese-language materials. The interview was conducted in person in April 2016.⁸ (Turn over for figures E.3 and E.4.)

⁸ The interview took place in Xu Jinhua’s office at the Xujiahui Library on 15 April 2016. It lasted approximately forty-five minutes. To respect the interviewee’s privacy, the interview was not recorded. Notes were taken instead.



Fig. E.3. Exterior of the Xujiahui Library.



Fig. E.4. Interior of the Xujiahui Library.

A couple of words are necessary to put the archive in context. Administratively, the Xujiahui Library (or the Library) comes under the purview of the Shanghai Library, a late twentieth-century complex situated on Central Huaihai Road (淮海中路), once

Avenue Joffre in the French Concession. The Library is part of an historic site (including St. Ignatius Cathedral) in Xujiahui (徐家匯), a locality also referred to as Zicawei, Siccawei or Zikawei during the treaty port years.⁹ The separateness of the Library's premises, coupled with the fact that it has origins as a Jesuit reading room more than a century ago, renders it a distinct entity, despite its organisation under the aegis of the Shanghai Library. Spatially and functionally, the two bear different forms of existence. The building of the Shanghai Library opened in 1996; the institution as it is now known is partly the outcome of the merger of numerous libraries in the latter half of the twentieth century. In addition, the Shanghai Library houses primary as well as secondary materials. It constitutes both an archive and a general resource centre, serving researchers and other users alike. By contrast, the Xujiahui Library operates specifically as a repository of foreign-language (not just Jesuit) materials from before 1949, having absorbed catalogues previously maintained by foreign organisations in the early years of Communist rule. The 'residue' of a European Catholic establishment in a repository has the effect of conserving a missionary edifice, which bordered but did not belong to the French Concession.

Indeed, the holdings of the Xujiahui Library project a rich history of communities and everyday life associated with them. The materials comprise books (fiction and non-fiction titles), newspapers, periodicals and other types of publication. They appear in an array of languages, extending from Chinese and Japanese to English, French, German and Russian. According to Xu Jinhua, the onsite collection consists of approximately 8,000 Chinese books, 2,000 Japanese books and 200,000 European-

⁹ Historically, Xujiahui was closely associated with the French Catholic presence in the city. Municipally, it was never a part of the French Concession.

language books. The offsite one is even more staggering, comprising roughly 110,000 Chinese books, 80,000 Japanese books, 750,000 European-language books and 100,000 Russian books. The sheer volume of assets explains and also helps to accomplish the objectives of the Library: Xu mentioned that they are working to cement their positioning as the preeminent foreign history archive, municipally and nationally. Insofar as archives in the PRC are concerned, he described Shanghai as occupying a unique place in research on modern China. For one must not only engage with local history but also with foreign-and-local history. Granted, the same could be said for other former treaty ports, notably Tianjin. However Xu, himself a trained historian, pointed out that the Library, with its inventory of surviving materials in Chinese and non-Chinese languages, is arguably one of a kind and has an important role in advancing the study of settler communities. He added that, since the Library functions primarily as a foreign history centre, its offerings cater well to research areas deemed top priorities in Shanghai, such as cross-cultural and religious histories.

Of particular interest to this discussion is the interplay between the subject focus of the repository and the discourse of ‘modern history’ in the People’s Republic. What transpires from Xu’s comments is an archival modality that aligns neatly with *jindai shi* (近代史), as the period is referred to in Chinese Communist parlance—namely the century starting with the treaty ports in the mid-1840s and ending with the Nationalists in the late 1940s. Although in strict ideological terms the period is considered synonymous with imperialism, colonialism and national humiliation, that conception of history does not discourage scholars in the PRC from researching foreign presences and the attendant experiences. The perceived aggression of non-native historical actors in

the pre-Communist era has and continues to exert a particular draw on academics in the PRC. The complexity of treaty port China also invites these scholars to give the topic careful attention—precisely because the impact of the Unequal Treaties and of exploitation is deemed detrimental yet far-reaching. Consequently the act of interpretation is anything but a plain matter of denouncing ‘enemy forces’. Rather, it is informed simultaneously by an imposed historicity (projecting a so-called historical truth) and by a sense of discovery. A 2009 study of treaty port Shanghai by local scholar Lu Qiguo (陆其国) emphasises the ‘duality’ (双重性) of the leased areas, highlighting the positive and negative effects of foreign influences on the development of modern China.¹⁰ The title of his book (畸形的繁荣), which characterises the city as one of ‘anomalous prosperity’, sums up his position. Lu acknowledges the significance of foreign activities and the importance of examining them, but is careful not to endorse such activities.

To be sure, the measured stance that Lu adopts is not a full indicator of how other Shanghai specialists in the PRC couch their work. Some of the contributions show a more affirmative rhetoric about the treaty port decades, and are by extension less angst-ridden as to what the period as a whole stands for. This attitude can be attributed to the fact that scholars go about researching Shanghai in the early decades of the twentieth century as everyday history, rather than as a meta-discourse of national history. An example is the output of Xue Liyong (薛理勇). Underlying his work is an ongoing interest in the quotidian life of the settlers. In a study dating from 2011, Xue focuses on the various western imports introduced in the city, for example the concepts

¹⁰ Lu Qiguo, *Jixing de fanrong: Zujie shiqi de Shanghai* [Anomalous Prosperity: Shanghai in the Era of Leased Areas] (Shanghai: Dongfang chuban zhongxin, 2009).

of a modern police force and of judicial procedure.¹¹ And in a 2014 publication, he charts the numerous social clubs active in the first decades of the twentieth century, chronicling a range of national, recreational and sport venues affiliated with such communities as the British, French, Japanese, Americans and Russians.¹² The approach here, which casts light on the day-to-day habits of foreigners, means that the author has less ‘baggage’ to deal with insofar as historical distance is concerned. Xue’s discussion taps primarily if not solely into bygone sites and actors. Interpretation is less a negotiation of the rift between ‘then’ and ‘now’ than a presentation of (perceived) facts and findings. Indeed, scholars like Xue tend to structure their writings in terms of anecdotes and tales. The story format that he employs, which straddles fiction and non-fiction, produces the desired narrative—one that reconstructs the treaty port era without a heavy ideological bent, and at arm’s length too.

On the surface, the practice of modern history in the People’s Republic of China is nothing but a concerted undertaking to explain the coming-to-power of the Chinese Communist Party (or the CCP). Yet, the prevalent fascination with settler presences suggests a subtler construal of the pre-Communist past than meets the eye. That past is not blankly associated with kowtowing to foreign demands and with Nationalist incompetence. The pre-Communist past is not merely activated in order to service the Communist present. Historical inquiry as a process is also characterised by a curiosity to place and understand communities in situ. By extension, foreign history, a forte if not the *raison d’être* of such archives as the Xujiahui Library, becomes a dominant trend.

¹¹ Xue Liyong, *Shanghai yangchang* [Shanghai’s Foreign Venues] (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chuban she, 2011).

¹² Xue Liyong, *Lao Shanghai: Wanguo zhonghui* [Old Shanghai: Multinational Clubs] (Shanghai: Shiji chuban she, 2014).

Sustained research on foreign history gives currency to the discourse of pre-Communist history in the PRC. The positioning of the Xujiahui Library not only fits but also informs that discourse.

In that sense, operations in and of the Library are considerably shaped by the surrounding political culture. The workings of the repository tie in, albeit indirectly, with the CCP's vision of a 'strong China' in the new millennium that is connected and on par with other global, notably western powers. The promotion of foreign history is deemed conducive to fostering additional exchanges between China and the world in the twenty-first century, supplementing such existing avenues as diplomacy and commerce. In that regard, the repository intersects with the past as well as with the present: a site where historical materials become both a matter of branding and image, and of scholarly study. Not surprisingly, access nowadays at the Xujiahui Library is straightforward—all the more so when compared with how it was in the not-too-distant 1980s, when official letters of introduction (issued by major institutions only) were required. Attitudes of 'openness' are also worthy of note because the Library went through a dormant period and reopened in the 1970s after the Cultural Revolution. Its policy in the current day, coupled with cooperative staff and an efficient service, helps to improve the visibility of what is an extensive catalogue. The valorisation of treaty port history has a direct impact on the accessibility of testaments to that history. This produces a jarring contrast with the map commentaries discussed in the previous section. Whereas the narrative of the reprints emphasises a ruptured past, one to memorialise precisely because it is 'gone' forever, operations in and of the Xujiahui Library arguably have the opposite effect of re/connecting the pre-Communist and Communist years.

What emerges from Xu's interview is a positive picture, not only with regard to how the pre-Communist period is interpreted in the PRC (alongside explicitly Marxist readings), but also with respect to how official archives such as the Xujiahui Library manage extant documents and release them to the public. For music historians researching western/-influenced cultures in Shanghai, is the affirmative policy of the Library an asset or a liability?

To an extent, the ready availability of surviving materials creates favourable conditions to explore various source types and research the plural sources stemming from foreign presences in Shanghai. Storehouses in the city are specific outcomes following the establishment of the PRC of mergers and other forms of reorganisation, at once carrying over and supplanting informational architectures (for example foreign newspaper rooms) from before the 1950s. As sanctioned milieus, Shanghai's archives are, on the one hand, custodians of stuff left behind by so-called enemy forces, and on the other, properties of a sovereign government with a distinct sense of the past and the present. Nothing is left to chance in what is national identity writ large. Repositories in the city cater to members of the public but also convey a certain ethos, at once recognising and breaking with the treaty port, Japanese and Nationalist years. This particular curatorial attitude means that research issues that arise nowadays in Shanghai are largely of a logistical rather than of a contentious nature, for example the quantity of materials in need of repair and the mammoth task of digitisation. There is a practical point to be made here, notwithstanding the conflation of archival preservation and national ideology. Music historians interested in the pre-Communist period are able to

engage directly and to ‘sound out’ primary sources in fairly unproblematic conditions. The Communist repository marks less a site *of* inquiry than an arena *for* inquiry.

Nevertheless, this ease of access urges one to be mindful of the skewed priorities created by that access. What appears a positive policy has certain hidden caveats. The avowal of foreign history comes with a focus on Chinese-and-non-Chinese encounters and on the related human experiences. Reified as a result are East-West and/or other binaries. There is no denying the value of researching (further) into cross-cultural contact in pre-Communist Shanghai, but clearly, there is more to the coexistence of multiple nationalities and ethnicities in the city. An inquiry into western music and municipality raises fresh questions that settler-based histories, actively promoted by the Xujiahui Library, may not be able to address. The official prioritisation of foreign-language materials doubtless aids access to them, but also has the effect of highlighting musical *collectives* at the expense of musical *localities*. Identity groups continue to merit scholarly attention; however, understanding pre-Communist Shanghai solely in these terms risks overlooking other dynamics, notably musical venues and the impact on them of municipal policies. By extension, the transparency of such archives as the Xujiahui Library is not something that music researchers can or should take for granted. Although the Library’s objectives have, in principle, a desirable effect on the retrieval and examination of primary sources, they reveal, in practice, an overriding emphasis on communities past. The very nature of this emphasis can pre-determine research agenda, however accessible are the surviving materials. That ‘raw data’ is readily obtainable is neither an outright advantage nor merely a reflection of an open-door policy.

How other modern history archives in Shanghai function as public information centres is fascinating in that regard. Two observations are in order. The first concerns the Shanghai Municipal Archives (or SMA). A sizeable body of the documents associated with the British-dominated Shanghai Municipal Council, the French Municipal Council and the Chinese Nationalists is normally read in digital form on house computers in a large reading room. In general the files can be printed out and at no extra charge. No more than fifty A4 pages may be reproduced each day. Strikingly, however, sources dating from the Japanese occupation, pejoratively termed the ‘Illegitimate Japanese Era’ (日伪时期), are restricted to the terminals on site. Printing of the materials, which are kept in dossiers marked with the prefix ‘R’, is categorically declined. Although researchers are rarely if ever given any satisfactory explanation, one may surmise that continually tense relations between the PRC and Japan, fuelled by differing views of the Second World War and by the surrounding politics of history, inform the decision here. What transpires is a ‘tiered approach’ at the SMA; palpably defined are the levels at which the surviving documents are made available to the public.

Such variance exposes mixed perceptions in the current day of foreign powers with municipal presences in 1930s and 1940s Shanghai. Shanghai’s British-led, French and Nationalist governments appear in more favourable light than does its Japanese-affiliated administration. Indeed, with respect to the Shanghai Municipal Council, French Municipal Council and the Nationalist Municipality of the late 1940s, the materials are mostly unrestricted. The taxonomy under which abandoned records are managed at the SMA reflects not only Shanghai’s multinational geography then, but also the state of the PRC’s dealings with the United Kingdom, France, Japan and

Taiwan now. Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis to comment on bilateral trade and diplomatic affairs, suffice to say that Sino-Japanese relations remain the most volatile at the time of writing. Such relations are rendered all the more precarious because of the major influence in the Asia-Pacific region of the United States, not to mention continuity and change in American foreign policy. Although access at the SMA is on the whole smooth, ‘trouble-free’ contact with the sources is not as straightforward as one might assume.

The second observation on the city’s modern history archives concerns the Shanghai Library, specifically its Modern History Documents Room (近代文献室). Here there seem to be fewer issues with regard to digitised materials. Unlimited copies may be printed without charge. Although requests still have to be submitted, they are not ‘vetted’ in the way that they are at the SMA. Researchers need only notify staff over the counter. In that sense, the practice is less bureaucratic and convoluted. Yet, one should also consider the provenance of the sources. Pre-Communist materials at the Shanghai Library—Chinese-language broadsheets and entertainment magazines—are mostly commercial in origin. The implication of these local and non-administrative holdings is that the ‘raw data’ is less sensitive than that at the SMA. For the data encourages quotidian readings—safe history, in other words.

The foregoing observations about the Xujiahui Library, SMA and Shanghai Library suggest that the city’s archive-scape is shaped by a number of political factors: namely, the promotion of foreign history as a means to further ties between China and the world; different positions on former municipal administrations amid political leveraging in the present; and the perceived ‘risk level’ of surviving documents. The

interplay between Shanghai's repositories and the reconstruction of pre-Communist Shanghai is thus intricate. Although these archives are relatively uncontroversial environments when compared with ex-colonial repositories, they pose other complexities, notably the push-pull between the telling of history and international affairs pertaining to a socialist, single-party state with a market economy.

For music researchers writing about western music in Shanghai and/or in other treaty ports, this relationship between historical knowledge and diplomatic relations in the twenty-first century yields two additional observations. First, because the Xujiahui Library has a committed priority—the reconstruction of Shanghai's settlements and communities—it is worth considering, as a matter of research practice, the ways in which foreign-language sources might or might not factor into musicological inquiry. Put another way, these sources, however well maintained, do not constitute 'pure data' inasmuch as they have a pre-assigned value and are deemed conducive to the Library's policy. Second, there is more to the archiving of Shanghai's foreign presences than meets the eye. While the systematic preservation of related materials facilitates study of those materials, examining music and municipality in Shanghai does not merely centre around analysing neglected documents and exploring their sonic potential. It is equally if not more important to uncover the repositories' *own* terms of operation, open access notwithstanding. Indeed, Shanghai's modern history archives are themselves distinct entities.

Representations of the pre-Communist era are disparate not only because reproduction maps and period buildings, such as the Jesuit edifice of the Xujiahui Library, produce their own conceptions (and senses) of the era, but also because there is

no ‘citywide’ archival policy. Although Shanghai’s main repositories are all properties of the municipal government, their motley research environments are such that attitudes in the city towards its past become all the more varied, divergent and intriguing.

The final section of the Epilogue discusses how historical attitudes might bear on musicological practice, specifically broader implications of my project as a whole for archival musicology in the future. In order to outline the research directions, the present section is structured around three keywords.

The first is ‘data’, specifically the opportunities that arise because data never comes raw. The imperative of paying careful if not finer attention to the evidence is nothing new to music studies, of course. In the edited volume *Empirical Musicology: Aims, Methods, Prospects*, Eric Clarke and Nicholas Cook note:

[M]usicologists are prone to build interpretations on very small data sets or even on single instances, and the less the evidence that has survived from the past, the stronger this tendency will be. [Conversely] there would be grounds for legitimate criticism if musicologists working in data-rich fields did not take full advantage of the methods available under such conditions, instead restricting them to traditional ‘humanities’ approaches developed for data-poor fields—and one of the messages of this book is that musicology is or could be, in many instances, a significantly ‘data-richer’ field than we generally give it credit for.¹³

Clarke, Cook and the wide array of contributors, for example Jonathan Stock, an ethnomusicologist specialising mainly in China and Taiwan, and Tia DeNora, a music

¹³ Eric Clarke and Nicholas Cook, eds., *Empirical Musicology: Aims, Methods, Prospects* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 4. Editors’ parentheses.

sociologist, discuss the diverse ways in which data can substantiate music research.

Valuable though the publication is, the idea of data—not least the provenance of data—is virtually taken for granted. The book's emphasis (as reflected in the title) is social-scientific in that the focus is on the data itself, rather than on the life of historical sources and on the afterlife of documents in institutions of preservation.

As a footnote to Clarke and Cook's volume, it is also crucial to ascertain the manner in which repositories make available the so-called raw data. The fact that surviving materials belong to specific informational architectures is all the more pertinent when one navigates the catalogues of the Shanghai Municipal Archives (or SMA), Xujiahui Library and the Shanghai Library. Although records management is not my expertise, it is worth highlighting that the city's archival systems, albeit managed by municipal employees, are anything but interconnected.

The SMA's catalogue is only obtainable on the house computers and not online. There is also a separate list itemising the microfiches. But the starting point is always the electronic catalogue. The Xujiahui Library does not yet have a master directory. Instead researchers ask, over the counter, for its newspaper and periodical inventories—handwritten registers of publications and their available issues. At the Shanghai Library, users mediate between several internal catalogues: the catalogue that is only accessible on terminals in the Modern History Documents Room, a separate card catalogue (with different materials) for the Room and the general catalogue of the Library.

The sheer volume and variety of Shanghai's historical sources, coupled with the particular priorities of the repositories and their staff, mean that a centralised system is an aspiration at best. What emerges therefore is a complex 'texture', by which I refer to

uncoordinated recordkeeping in and across the city. The very fact that Shanghai's historical sources are located 'here and there' poses more an advantage than a disadvantage to music researchers. The opportunity that can be identified here is for an archival musicology that draws out (further) the implications of materials in relation to the premises on which they are held. Specifically, music researchers may probe the extent to which materials found in different parts of the city, and what they suggest about musical habits and sounds, are in agreement. In other words, one factors into the 'topography' of preserved documents.

The second keyword is 'treaty ports'. The case of 1930s and 1940s Shanghai sheds light on what is an under-researched phenomenon in music studies: multi-colonial formations in East Asia, administratively ambiguous settings with exploitative, imperialist agenda on the one hand and co-operating local polities on the other. Indeed, Shanghai is not the only setting in which an archival musicology would have potential. In history, scholars such as Robert Bickers and Maurizio Marinelli have published on other Chinese treaty ports. Bickers' latest book is the co-edited volume *Treaty Ports in China: Law, Land and Power*, an outgrowth of the conference 'Colonialism in comparative perspective: Tianjin under nine flags, 1860–1949', held in 2011 at the University of Bristol.¹⁴ Contributors venture beyond Tianjin and navigate China's treaty ports as a group rather than in isolation. In his work, Marinelli addresses questions of urbanisation as well as of living heritage such as 'Little Italy' in the city of Tianjin, which was initially sectioned into nine foreign concessions, far exceeding the one that

¹⁴ Robert Bickers and Isabella Jackson, eds., *Treaty Ports in China: Law, Land and Power* (London: Routledge, 2016).

Shanghai had.¹⁵ Given increased access to repositories in the country, music researchers can offer additional observations, especially on intersections of music history and urban geography, and of musical venues and municipalities.

What is more, an archival musicology of treaty ports is not confined to China. The ports also existed in Japan from the middle through to the end of the nineteenth century. They were Shimoda, Hakodate, Yokohama, Kanagawa, Hyōgo (Kobe), Nagasaki and Niigata. As was the case in the Chinese ports, nationals of treaty signatories were accorded extraterritorial rights. Various foreign settlements emerged. Especially palpable were British and American presences. Korea, too, had treaty ports—Busan, Incheon and Wonsan—though they were established due to Japanese military expansionism rather than to demands imposed by a coalition of imperial powers.

‘Treaty Ports in East Asia, 1850–1910’, a symposium held recently at Heidelberg University, can be seen as a significant step towards surveying collectively the ports and the common characteristics that they shared.¹⁶ In the words of the organisers, the objective of their proceedings was to ‘move from the historical specificities of place and time to develop generalisations and concepts [regarding the phenomenon of treaty ports]’.¹⁷ While I have certain reservations about scaling back the local—possibly for the sake of the transnational—the East Asian framework is without doubt beneficial to a comparative archival musicology. The fact that surviving materials are multi-lingual, catalogued over the years and readily available is not unique to treaty

¹⁵ See, for example, Maurizio Marinelli, ‘Italy and/in Tianjin: Remaking the Urban Form and Rewriting History’, in *National Belongings: Hybridity in Italian Colonial and Postcolonial Cultures*, ed. Jacqueline Andall and Derek Duncan (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010). See also Maurizio Marinelli and Giovanni Andornino, eds., *Italy’s Encounters with Modern China: Imperial Dreams, Strategic Ambitions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

¹⁶ The symposium took place on 17 and 18 June 2016 at the Karl Jaspers Centre, Heidelberg University.

¹⁷ This is quoted from the symposium programme.

port Shanghai. The same can be said for Tianjin and Yokohama, for example. The East Asian framework allows one to study urban musical geographies in and across treaty ports—and to assess the extent to which their geographies echoed each other in terms of what was debated, programmed and heard. This framework also enables one to evaluate the degree to which the ports sounded (as) a ‘modern imperialist world system’, as described by the convenors of the Heidelberg symposium.

The third and last keyword is ‘architecture’. Expanding from Shanghai to other treaty ports in China and/or in East Asia brings another prospect: an archival musicology that cross-examines the foreign-built structures in which musical performances took place, including but not limited to hotels, bunds (foreign-dominated waterfronts) and recreation clubs (of national societies). Here my thinking is not dissimilar to that of Laura Victoir and Victor Zatsépine. In *Harbin to Hanoi: The Colonial Built Environment in Asia, 1840 to 1940*, they state:

Our volume brings together scholars in city planning, architecture, and Asian and imperial history, to provide a more detailed picture of how colonisation worked both at the top and at the bottom levels of society, and of how it was expressed in stone, iron and concrete. We show that the process of creating the colonial built environment was multi-layered, complicated and unpredictable.¹⁸

Just as Victoir, Zatsépine and other contributors to the book raise issues about the colonial construction of buildings—the processes (contracts, for example) and the experiences (of local workers, for example)—it is worth interrogating the extent to which musical habits in the treaty ports differed from one form of architecture to

¹⁸ Laura Victoir and Victor Zatsépine, eds., *Harbin to Hanoi: The Colonial Built Environment in Asia, 1840 to 1940* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2013), 2.

another—and the degree to which such etiquettes, coupled with their surroundings, remained synonymous with imperial/ist agenda and activities over time. So far as these ports are concerned, the potential tension between ‘colonial’ built environments and *quasi*-colonies makes for fascinating analysis.

Also intriguing is the fate of some of the inherited structures, notably hotels that still exist but have been redesigned and/or partially repurposed over the decades. Good illustrations are Shanghai’s Astor House (浦江饭店), the city’s oldest surviving hotel, and Tianjin’s Astor (利顺德饭店). Both were closely associated with the British during the treaty port era. Their prominence on the cities’ waterfronts were supposed to reflect well on the British settlers, who were in competition with other foreign powers for influence. Owing to commercial considerations, the hotels’ operators now—a Shanghai enterprise and an American conglomerate respectively—seek to recreate the ‘former glory’ of the establishments.¹⁹ For example, Tianjin’s Astor has a museum in its old wing exhibiting such objects as its century-old cutlery and menus. How does live music factor in, and what kind of a sound world emerges from such reconstructions of treaty port history? The case of these ‘historic’ hotels calls attention to the role of musical sound in their own accounts of the treaty port past.

In some ways, the last keyword brings the three keywords together. An archival musicology based on ‘treaty ports’ and ‘architecture’ can be fruitful from a ‘data’ point of view. In addition to the repositories, researchers can use such techniques as ethnography. One example would be to conduct interviews with musicians and other

¹⁹ The Astor House Hotel is operated by the Shanghai Hengshan Group (上海衡山集团). The Astor is run by Starwood. (Worth mentioning is that the acquisition of Starwood by Marriott International was finalised at the time of writing.)

employees at Shanghai's and/or Tianjin's Astor. Another would be to carry out a study of 'nostalgic' musical events, notably the re-enactment of the tea dance in such establishments as the Fairmont Peace Hotel on Shanghai's Bund—originally Sassoon House, which consisted of the Cathay Hotel on six of its ten floors. The data set here, to allude back to Clarke and Cook, taps not only surviving materials and the research environments in which they are located, but also contemporary actors, musical performances and the sonic spaces in which they are situated. As such, the data set encourages one to explore connections as well as disconnections between archived and living sources.

The thesis began by alluding to the action video game 'Whore of the Orient': players enter the racy world of 1930s Shanghai and become virtual *gongfu* fighters against a backdrop of vice and violence. Such entertainment may well prove a commercial success, but as the Prologue, four case studies and the Epilogue have variously demonstrated, music historians have compelling reasons not only to debunk the myths surrounding 1930s and 1940s Shanghai, but also to consider what an archival musicology of a city of cities, multinational yet divided, may entail. Intersections of music history and urban geography, doubtless germane to treaty ports, invite one to think afresh about western music in these complex cities—and about ways to research and to write about their unsettled pasts in the no less precarious present.

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