Book Reviews

Andrew F. Jones. *Circuit Listening: Chinese Popular Music in the Global 1960s*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020. 304 pp. ISBN 9781517902070.

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Andrew F. Jones's *Circuit Listening: Chinese Popular Music in the Global 1960s* marks the culmination of his three-decade exploration of Chinese popular music, rounding out the trilogy which began with *Like a Knife: Ideology and Genre in Contemporary Chinese Popular Music* (1992) and *Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in the Chinese Jazz Age* (2001).[1] Running through these three volumes are the dialectics of mass-mediated sonic warfare. In *Like a Knife*, it is the ideological struggle between two competing genres around the time of the Tiananmen Square student movement of 1989: state-sanctioned popular music (*tongsu yinyue*) disseminated through mass media, and subversive, subcultural underground rock music (*yaogun yinyue*) represented by Cui Jian at rock parties. Popular music is here compared to a double-edged sword, which can be used both for propaganda purposes and to protest against hypocrisy and oppression and construct an authenticity-oriented alternative public sphere. In *Yellow Music*, it is the ideological conflict between the "decadent sounds" of Li Jinhui's yellow music or sinified jazz since the late 1920s, and Nie Er's left-wing revolutionary mass music (*qunzhong yinyue*) in the wake of the January 28 incident of 1932, when Japanese forces attacked Shanghai's Zhabei district.

[1] Andrew F. Jones, *Like a Knife: Ideology and Genre in Contemporary Chinese Popular Music* (Ithaca: Cornell East Asia Program, 1992); Andrew F. Jones, *Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in the Chinese Jazz Age* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).

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As a book about the Cold War, *Circuit Listening* not only picks up where *Yellow Music* left off—yellow music's post-1949 exile to Hong Kong and Taiwan, revolutionary songs' monopoly in the loudspeaker soundscape of socialist China between the 1950s and 1970s, and the return of the repressed soft, sweet love songs from Hong Kong and Taiwan such as Teresa Teng's in Deng Xiaoping's "reform and opening" era in the late 1970s—but also proves ambitious in mediating between two seemingly irreconcilable global musical events during the Cold War contest in the introduction: The first is the Beatles' live studio performance of "All You Need Is Love" which culminated "Our World," the first worldwide satellite broadcast on June 25, 1967. The other is the Maoist anthem "The East Is Red" emitting from China's first satellite on April 24, 1970. For Jones, the capitalist/communist, entertainment/propaganda divides are bridged by the transistor technology, which connects and diffuses the global 1960s sounds of miniaturized and portable music. Transistor circuits engender Jones's concept of circuit listening, which harks back to *Yellow Music*'s attention to the materiality of media technologies such as the gramophone, wireless broadcasting, and sound cinema. Circuits not only enable but also restrict circulation of music, which makes circuit listening a malleable and playful framework for both "open circuits" linking Hong Kong, Taiwan, the Chinese diaspora, Japan, the West, and the "closed circuit" of revolutionary China monopolized by the Communist Party.

Chapter 1, "Circuit Listening at the Dawn of the Chinese 1960s," opens with the aerial aspirations in the opening number—"I Want to Fly up to the Blue Sky"—of the Hong Kong Mandarin musical *Air Hostess* (Evan Yang [Yi Wen], 1959), starring "mambo girl" Grace Chang, who embodies not only postwar socioeconomic mobility but also linguistic and musical mobility. The chapter ends with the tragic ending of the Hong Kong Mandarin musical *Because of Her* (Wong Tin-lam [Wang Tianlin], Evan Yang [Yi Wen], 1963), in which Grace Chang's fatal fall prefigures the real-life plane crash in Taichung, Taiwan that killed Loke Wan Tho, head of the MP&GI studio, which produced the self-reflexive *Air Hostess* and *Because of Her*, featuring the capitalist circuit along which mobile women and musical genres travel. Jones listens to not only how Afro-Caribbean-derived genres like mambo and calypso circulated in the Hong Kong Mandarin musicals of the late 1950s and the early 1960s, but also how "mixed-blood" Taiwanese ballads covered Japanese *enka* with Taiwanese lyrics in the black and white Taiwanese-language musicals throughout the 1960s. The latter was relegated to a more limited, local, and regional (albeit transnational) circuit of

Taiwanese (Southern Min, Hokkien) communities under the ruling KMT's "Mandarin-only" (1945–1987) language policy.

Chapter 2, "Quotation Songs: Media Infrastructure and Pop Song Form in Mao's China," is concerned with how a wired broadcasting network of loudspeakers as media infrastructure both disseminated and displaced Chairman Mao as media effect, penetrating the soundscape of rural China during the Cultural Revolution. *The Quotations of Chairman Mao* ("Little Red Book") were set to music between 1966 and 1969 with the use of hooks drawn from the yellow music tradition in republican Shanghai. The infrastructure of wired loudspeakers lacking bass determined the "high, fast, hard, and loud" sound of the era in duple march rhythm for effective transmission. For Jones, the Maoist media effect within this closed circuit was nevertheless diffused globally, as seen in Jean-Luc Godard's *La Chinoise* (1967), which captures the affinity between propagandist quotation songs and the Beatles-derived yé-yé (yeah-yeah) fever of the French 1960s.

In the following four chapters, Jones approaches the global 1960s through the medium of Taiwanese music. Chapters 3 and 4, the most original contribution of this study, celebrate the creativity in the cultural logic of belated covers and pirated copies, respectively. Chapter 3, "Fugitive Sounds of the Taiwanese Musical Cinema," should be situated in the recent wave of digital restoration of Taiwanese-language films (*taiyupian*) by the Taiwan Film and Audiovisual Institute since 2014. A close reading of the Wen Shia (b. 1928) vehicle *Goodbye, Taipei* (1969) was likely made possible by the film's restoration in 2016. As part of the last and only surviving film of the ten-film series "Wen Shia's Drifter Chronicles," the prologue sequence of *Goodbye, Taipei* serves as an invaluable "intermedial archive" documenting and summarizing the nine preceding lost films. The film addressed its northbound rural-urban migrant audiences not only through Wen Shia's Chaplin-derived drifter image, but also through its eclectic soundtrack featuring instrumental covers of Anglo-American pop songs and on-screen performances of Taiwanese covers of Japanese hits by Wen Shia and his band, the Four Sisters. Chapter 4, "Pirates of the China Seas: Vinyl Records and the Military Circuit," tells the fascinating story of how Taiwanese pirate records of Anglo-American music relied on U.S. military bases and gave rise to the guitar-driven Taiwanese campus folk movement in the mid- to late 1970s and 1980s (discussed in chapter 5, "Folk Circuits: Rediscovering Chen Da"). In 1947, it was Hsu Shih in the company of his student Wen Shia at the tender age of 20 that had transcribed and arranged Chen Da's signature Hengchun

folk tune "Sixiang qi" or "Su Siang Ki," two decades before Hsu Tsang-houei and Shih Wei-liang's 1967 field recordings of Chen Da as part of the Folk Song Collection Movement. The final chapter of the book, "Teresa Teng and the Network Trace," begins with the infrastructure of Beishan Broadcasting Wall, built in 1967, on the frontline island of Quemoy (Kinmen). Taiwanese military broadcasting stations such as this one weaponized Teresa Teng's sweet voice from 1974 to 1991 in a psychological and sonic warfare subverting the socialist sensibility and soundscape across the straits.

Circuit Listening is written in such an engaging style that it inspires the detective work of an *audiovisual readership*, which involves sourcing the songs, records, movies, and other artefacts mentioned in the book on Youtube and elsewhere, practicing the methodology of circuit listening, and excavating both overt and covert circuits and routes of how locally-inflected global vernaculars travel, in order to trace their remediation and reception history. To give an example, I would like to take issue with Jones's analysis of Grace Chang's performance of "Taiwan Melody" in *Air Hostess* (discussed in chapter 1), which he claims was "composed by Yao Min with no reference to local musical traditions" (40) and "reputedly based on the melody of a Cantonese popular song" (p. 216 n24). His misattribution of "Taiwan Melody," following Hong Kong *shidaiqu* (Mandarin pop) specialist Wong Kee-chee, points out the complex and circuitous networks and processes of remediation and reception. "Taiwan Melody" has been heard as Japanese, Taiwanese, and Cantonese to different audiences depending on their audiovisual histories and access to audiovisual artefacts. In *Air Hostess*, the diegetic motivation for "Taiwan Melody" (Grace Chang's Taiwanese colleagues request a song from her as a gift and she complies by singing "a Taiwanese song she just learned" on a local trip) and its very name give us a clue to its close connection to Taiwanese folk songs and its uneasy relationship with Japanese colonial past. "Taiwan Melody" is a Mandarin cover of the first major hit of postwar Taiwan, a "folk" love song entitled "Night in a Southern City" / "Night in the City of Tainan" 南都之夜 (1946). The song was composed by Hsu Shih 許石 (1919–1980, discussed in chapter 5) with Taiwanese lyrics by Cheng Chih-Feng 鄭志峯, and starts with the line "I love my sister." Hsu composed "Night in a Southern City" in 1946 upon his return from musical education in Japan "so that Taiwanese people can sing songs in their own language."[2] Such decolonizing sentiment seems at odds

[2] The early history of "Taiwan Melody" is briefly documented in a 1961 article by Tsai Mao-Tang, collected in a 1980 memorial issue for Tsai, "Jin sa wu nianlai de Taiwan liuxing

with the claim in the 1960s that the song was influenced by Japanese music. According to Tsai Mao-Tang's 蔡懋棠 1961 article, Hsu Shih adapted this faux folk song from the first major hit of postwar Japan, "The Apple Song" (Ringo no uta, 1945), a new film song performed by Namiki Michiko in Shochiku's *Breeze* (*Soyokaze*, Sasaki Yasushi, 1945).[3] However, a close comparison between "The Apple Song" and "Night in a Southern City" suggests that the latter is not so much an adaptation as a new composition.[4]

Or, to be more accurate, "Night in a Southern City" was adapted from Hsu Shih's "Song for the Construction of a New Taiwan" 新臺灣建設歌 (1946) with Taiwanese lyrics by Hsueh Kuang-Hua 薛光華, which begins with the line "I love my beautiful island." In a TTV (Taiwan Television Enterprise) interview, Hsu Shih recalled that Taiwan's song circles in 1946 were saturated with Japanese military songs, so much so that in order to compose "songs of our own" he started collecting folk songs.[5] "Song for the Construction of a New Taiwan" was the first piece resulting from Hsu's folk song collection effort, which reinvented indigenous musical materials while resisting the inevitable Japanese influence in postwar Taiwan. As C. S. Stone Shih points out, Hsu Shih's insistence on composing original Taiwanese songs went against the postwar trend of covering Japanese songs in Taiwanese.[6] In 1946, Hsu Shih performed "Song for the Construction of a New Taiwan" with Tsai Jui-yueh 蔡瑞月 (1921–2005), the mother of modern dance in Taiwan, presenting the premiere of her dance piece "New Construction" 新建設 at Miyako-za Theater 宮古座 in Tainan, Taiwan.[7] "Song for the Construction of a New Taiwan" was not popular until it

ge" [Taiwanese Popular Songs for the Past 35 Years], *The Taiwan Folkways* 30, no. 2 (1980): 68.

[3] See Joseph L. Anderson and Donald Richie, *The Japanese Film: Art and Industry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 159. See also Michael K. Bourdaghs, *Sayonara Amerika, Sayonara Nippon: A Geopolitical Prehistory of J-Pop* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 12.

[4] Music historian Huang Yu-yuan suggested in a private communication that "Hsu Shih insisted on not borrowing from Japanese songs in his Taiwanese ballads so I find it disrespectful to claim 'Night in a Southern City' was adapted from 'The Apple Song.'"

[5] See Lin Lan, "Wo ai wo de meimei ya: 'Taiwan Xiaodiao' zuoqu jia Xu Shi" [I love my sister: The composer of "Taiwan Melody" Hsu Shih], *TTV Weekly* 890, October 28–November 3, 1979, 44.

[6] See C. S. Stone Shih, "Entangled Identities: The Music and Social Significance of Hsu Shih, a Vanguard Composer of Taiyu Ballads," in Eva Tsai, Tung-hung Ho, and Miaoju Jian, eds., *Made in Taiwan: Studies in Popular Music* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 75–89: 75.

[7] Shih, "Entangled Identities," 80–82.

was adapted into a love song, "Night in a Southern City," and became the first hit of postwar Taiwan.[8] The earliest recording of "Night in a Southern City" was perhaps a light music arrangement in the style of rumba, issued by Hsu Shih's own label Queen Records as C3003 between 1956 and 1957.[9] To further complicate the dialectics between local and Japanese musical traces, "Night in a Southern City" was performed as a duet between Hsu Shih and Liao Mei-Hui 廖美惠 at Cathay Theater in Taipei as part of postwar Japanese jazz queen Ike Mariko's 池真理子 concert tour in March 1961. It appeared on the B-side of "Folksongs of Taiwan," released by Hsu's own label King Records (KLK-59, 1962–1964, see figure 1) and performed live as a duet between Hsu Shih and Ike Mariko singing consecutively in Taiwanese and then together in Japanese (KLK-003, 1968 and 1974).[10] The original score and lyrics of "Song for the Construction of a New Taiwan" were rediscovered in 2016 and presented anew in a 2017 exhibition at the National Museum of Taiwan History in Tainan curated by Huang Yu-yuan 黃裕元 to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the February 28 Incident of 1947.[11]

As to why "Taiwan Melody" has been misattributed to a Cantonese melody, the reason would be that the popularity of "Night in a Southern City" engendered at least three Cantonese covers in Hong Kong: "A Star Loves a Moon" 星星愛月亮 with lyrics by Chow Chung 周聰;[12] "Old Love Is Like a Dream" 舊歡如夢 with lyrics by Pong Chow-wah 龐秋華 (1928–1991);[13] one

[8] Shih, 80.

[9] This information was provided by music historian Huang Yu-yuan based on Teng-fang Hsu's collection.

[10] For the score, lyrics in Taiwanese and Japanese, introduction, and nine record versions of "Night in a Southern City," see Huang Yu-yuan, *Geyao jiaoxiang: Xu Shi chuangzuo yu caibian geyao qupu ji* [Ballad symphony: Hsu Shih's composition and compilation of songs] (Taipei: Azure Culture, 2019), 16–18.

[11] On February 27, 1947, the beating of a female cigarette vendor and the killing of a bystander led to a protest and uprising against the corruption of the ruling KMT government the following day. On March 8, KMT troops from mainland China arrived and killed around twenty thousand Taiwanese, which led to four decades of martial law (1949–1987) known as the White Terror. See Sylvia Li-chun Lin, *Representing Atrocity in Taiwan: The 2/28 Incident and White Terror in Fiction and Film* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

[12] Performed by Chow Chung and Hui Yim Chau 許艷秋, released by The Wo Shing Co., Ltd. 和聲唱片 in 1961.

[13] Performed by Tam Ping Man 譚炳文, included on a long-playing vinyl record entitled "Connie Chan Po-chu's Songs," 陳寶珠之歌 released by Fung Hang Records Ltd. 風行唱片 in 1971. "Old Love Is Like a Dream" appears on "Connie Chan Po-chu's Songs," Fung Hang Records Ltd. FHLP-154, 1971.

year after the death of lyricist Pong Chow-wah, "Old Love Is Like a Dream" was propelled to popularity through its inclusion in the film *92 Legendary La Rose Noire* (Jeffrey Lau Chun-Wai, 1992). The song was performed on screen in a karaoke fashion by Wong Wan-sze, Petrina Fung Bo-bo, and Tony Leung Ka-fai (synchronized to the voice of Lowell Lo), coming full circle as a film song like "Taiwan Melody."

Furthermore, *Circuit Listening* is not just about the 1960s past but also about its relevance to the present and future, which has significant potentials for cultural policy, curatorial practice, and future research. The fugitive cultural forms of the Taiwanese-language music and films of the 1960s have been fixed and made permanent by film preservation and restoration in the digital age. But the laborious and manual search for the fugitive sounds and images started during the analogue era. In a roundtable discussion about the rise and fall of Taiwanese-language films between 1955 and 1962 titled "How to Preserve Taiwan Cinema's Cultural Heritage" convened at the Chinese Taipei Film Archive by its then director Ray Jiing on June 24, 1989, film critic and educator Chang Chang-Yan mentioned how the neglect of *taiyupian* prompted a program he was curating with film critic Alphonse Youth-Leigh for the Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival in December 1989. The program was supported by Ray Jiing as the first step toward a long-term collection, preservation, and research of Taiwan's local film culture. The Chinese Taipei Film Archive was then transformed into Taiwan Film Institute under film scholar Wenchi Lin's leadership, who initiated the restoration of *taiyupian* including *Goodbye, Taipei* (discussed in chapter 3) along with classics such as King Hu's *Dragon Inn* (1967), *A Touch of Zen* (1971), and Hou Hsiao-Hsien's *Daughter of the Nile* (1987). Taiwanese cultural policy under President Tsai Ing-wen since 2016 has emphasized local Taiwanese consciousness and culture, thus the once marginal circuit of *taiyupian* has gone mainstream with the promotion and vision of film scholars Chen Pin-Chuan and Wang Chun-Chi as the second and current directors of the Taiwan Film Institute (now Taiwan Film and Audiovisual Institute) after Lin. Wang's research interests revolve around gender, sexuality, feminist studies, and *taiyupian* studies, which have gradually emerged from a male-centered, Mandarin-dominated cultural landscape in the Chinese-speaking worlds. *Circuit Listening*'s emphasis on Taiwan resonates with the current trend-setting cultural policy and curatorial practice and should be brought into dialogue with recent scholarship, such as the special issue of the *Journal of Chinese Cinemas* coedited by Chris Berry and Mingyeh T. Rawnsley in 2020, monographs by Su Chih-Heng in 2019 and Lin

Kuei-Chang in 2020 on *taiyupian*;[14] a Ph.D. dissertation by Pien-Pien Yen in 2019, an anthology coedited by Eva Tsai, Tung-hung Ho, and Miaoju Jian in 2019, and monographs by Hung Fang-Yi and Peifong Chen, respectively, in 2020 and Teng-fang Hsu in 2021 on Taiwanese music.[15] The collective and creative efforts in collection, preservation, restoration, research, curation, and consumption of audiovisual artefacts have created and will create new experiences and memories of audiovisual readership and spectatorship in expected and unexpected circuits.

Fig. 1 "Taiwan Melody" in *Air Hostess* (1959) is a Mandarin cover of the first major hit of postwar Taiwan, a "folk" love song entitled "Night in a Southern City" / "Night in the City of Tainan" 南都之夜 (1946) composed by Hsu Shih 許石.
"Night in a Southern City" appears on "Folksongs of Taiwan," King Records KLK-59-B, c. 1962-64. © National Museum of Taiwan History

[14] See Chris Berry and Ming-yeh T. Rawnsley, eds. "Taiwanese-Language Films (*taiyupian*)," special issue, *Journal of Chinese Cinemas* 14, no. 2 (2020); Su Chih-Heng, *Wu ganyuan de dianying shi: Cengjing Taiwan you ge Haolaiwu* [Once Upon a Time in Hollywood Taiwan: The Life and Death of Taiwanese Hokkien Cinema] (Taipei: SpringHill Publishing, 2019); Lin Kuei-Chang, *Taiyupian de moli: Cong gushi, mingxing, daoyan dao leixing yu xingxiao de dianying guanjianci* [The Power of Taiyu Pian: Keywords of Taiwanese-Language Cinema] (Taipei: Guerrilla Publishing, 2020).

[15] Pien-Pien Yen, "Reception of Jazz Music in Taiwan," Ph.D. dissertation, National Chengchi University, 2019; Eva Tsai et al., *Made in Taiwan*; Hung Fang-Yi, *Qupan kai chu yi rui hua: Zhanqian Taiwan liuxing yinyue duben* [Lost Sounds of Pre-war Taiwanese Popular Records] (Taipei: Yuan-Liou Publishing, 2020); Peifong Chen, *Gechang Taiwan: Lianxu zhimin xia Taiyu gequ de bianqian* [Singing Taiwan: Changes in Taiwanese Songs under Continuous Colonization] (Taipei: Acropolis Publishing, 2020); Teng-fang Hsu, *Liusheng qupan zhong de Taiwan: Tingjian bainian meisheng yu lishi fengqing* [Taiwan in Phonograph Records: Listening to the Music and Historical Moments of a Century] (Taipei: National Taiwan University Library, 2021).

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