

Thesis abstract

The aim of this thesis is to describe the role of school songs in the modernization of Chinese music. Since the establishment of modern Chinese education school songs have become an important part of Japanese-based teaching materials as well as a tool for introducing and transferring political ideology. The tunes of the early school songs were adapted from Western romantic songs and Japanese school songs, and as I argue, this have shaped the Chinese musical taste towards a greater popularity of music including western compositional elements and thus westernization of music in general.

In addition to describing the musical specifics of Chinese school songs, the work focuses on more general questions about the modernization and westernization of Chinese music. Compositions written by Shen Xingong (1869-1947), Li Shutong (1880-1942) and Zeng Zhimin (1879-1929), prefaces to various editions of collected school songs, and articles on the relationship of these songs to the education system in China is the primary focus of the current study.

Key words: modernization; Chinese music; school songs; early 20 century