“We Found Ourselves”—Music and Identity Among the Chinese American Diaspora in Miami

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UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

“WE FOUND OURSELVES”—
MUSIC AND IDENTITY AMONG THE CHINESE AMERICAN DIASPORA IN MIAMI

By
Yiyu Zhang

A THESIS

Submitted to the Faculty of the University of Miami in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Music

Coral Gables, Florida

December 2013
A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Music

“WE FOUND OURSELVES”—
MUSIC AND IDENTITY AMONG THE CHINESE AMERICAN DIASPORA IN MIAMI

Yiyu Zhang

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“We Found Ourselves”—Music and Identity

Among the Chinese American Diaspora in Miami

Abstract of a thesis at the University of Miami.

Thesis supervised by Professor Deborah Schwartz-Kates.
No. of pages in text. (93)

Chinese American communities have been part of the United States since the 19th century. Presently, their high rates of immigration have made them one of this country’s fastest growing communities. However, in Miami, only 0.3% of the population are Chinese Americans. In this local setting, music serves, in the words of Su Zheng, as an important “signifier that produces complex cultural meanings.” Because traditional music forms one of the most significant aspects of music in China, it is critical to explore the extent to which Chinese American musical culture has developed and changed. This thesis discusses the function of Chinese music influences Chinese and Chinese Americans in their new diasporic setting, and the music form individual or group identities.

This thesis explores two types of Chinese American communities in Miami centered around: 1) the Chinese Baptist Church and 2) local educational settings.
Through these contexts, this study shows how music among Chinese Americans in Miami involves the preservation and enactment of cultural traditions in daily life, religion, and festivals through which diasporic communities maintain their sense of identity and place. The music of Chinese Americans in Miami has established its own hybrid tradition that is unique to its own local and national roots and that helps shape the contemporary local diaspora.

This thesis fills a gap in the study of the Chinese American experience, both in Miami and in the United States. Through different research methods, I observe that the Chinese American musical community is an exceptionally complex diasporic world that, in many respects, markedly contrasts with established Chinese settlements in the United States. This complexity is a product of both the unique cultural environment of Miami and the individual experiences of Chinese American immigrants and their music-making.
Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the numerous people who assisted me during my studies in the United States. I would like to thank my thesis supervisory committee members. First, I would like to thank Dr. Deborah Schwartz-Kates for her invaluable contribution. She supported me throughout the preparation of my thesis with her great patience, endless editing, and knowledge during my studies at the University of Miami. I am grateful to her for helping me find the focus of this thesis, for reading the various drafts, and for revising every single aspect of them. Also I am grateful to her for her detailed criticisms and thoughtful suggestions about the logical order of information in the thesis. Without her encouragement, as well as her two years of assistance and guidance on this thesis, my master’s research would not have been possible. I am also grateful to the other members of my committee, Dr. Willa Collins and Dr. Carlos Abril, for their editorial assistance as well as for their thoughtful comments and multiple perspectives. I am grateful for their help in the research of this thesis. My work owes a great deal to these three remarkable scholars.

I also want to thank the faculty and staff at the University of Miami for their kind help. Special thanks go to Professor Frank Cooper, Dr. Melissa de Graaf, Dr. Coreen Duffy, and Nancy Zavac for their invaluable advice and support. The library staff provided friendly and helpful service. I would not have had the opportunity to succeed in my graduate studies without the help of these people.

In addition, I would also like to express my debt to previous scholars who have worked on the subject of Chinese Americans and their musical expressions in the United States.
States. I am especially indebted to the ethnomusicologist Su Zheng, who has written extensively on Chinese American studies. I am deeply grateful for her work.

Above all, thanks should go to my interviewees—the members of the Chinese Baptist Church of Miami, the faculty and staff of the Confucius Institute, the instructional staff and students at the University of Miami, and the performers of Chinese and Chinese American music who informed my research.

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Finally, I extend deep gratitude to my parents, Jincai Zhang and Jing Kang, and my grandmother Deyu Fu for their enormous understanding, support, and encouragement.
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Historically, most Chinese American immigrants came to the United States from southeastern China, bringing their own culture, heritage, and history. Early undocumented arrivals entered the country as early as the 1700s. In their long history of life in the United States, the Chinese have faced numerous challenges. In 1852, the first Cantonese opera performance was held, and the first Chinese theatre was built in San Francisco, California.\(^1\) Since that time, Chinese American communities have formed part of the United States. Presently, their high rates of immigration have made them one of this country’s fastest growing communities. The table below summarizes the total population of the Chinese people in America at fifty-year intervals from 1850 to 2010.\(^2\)

Table 1.1 Chinese American Population of the United States, 1850-2010.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>4,018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>89,863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>117,629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1,645,472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>3,347,299</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


According to the 2010 U.S. census, the Chinese American population numbered approximately 3.8 million people, half of whom live in California and New York. The table below shows the U.S. states with the largest Chinese populations:

Table 1.2 States with the Largest Chinese Populations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Chinese American population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>1,122,187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>451,859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>170,803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>121,588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>110,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>92,380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>86,095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>75,884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>59,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>56,831</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chinese American communities in these areas have developed local forms of musical culture. For example: The California Youth Chinese Symphony (CYCS), a non-profit organization, provides traditional Chinese music and instruments for local members of the community. In New York City, the Chinese Music Ensemble of New York is the oldest and largest non-profit organization that performs Chinese music in America. Leaders of this group also teach young members of the local community how to play traditional Chinese instruments. They have an explicit goal, which is to promote and

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3 Ibid.


extend the Chinese musical heritage in America. In Texas, the Chinese American Original Music Association (CAOMUSIC) is organized by musical enthusiasts who are primarily Chinese and who promote the appreciation of Chinese culture and heritage through the performance of original Chinese music.

Florida is the fourth most populous state in the U.S., exceeded only by California, Texas, and New York. The state is known for its diverse population that comes from a variety of ethnic, racial, national, and religious groups. The state has attracted a number of immigrants including the Chinese (see Table 1.2). Miami, an international community commonly known as the “Gateway to Latin America,” is a major urban center with a Spanish-speaking majority and the U.S. city with the largest Cuban-American population. In Miami, only 0.3% of the population (399,457 people) are Chinese or Chinese American. In Table 1.3, is a further breakdown of the Chinese people who live in the most populous cities of Florida.

---


Table 1.3 Cities with the Highest Percentage of Chinese in Florida

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage of Chinese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jacksonville</td>
<td>821,784</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami</td>
<td>399,457</td>
<td>1,084</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampa</td>
<td>335,709</td>
<td>1,698</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Petersburg</td>
<td>244,769</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orlando</td>
<td>238,300</td>
<td>1,491</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tallahassee</td>
<td>181,376</td>
<td>1,760</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollywood</td>
<td>140,768</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this local setting, music serves, in the words of Su Zheng, as an important signifier that produces complex cultural meanings. From this point of view, it is important to examine the way we think about Chinese and Chinese American cultural identity. How are Chinese American musical activities affected by local cultural histories? What are the musical expressions of this community, and how do they convey their “cultural longings and belongings”? Because traditional music forms one of the most significant aspects of musical culture in China, it is critical to explore the extent to which Chinese American musical culture has developed and changed. What are the characteristics of Chinese American music in Miami? What is the function of this music,

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9 Zheng Su, Claiming Diaspora: Music, Transnationalism, and Cultural Politics in Asian/Chinese America (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 7. The following discussion in this paragraph owes a considerable debt to Zheng’s work.

10 Ibid.
and how does it influence Chinese Americans in their new diasporic setting? How can music form a part of individual or group identities? It is important and necessary to pay attention to these issues at the present time because of the growing international presence of the Chinese population in the world today. This study aims to explore these questions in greater depth.

**Literature Review**

Research about Chinese Americans has grown increasingly significant in the last few decades due to the increasing demographic presence of this population in the United States. Some of these studies, such as Krystyn R. Moon’s work on the Chinese in American popular music and performance (1850s-1920s)\(^ {11}\), focuses on the historical past. These scholars tend to concern themselves with issues related to historical musicology. In contrast, Su Zheng’s *Claiming Diaspora: Music, Transnationalism, and Cultural Politics in Asian/Chinese America*\(^ {12}\) serves as an important contribution to contemporary ethnomusicological studies. She examines the musical activities of Asian Americans, especially focusing on the specific cultural group of Chinese Americans in New York.


City. In addition, *The Musical Activities of the Chinese American Communities in the San Francisco Bay Area: A Social and Cultural Study* by Wei Hua Zhang\(^{13}\) is another important contribution to the study of local Chinese and Chinese American communities in the United States. Deborah Wong’s book, *Speak It Louder: Asian Americans Making Music*,\(^{14}\) examines the musical experiences of Asian Americans who incorporate traditional musical forms within jazz, classical, and popular music in both Philadelphia and southern California. These books, along with journal articles on the subject, reflect the variety of musical expressions of Chinese Americans who are living in the United States.\(^{15}\) Because none of these studies address the music activities of Chinese Americans communities in Miami, my work will fulfill this role.

This study will address the local Chinese American community within the theoretical framework of “diaspora.” This vast field of diaspora studies has increasingly engaged the interest of ethnomusicologists in recent years. Although it goes beyond the scope of this paper to review the comprehensive diaspora literature here, two scholars who have influenced my work significantly are the anthropologist James Clifford and the

\(^{13}\) Zhang Wei Hua, “The Musical Activities of the Chinese American Communities in the San Francisco Bay Area: A Social and Cultural Study” (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1994).


ethnomusicologist Mark Slobin. In his book titled, *In Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*, Clifford defines a “diasporic homeland” as “an emotionally resonant home from which one has been separated by time, physical distance, and the experience of loss.” In *Music in Diaspora: The View from Euro-America*, Slobin defines a model that includes “superculture, subculture, and interculture.” In his book, *In the Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introducion*, Slobin claims that “music itself becomes a kind of homeland to the musician’s compounded sense of Diaspora.” His aim is to showcase the importance of music to nonmusic diaspora scholars. All of these perspectives will inform and engage with my research.

**Ethnomusicological and Cultural Theory**

As previously noted, music in Chinese American life serves “as an important signifier that produces complex cultural meanings.” It re-elaborates diversified forms of

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17 Ibid., 269.


the Chinese cultural heritage that are deeply rooted in various enduring traditions and histories. As the social anthropologist Martin F. Manalansan IV explains,

Music is an essential vehicle of social, aesthetic, and political expression among Chinese Americans that is manifested and reflected in various music ensembles, heterogeneous genres, and performance practices. It shapes the palpable diasporic experience of Chinese American musicians and the complex interactions between community organizations and local, national, and transnational cultural institutions.

Diaspora, a term from Biblical sources associated with “particular histories of suffering and violence,” was originally applied to Jews scattered throughout the world, without a single homeland. Now it “shares meanings with a larger semantic domain that includes words like immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest-worker, exile, community, overseas community, [and] ethnic community,” such as the Chinese in America. During the last decade of the twentieth century, the notion of the diaspora also became a key concept “in organizing contemporary intellectual ideas, exploring the politics of identity, and characterizing experiences of hybridity, difference, displacement, and

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21 The discussion in this paragraph owes a great debt to Su Zheng, who has written extensively on the subject in her study, *Claiming Diaspora: Music, Transnationalism, and Cultural Politics in Asian/Chinese America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 11.


transgression.” Paul Gilroy describes diaspora as the struggle to “comprehend the dynamics of identity and belonging constituted between the poles of geography and genealogy.” Walker Connor states that a diaspora is “the segment of a people living outside the homeland.” J. Lawrence Witzleben in his “Review Essay: Music and Diaspora” summarizes Safran’s six characteristics of diaspora communities:

Dispersal from an original center, collective memory of the homeland, belief in maintaining or restoring the homeland, and having “ethnocommunal consciousness and solidarity” defined in part by the community’s relationship to the homeland. (1991:83-84)

Finally, under the influence of Zheng’s conceptual framework, I use “diaspora” as a descriptive term referring to Chinese Americans’ past and present socio-cultural experiences and “their structures of feelings, memories, and subjectivities.”

Two significant theoretical concepts that underscore the relationship between music and place further extend our perspective. First is the development of urban ethnomusicology beginning in the 1970s, which, according to Adelaida Reyes-Schramm,

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29 Zheng, Claiming Diaspora: Music, 11.
30 Ibid., 17.
established the urban area as an “ethnomusicological study in its own right.”

Reyes-Schramm states that the urban area is “an intricate network of interacting institutions and individuals” and takes part in “a global network linked by mass communication and systems of transportation, by international politics and commerce” (1975:1). The recognition of an urban area as a legitimate field of ethnomusicological research provides greater possibilities for the exploration of migration and music in the complex modern community of Miami. A second key concept involves the interconnections between race, gender, and class, which emerge as central parameters for observation and analysis. As a result, the current state of the discipline focuses on exploring various sets of relationships, including relationships between music, identity, inequality, and power; as well as subaltern discourses about music history and their relationship to social, political, and economic conditions. Both the study of urban ethnomusicology and current research on relationships of race, gender and class reflect and contribute to the study of Chinese American music in Miami.

31 Ethnic Music, the Urban Area and Ethnomusicology (Sociologus, 1979), 3.
Methodology

The methodology of this thesis centers around fieldwork with Chinese American communities in various locations throughout Miami from July 2012 until November 2013. Like Kay Shelemay, I perceived my fieldwork as representing a mixture of experiencing life “at home and abroad.”35 Since moving to Miami two years ago, the city arose as the place where I carried out my fieldwork, led my daily life, and pursued my academic degree. I attended Chinese musical performances, read Chinese-language Miami newspapers, shopped in Chinese supermarkets, and entertained friends in Chinese restaurants. During this time period, I participated in Chinese American musical activities and interviewed local musicians. I gathered most of the information from formal interviews and casual conversations in the community. These dialogues took place with musicians, faculty members, students, church members, organizers of musical events, and musical groups.

In addition to these experiences, I used questionnaires to ask people about their music and identity. Some of my sample questions included: What musical activities do you participate in? What type of music in the church do you like? Does the music you

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hear have a special significance for you? Does it relate to your identity as a Chinese American? Another essential part of my data derived from the transcription and analysis of musical examples and song texts. Chinese-language newspapers in Florida—*The United Chinese News of Florida, The Florida Chinese News, Florida Overseas Chinese Weekly, The Epoch Times* (Florida), and the *North American Economic Herald* (Florida)—have also been particularly valuable sources of information.

This study is based on my observations and participation in the social practices of Chinese Americans living in Miami. Because there is no central locale (such as a Miami Chinatown) and because there is no centralized form of official music-making, I selected two sites to carry out my research, both of which involve significant musical experiences and activities. The first site centered around Chinese churches in the community. The two largest religious establishments of this kind are the Chinese Christian Gospel Church in Miami and the Chinese Baptist Church of Miami. These sites serve as places of worship for Chinese Americans who converted to Christianity in the United States. In

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36 A complete list of questions used in interviews and questionnaires appears in the appendices A-C. These research methods were approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Miami in April 2012.


these churches, I attended services and interviewed the members about their involvement and motivations for participating in the church. I asked about their musical activities, specifically inquiring about the different forms of U.S. and Chinese music that are used within the church service and in outside church-related activities.

The second site for studying the Chinese American community in Miami consists of educational and cultural institutions in the city. Two of the most prominent examples are the Confucius Institute at Miami Dade College (Wolfson Campus)\(^{39}\) and the University of Miami. At the Confucius Institute and at the University of Miami, I interviewed faculty members and students, asking them about their motivations for teaching or studying at the institution, and I inquired about the type of music that they performed, studied, and experienced as part of their training. This information allowed me to understand what type of Chinese music is used, the extent to which it has changed, and the significance it acquires for those who experience it.

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Organization and Research Contribution

In the following chapters of this thesis, I offer an analysis of how music among Chinese Americans in Miami involves the preservation and enactment of cultural traditions in daily life, religion, and festivals through which diasporic communities maintain their sense of identity and place. In the next chapter, I discuss the impact of music in the Chinese church. I attest to the way that the church influences the way that Chinese and Chinese Americans carry out their daily lives and consolidate their identity. In the following chapter, I explore the impact of the diasporic experience on music-making in educational settings and describe the interactions between local individuals, music groups, and cultural institutions. The final chapter, consisting of my conclusions, synthesizes the specific characteristics of cultural identity among Chinese American communities in Miami.

This research fills a gap in the study of the Chinese American experience, both in Miami and in the United States. With this study, I support Zheng’s conclusions that the Chinese American musical community is one of extraordinary complexity. Yet, I also show that this diasporic world markedly contrasts with established Chinese settlements in New York, San Francisco, and other large cities throughout the United States. I will

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40 Zheng, Claiming Diaspora, 7.
illustrate this complexity as a product of both the unique cultural environment of Miami, and the individual experiences of Chinese American immigrants and their music-making. These observations reveal fresh insights about Chinese American communities within their real and imagined diasporic experiences in Miami.
CHAPTER 2
Chinese Church Music in Miami

The institution of Chinese American churches in the United States offers an important sense of unity for its members. Yet, within the Chinese American church, American-born and overseas Chinese have vastly different worldviews. There seem to be tensions among Chinese who were born overseas and those born in the United States. Not only are there generational differences, but also cultural differences. Even within the Chinese American community itself, individuals may come from different social and cultural backgrounds, and they often have different dialects or languages. Moreover, members of Chinese American churches not only come from mainland China, but also from Hong Kong and Taiwan, adding to the diversity of this community.

In the United States, participation in Christianity is a common practice. In contrast, attitudes and practices differ markedly overseas, depending on whether someone comes from mainland China, Hong Kong, or Taiwan. In mainland China, Christianity is not considered a traditional religion, and religious practices are not officially sanctioned. Beginning with the introduction of Christianity in China by Protestant missionaries during the early nineteenth century, the Christian religion has met with cultural, social,
and political obstacles. Political conflicts with Christianity worsened under the rule of the Chinese Communist Party. After 1949, during the establishment of the People’s Republic of China, all foreign missionaries were expelled, and the practice of Christianity was officially banned. Citizens belonging to the Party were no longer allowed to practice an organized religion. Besides opposing Christianity on ideological grounds, the Communist Party viewed the Christian religion as a relic of a pre-modern past.

While Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan do share some cultural and linguistic similarities, their political and ideological framework is substantially different. Cultural policies and operations in these three areas are derived from different political systems, social structures, and philosophical frameworks.

In Hong Kong, religious freedom is considered a fundamental human right. It is protected by the legal framework of the country and is supported by government legislation. A large variety of religious groups exist in Hong Kong that include Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Christianity. Apart from offering religious instruction, many major religious bodies have established educational institutions for the

\[\text{footnote} 41\] The first missions in China, sent by the London Missionary Society, arrived in Guangzhou (Canton Province) in 1807. Since then, the growth of the faith has been particularly significant. Ching Sun and Wan Wong, Catalogue of the London Missionary Society Collection Held in the National Library of Australia (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2001).
young and provided facilities for social welfare.\textsuperscript{42} Similarly, Taiwan has a wide variety of religious practices and institutions due to the protection of religious freedom in the Constitution. For this reason, many members of Chinese American churches are first-generation immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan who are Christian already.

In the United States, Chinese churches have grown rapidly ever since the 1960s when changes in U.S. immigration policies spurred an influx of new arrivals to the U.S. from mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. The number of churches increased even more rapidly during the 1980s, when large numbers of Chinese students and researchers studying in the United States began flocking to Christian churches. These newcomers found many churches readily accessible and welcoming. A core part of the church membership consisted of immigrants from Taiwan and Hong Kong, who converted to Christianity after fleeing Communist mainland China. Other members became members of the religion after immigrating to the United States. In this way, Chinese from diverse social, cultural, and political backgrounds gathered together in America.

Today, it would appear that Chinese Christian churches have emerged as the predominant religious institution among Chinese in the United States. For example,

Fengang Yang (1999), a U.S. sociologist of Chinese descent, estimates that about 32% of the Chinese community of Los Angeles and Chicago belongs to the Christian church.43 The high proportion of Christians among the Chinese stands in remarkable contrast to old images. Historically, many Chinese were labeled as “rice-bowl Christians” because they attended church in search of material support rather than worship.44 Yet, over the decades, through a relatively small but continuous group of followers, Christianity has become a “Chinese tradition” and the majority of members who currently attend the church believe in Christianity.

There are about 27 churches in Florida, most of which are located in Orlando and Miami. In the latter city, the two most important are the Chinese Christian Gospel Church in Miami and the Chinese Baptist Church of Miami. In the remainder of this chapter, I will focus on the Chinese Baptist Church of Miami, one of the most influential religious institutions in the city. In addition, this Church is the largest in Miami and has the largest number of participants. For six months, from September 2012 to March 2013, I carried out fieldwork there among the Christian Chinese community. Based on this fieldwork, I

43 Fengang Yang, Chinese Christians in America: Conversion, Assimilation, and Adhesive Identities (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999). In his study, Yang did not discuss the remaining 68%, who presumably belong to other religious communities or are unaffiliated.

will discuss the ways that people belonging to this church create a united ethnic identity through their common belief system rooted in Christianity. In addition, I examine how this Chinese American congregation’s worship and music reflect their diversity.

This discussion will be organized into four sections. First, I give an overview of the history of The Chinese Baptist Church of Miami. Then, I provide a comparative analysis of two types of worship service—the Mandarin (“traditional”) and English (“contemporary”)—in which Christianity has served as a framework for members of the community to shape their identities. I also interview members of the congregation and analyze elements of their identity constructions. Next, I refer to other musical activities in the Church, such as the Little Voices Choir, the Joyful Ringers Handbell Choir, and Family Musical Night. Finally, I integrate an analysis of the musical characteristics of Chinese hymns into the discourse.

A Brief History of the Chinese Baptist Church of Miami

The Chinese Baptist Church of Miami was officially constituted on Sunday, June 11, 1972, when the primary Christian families engaged a civil engineering professor from the University of Miami, Dr. Wan Chang to supervise the church-building process, because they wanted their own place of worship. Over time, the congregation developed
a plan to build the church and negotiated the shape that daily religious life would take.

They founded a number of Christian fellowships whose members shared similar interests, ideals, or experiences. The classification of these fellowships is based on age, language, and gender. Of the nine current fellowships in the church, four that are especially important are: (1) the fellowship for Mandarin overseas students, scholars and their families (NCCF); (2) the Mark Young Adult Fellowship for Mandarin young adults (MYAF); (3) the Caleb Senior Adult Fellowship (CSAF) for Cantonese or English senior citizens and retirees; and (4) the Joshua Young Adult Fellowship for English-speaking young adults (JYAF).

Another important initiative is the publication *Home News*, which advertises recent news in this church. It includes biographies of its members. Another section is called, “My Testimony,” in which members of the congregation attest to their spiritual experiences. Elsewhere a section, termed, “Actions for Missions,” reports on members’ efforts to proselytize. The newsletter also contains reports from the different fellowships. It is published twice a year and there are currently 94 issues in print.

*Home News* effectively facilitates the communication and interaction between the church and its participants. Also, it encourages members to contribute to the growth and prosperity of the church. In general, the word “home” refers to where a person lives—
either their physical location or their native country, state, or locality. The word also implies a comfortable environment offering warmth, security, and affection. The Church extends these meanings to include the idea of a home as a place where local Christians are insiders who welcome and accept overseas Chinese. As part of the experience, they provide delicious Chinese food for students who remember and miss the hometown flavors of their country. The Church offers a place where these people, even those who are not Christians, feel at home. They want these people to form an emotional connection to the church and to miss it when they leave. The Church hopes that everyone in its group will feel like family. Church members witness the birth and growth of children, the marriage of couples, and the death of the elderly. In the first cover issue of *Home News*, shown in Figure 2.1, the imagery associated with the fortieth anniversary of the church is associated with the years of a happy couple, surrounded by brightly colored hearts and flowers. The church constructs a self-image, not only as the home of the Lord, but also as a cherished space where dislocated Chinese can belong.
The history of the Chinese Baptist Church of Miami can be delineated into three phases. The earliest phases began in 1968, when Pastor Kwong-Wah Lau, a writer in Hong Kong, came to Miami. Back then, there were less than 30 people who wished to worship Christianity. They had to hold Sunday afternoon services in a small fellowship hall in the Flagler Street Baptist Church. Of these few primary families and immigrants, over 90% at the time were grocery store owners. These residents for the most part were born overseas. Arriving in the U.S. with few resources and skills, and these individuals relied on language assistance programs and were aided by kinship and family associations. Compared with professions like accounting, law, and medicine, which

45 Author’s collection.
required the knowledge of English and an extensive U.S. education, the grocery store business was easy to enter and therefore extremely common among immigrants.

In less than two years, the number of worshippers grew so rapidly that they ran out of space, creating the need for a building project—an endeavor that arose even before the church was formally established. On June 12, 1972, the building was completed and constituted as an independent, Chinese church. After the original Cantonese, the name of the church was pronounced “May-ah-May”, rather than Miami.

In the beginning, the church was housed in a modest space, but it nonetheless offered a strong sense of community. As one member recalled: “Even though the place was small, the brothers and sisters were very devoted to one another, just like a big family.” He continued: “God has greatly blessed our church right from the beginning.” The first Deacon of the church was Dr. Chang You Wu, a world-renowned surgeon known for heart transplants. Not long after the church was formed, more fellowships were established: the Timothy Young Adult Fellowship (TYAF), Mark Youth Adult Fellowship (MYAF), Joshua Young Adult English Fellowship (JYAF),

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47 Interview by the author, Florida, Miami, 16 September 2012.

48 Ibid.
Noah Youth Adult Fellowship (NYAF), Caleb Senior Adult Fellowship (CSAF), English Children Fellowship (Sunbeam), and Junior Chinese Baptist Youth Fellowship (Junior CBYF). Soon after, this church established the Mission Department, and appointed the second Sunday of every month as Mission Sunday. All the mission offerings went towards supporting missionary work outside the church, especially to the organizations which did outreach specifically to the Chinese.\(^49\)

The main sanctuary was completed in 1982. After it was completed, the original space was converted into an alternate hall, to be used for dining or special events. The completion of the main sanctuary established the first church by Chinese Christians in the state of Florida and throughout the southeastern United States. The government of Miami Dade County was pleased that the Chinese population, which was rather small, could establish for themselves a church without incurring any debt or requiring a bank loan.\(^50\)

For this reason Mayor Stephen Clark established June 12, 1972 as the Chinese Baptist Church of Miami Day and issued a certificate in memory of the event.\(^52\)

\(^49\) Ibid.  
\(^50\) Ibid.  
\(^51\) Ibid.  
\(^52\) Ibid.
From 1983 to 2002, the church went through a third construction phase in which it completed the Sunday School classrooms. After this time, the Ministry flourished. This Sunday School was voted by the Florida Baptist Convention as one of the ten fastest growing Sunday Schools in the entire state. The church choir also received a certificate of excellence from the Florida Baptist Convention.

In 1990, Pastor Lau began the practice of implementing short-term missions to other churches in the state. These missions had a large-scale Chinese gospel folk song evangelical event at four different locations: North Miami Beach, Orlando, Jacksonville, and Clearwater. At each event, about a hundred people from the church participated, with a total attendance of at least 250 people. In one event, the number of churchgoers in attendance reached 700 people. In addition, the church conducted numerous gospel musical events, featuring The Chinese Gospel Folk Song Choir, led by Brother Antonio Ngo. The hymns presented were famous Chinese folk songs that Pastor Lau replaced with Gospel lyrics. These events attracted many Chinese scholars who came to listen to the music and take part in the religious experience.
Order of Worship Services

Since the beginning of the church, the choir has faithfully served in every worship service. In 1982, Antonio Ngo began attending church and worked with Pastor Kwong Wah Lau to develop the music ministry. Sharing the same vision, Ngo and Lau reorganized the music department and set the quality of musical worship to a high standard. Throughout the years, the Sanctuary Choir has performed in local events. To this day, important classical works such as Vivaldi’s *Gloria* and Handel’s *Messiah* are still performed during worship services on a regular basis. The Chinese Gospel Folk Song Choir was established to reach non-believers from China. This group blended a variety of styles, including Chinese folk tunes, U.S. gospel music, and sacred Christian texts created by Pastor Lau. Some pieces used gospel melodies with texts in Chinese. Others changed the lyrics of familiar Chinese folk tunes to Pastor Lau’s sacred texts. This choir sang mainly during Revival meetings. Now part of the Sanctuary Choir, it performs songs in Mandarin regularly during the 11:00 a.m service.

A valuable theoretical framework for understanding this complex mixture of languages and texts appears in the work of the sociologist Fenggang Yang in his book.

*Chinese Christians in America: Conversion, Assimilation, and Adhesive Identities.*

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53 Fenggang, *Chinese Christians in America*, 100.
Yang identifies language as a common problem of immigrant churches. He states that if English is not the original language of the immigrant group, the idea of adopting English in the church will come up eventually.\(^{54}\) In his discussion, Yang references the previous ideas of Mullin who, in 1987, asserted that “an immigrant church will evolve from a monolingual (non-English) stage to a bilingual (English plus the original language) stage and end with a monolingual (English only) stage.”\(^{55}\) Yang disagrees with this unilineal evolutionary process as applied to Chinese churches in the United States. He points out that many of these churches have adopted English but still preserve the original languages (both the Cantonese dialect and Mandarin).\(^{56}\) The Chinese Baptist Church of Miami follows this model, with trilingual worship services in English, Mandarin, and Cantonese.

The Chinese Baptist Church of Miami has two worship services in the main sanctuary on Sunday morning. The first service takes place in English at 9:30 a.m.; the second is in English and Mandarin or Cantonese at 11:00 a.m. The second service normally follows the format of the first service, but the announcements and sermon are

\(^{54}\) Ibid.
\(^{55}\) Ibid.
\(^{56}\) Ibid.
all bilingual, with sentence by sentence interpretations from Mandarin or Cantonese into English. In the Sunday services, a maximum of 500 members attend religious events at the church. For instance, on January 13, 2013, the number of members at the Sunday worship services totaled around 300. In addition, around 150 children, young people, and adults attended Sunday school at the church.

The order of events in the two worship services is a little different, but most of the parts remain the same. However, each of the services has its own distinctive musical features. The services differ from one another in their repertoires of congregational hymns and music sung by the choir, as well as in features such as the choice of musical instruments and the style of accompaniment for congregational singing. A comparison of the two worship services held on January 20, 2013 is shown in Table 2.1. The differences in the two services are underlined below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>First Worship Service</strong> (English)</th>
<th><strong>Second Worship Service</strong> (Bilingual)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prelude</td>
<td>Prelude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent Prayer</td>
<td>Silent Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call to Worship: Psalm 62:5-8</td>
<td>Call to Worship: Psalm 62:5-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hymn: “Great Is Thy Faithfulness” (chorus)</td>
<td>Hymn: “Great Is Thy Faithfulness” (congregation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songs of Praise</td>
<td>Pastoral Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral Prayer</td>
<td>Pastoral Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sermon Passage Bible Reading: <em>Psalm 119:105</em></td>
<td>Sermon Passage: <em>Luke 19:1-10</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sermon: Thy Word</td>
<td>Sermon: <em>Are You A Hound Dog?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Bob Felder</td>
<td>Pastor Bob Felder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song of Commitment</td>
<td>Response Hymn: <em>Here Am I, Send Me, O</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In order to analyze these two worship services in the Chinese Baptist Church of Miami, it is first necessary to know about the musical traditions of the members’ birthplaces. The membership of this Church includes American-born Chinese, as well as Chinese from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Mainland China. The cultural aesthetics and musical practices are different depending on where people originally lived. The Chinese from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Mainland China do not only listen to their own music, but also Western classical music and multiethnic popular music in their homeland. However, these three groups have a long tradition of singing translated Western hymns. In “Reflections on the Musical Diversity of Chinese Churches in the United States,” Maria M. Chow claims that the type of hymns and musical styles in a service often play a primary role in deciding which service to attend or even which church to join. She states: “The reason for choosing to attend a service may be another’s reason for choosing not to

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attend. Either way, there are many reasons other than linguistic ties or shared geographical origin behind each decision.\textsuperscript{58} She concludes that even Chinese who speak different dialects or languages share a common educational background and usually have the same interests or aesthetic preferences. Despite their difference they may be attracted to the musical styles of the same worship service.

Most participants who attend the second Chinese service (in Mandarin and Cantonese), are older first-generation immigrants. The younger American-born Chinese and American-raised Chinese attend the second (English) service. Most people in the English congregation are children of the immigrants who attend the Chinese service. These two services differ in style and format. The Chinese service is more formal. Participants sing traditional hymns and the Doxology. The service starts and ends with formal calls to worship and a prelude and a postlude. The singing in the Chinese service is accompanied by piano only with chordal harmony. In contrast, singing in the English service usually takes a longer time. Besides performing hymns from the service hymnal, participants in the English service also sing many contemporary American Christian songs. The singing often starts with an allegro tempo, accompanied by percussion instruments, guitars, and an electronic keyboard. These rapid rhythms draw the attention

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid., 301.
of the young people into the worship. The differences between the Chinese service and the English service reflect the different needs of the first generation immigrants and their American-educated children. In short, the English service differs from the Chinese language service not only in language but also in musical practice.

These two worship services use the same hymnal, *Century Praise* (2001). There are 461 hymns in this book, including fresh, contemporary songs of praise as well as traditional hymns that cover a range of Chinese, Asian, and Western lyricists and composers. Both the traditional songs and the modern songs of praise meet the needs of different age groups of today’s worshippers. The uniqueness of *Century Praise* can be seen in the proportions or approximate percentages of its hymn classifications: traditional hymns (48%), gospel hymns (18%), contemporary praise songs (12%), twentieth-century hymns (10%), Chinese and Asian hymns and songs (10%), and unclassified musical compositions (2%). The format of this book is shown in Figure 2.2, which illustrates the Chinese words on the left and the English words on the right.

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In the Chinese service, any translations of the hymn involves interpreting or even transforming the original meaning. As Maria M. Chow states:

Every translated Chinese hymn text is a union of some tradition of Christian expression and the cultural experiences embedded in the Chinese language. The musical aesthetics of the Chinese hymns are inseparable from the aural experience of the Chinese dialects. For these people, the experience of singing in their own dialect is different from singing in English. The production of a Chinese and English bilingual hymnal especially a service hymnal requires not only specialized knowledge in music, theology, hymnology, and

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60 Ibid., 23.
English poetry, but also a perfect command of the Chinese dialect involved.  

The musicians are members of the congregation. In the English services, the second generation Chinese or younger foreign-born Chinese use contemporary popular music, from which contemporary Christian songs draw many of their musical characteristics. The members of the English congregations are more familiar with the contemporary Christian songs than traditional hymns, and the music represents the strong impact of popular culture on Christian churches.

More than half the current members of the Chinese Baptist Church of Miami are adult converts from non-Christian backgrounds. The meaning of religious conversion varies widely for different people of different religions. For Chinese Christians in America, Fenggang states that “conversion” has taken place when “a person has had the experience of being ‘born again and saved,’ or has accepted Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior and Lord.” One example is Yanxin Wang, who came from Mainland China with no religious background. In his own words:

It has been decades since I left my home town in YanTai, in Shan Dong province and came to Miami working at a Chinese restaurant as a chef. All these years I was always in good health and I saw no

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62 Fenggang, Chinese Christians in America, 70-71.
need to visit a doctor. But last year I started feeling really sick and it got worse. After many tests and much lab work, the doctor announced a diagnosis of Stage III lung cancer.

That was the lowest point in my life. I had no hope with a negative attitude…. Luckily, my wife Suzhen and many brothers and sisters still cared about me. They brought me to our church, encouraged me to attend Bible study and church activities, and led me to accept Him as my Savior.

After a few months, my speedy recovery was exceptionally promising, and my health was getting better and better. The unspeakable joy in my heart was beyond imagination. My Lord saves me! He loves me so much! I want to love Him more and more. I will be your Son forever.63

Jenny Shen is a good example of a younger student from China who attends this church. She graduated from Florida International University. According to her account:

The process of applying to study abroad was quite successful. It is God’s grace to me. So I came to the States in 2010 as an overseas student. Shortly after I had arrived in Miami, I was led to CBCM and had the chance to accept the truth. I feel so fulfilled. I like to listen to the pastor’s sermons and participate in fellowship activities. I make lots of friends and get great help from them.64

Xing Wang states that she felt members of the church cared about her and supported her, not only in her life but also in her spirituality:

Though the procedure of applying for college was smooth, life on campus was and still is a bumpy ride. Sometimes even when I am enjoying my accomplishments and friendships, or even when I am

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63 Author’s collection.
64 Ibid.
in the company of my family, I still feel lonely deep down. In moments like these, I know I am not standing alone.65

The Chinese Baptist Church of Miami has converted many Chinese students and immigrants. It has also been successful in promoting Christianity to the second generation. It has good Sunday school classes and fellowship activities for children. Christianity has become part of their lives. Matthew Oei, who was born in Miami, said:

I grew up in a family that always went to church, so I spent every Sunday at the Chinese Baptist Church of Miami. As a child, I listened to and accepted everything that I was taught about Christ. As I grew older, I gradually began to understand more about God … When I graduated from Jr. Church, I hoped to continue to grow as a Christian and to be able to serve God more.66

Amy Fang, also born in Miami, perceived the church as a place that could bring her enjoyment:

I have been attending the Chinese Baptist Church of Miami since I was six years old and have practically grown up here. This church has become nothing short of a second family to me. I remember my days in Junior Church—singing songs with many hand motions with Uncle Jonathan … Eventually, I grew to a young Christian—actively serving within the church in the music department and in CBYF.67

65 Ibid.
66 Ibid.
67 Ibid.
Musical Activities

In addition to traditional religious music, the Chinese Baptist Church of Miami holds various musical activities to enrich the leisure time of the congregation. These activities include concerts by The Little Voices Choir, The Joyful Ringers Handbell Choir, and Family Musical Night. All these music groups shared with the same instrumentalists. The instrumental accompaniments to these various groups are very simple, mostly only using piano or recorded accompaniment with singing. In The Joyful Ringers Handbell Choir, they use handbell only. One of the church member Mindy Wang, who contributed to the church’s music ministry for several years, mentioned: “I was one of the individuals who occasionally played piano for worship services, sang with the adult choir, played handbells, and performed with praise team.”

Instilling musicianship at a young age, the Little Voices Choir features elementary school singers. During combined worship services, the Little Voices Choir sings many choral works. The church believes that hymn singing can be particularly beneficial to children by helping them develop both spiritually and musically and by training them to become adult hymn singers. Other special groups, including families, also benefit from hymn singing. Even though family groups often prefer songs they already know, the

68 Ibid.
church teaches that it is important for them to continue learning new music to preserve the freshness of their congregational singing and to develop their faith.

Figure 2.3. The Little Voices Choir

The Joyful Ringers Handbell Choir also comes together to perform during worship services throughout the year. Begun in the 1980s, the handbell choir is comprised of ringers of all ages. Since its inception, this choir has attended local workshops and travelled as far as North Carolina to work with well-known performers. This year, the musical group attended a local workshop in Miami and met other performers in the community. The Joyful Ringers perform as a full choir, in trios or duets, or as soloists.

Ibid.
Both of these choirs continue to serve in the church’s biannual Christmas Candlelight Service. While many churches hold their Candlelight Service on Christmas Eve, this church features Christmas caroling instead. This church-wide outreach brings Christmas carols to employees and patrons at local Chinese restaurants.

In addition, Family Musical Night, which started in 1983, is another church-wide event held during the Christmas season. It is an evening when families in the church come together to celebrate their musical talents. In the early years, it was truly a family affair, as most of the participants got involved as a family. Later, children who performed solo pieces were presented with small gifts afterward. In the early 1990s, this became a biannual event, and the church celebrated its 25th Family Musical Night this year.

\[70\] Ibid.
Members of the church tell numerous stories about these popular events. Many participants—who rarely sing outside their homes, cars, or showers—practice for weeks or months for this special evening. Children, often persuaded by their parents, perform for the whole church family. Most of the performances delight the families, yet there is one story of a parent who was so embarrassed by her children’s performance that she took the gift and would not let them have it. By now, there are many humorous anecdotes such as this one and many recollections of group performances. Family Musical Night is an important communal event where fellowship groups, including the Junior Church, sing or act onstage—all in celebration of the gift of music.

**Musical Characteristics of Chinese Hymns**

As the theological scholar David W. Music points out, a principal characteristic of twentieth-century Chinese American hymns is variety. He writes that the word “hymn” often means “congregational song” and has a broader context than the meaning traditionally ascribed to the term. According to Music:

“Hymn” refers to any kind of sacred song sung by a corporate body of untrained singers, whether it be a traditional hymn, a contemporary Christian chorus, a congregational performance of an Anglican chant, or any other form of congregational music. The use of “hymn” in a
more specific sense (i.e., to contrast hymns with chants or gospel songs) is generally obvious from the context.\textsuperscript{71}

At first, in the nineteenth century, Chinese hymnody developed along the lines of traditional English models. Some of these pieces still form part of the church repertoire today. The texts are in strophic form, with the same music for each stanza. In order to make it easier for untrained Chinese singers to read the score, the music includes a numbered notation that corresponds to solfege syllables (Figure 2.2). Also, participants have the choice of Chinese or English lyrics. The lyrics of Chinese hymns cover a wide variety of subjects; however, Biblical content accounts for a large proportion of the repertoire. Other subjects include Christian daily life, church life, and seasonal themes. The tunes are printed along with four-part chordal harmony that is played by the piano. Chinese hymns include the translation and arrangement of Christian hymns, along with the adaptation of traditional Chinese melodies and American gospel songs.

The popular congregational song is widely used in the English worship services. These songs are quickly accepted by most second-generation Chinese Americans. In contrast with traditional hymns, the lyrics are more based on personal experience than on theological expression. The lively performance ensemble with guitar or drums makes the

participants feel more relaxed about singing in an informal style. It is quite different from
the traditional hymn style that requires the ability to read a music score and play a
complex harmony accompaniment on the piano.

In short, hymnody and popular congregational songs play a major role in the
musical life of the Chinese American Church.

In addition, hymns in original Chinese dialects form an indispensable part of the
service. As Maria M. Chow has noted: “The musical aesthetics of the translated Chinese
hymns are inseparable from the aural experience of the Chinese dialects.” She continues:

Many, who regularly sing translated Chinese hymns or Christian songs, speak English fluently and are able to appreciate the original English texts without any problem. They still choose, nonetheless, to sing the translated

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72 Author’s collection.
texts in the dialects they speak because, for them, the experience of singing in their own dialect is different from singing in English.\textsuperscript{73}

She points out that the Cantonese dialect as a tonal language has more tones than other Chinese dialects in which “different characters bearing totally different meanings are often pronounced with the same sound but with different tones.”\textsuperscript{74} These many tones in the spoken language can create difficulties in translating English hymns with a fixed melody into Chinese. The problem is that the original contour of the hymn melody may not match the tonal inflection of the dialect. To compensate, once the melody is completed, the translator will select those Chinese words that most closely match the intonation of the musical pitches. The composition of good lyrics becomes much more difficult and demanding, and the choice of words will still be very limited.\textsuperscript{75} Yet, singing hymns in one’s original dialect is so gratifying that many are willing to overcome these challenges. Indeed, more recently an increasing number of Christian songs are composed both in Cantonese and Mandarin. The musical styles of these songs resemble contemporary Christian songs and popular music from the United States.

\textsuperscript{73} Maria, “Reflections on the Musical Diversity of Chinese Churches in the United States,”, 302.

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid.
Conclusion

Chinese churches as communities often attract new Chinese immigrants and serve as places of refuge. Chinese hymns in the church allow first-generation immigrants to keep their real Chinese traditions. However, for the second-generation members of the community who speak English, Chinese songs make this church culturally diverse. For participants, the music they choose shapes their identities and the Chinese diasporic experience in Miami. The music in the Chinese Church—weekly Sunday worship services, The Little Voices Choir, The Joyful Ringers Handbell Choir, and Family Musical Night—have a great impact on how Chinese and Chinese Americans conduct their daily lives, because outside the Chinese church, they might not have a chance to participate in much Chinese music. In this situation, music in Miami Chinese churches demonstrates a multicultural and multilingual environment. These Chinese and Chinese American Christian practices in the Chinese Baptist Church of Miami establish special communities and create a sense of “Chineseness.”

Palinkas argues that the church functions to aid in the acculturation of immigrants.\(^76\) Chinese residents of Miami go to the church not only for their faith, but

also because it brings them the emotional comfort of their homeland. Some Chinese convert to Christian practices upon arrival in the U.S. This conversion not only takes place because of the pressures of a new environment, but also because the new settlers greatly enjoy the music and feel that the Church is a “home place.” For example, Amy Lee, one of the Chinese Baptist Church members, says: “While the church building does give a sense of ‘home’ it is mostly because people associate it with the events, people, or lessons that they meet and experience in the church building.”77 Furthermore, Chinese music in this church is a way for second generation Chinese American participants to come together, experiencing the Chinese culture that they have lost because they live far away from their home country. Attending the church is a way of participating in Chinese daily life and feeling at home. More importantly, the Chinese church in Miami uses Chinese music to overcome isolation and to build a sense of community. Murnbers go to the church not only for entertainment, but also to create a sense of their identity in Miami. The Chinese Baptist Church of Miami thus serves to foster the social and cultural cohesion of the Chinese community.

77 Author’s collection.
CHAPTER 3

Chinese Music in Educational Settings in Miami

This chapter investigates the role of Chinese music in two educational settings in Miami: 1) the Confucius Institute at Miami Dade College and 2) the University of Miami. These two educational settings have many non-linguistic functions; for instance, the University of Miami fosters Chinese students’ sense of community and pride in their heritage, and the Confucius Institute reminds students about the importance of Chinese values by teaching Chinese American students the language of their mother country. One important role of these educational settings is to offer enrichment activities, such as traditional cultural and musical performances. These Chinese events are part of the educational mission of both settings to promote cultural understanding and prepare students to interact in a global environment. These events are valuable activities for overseas Chinese because they allow for the transmission, maintenance, and preservation of Chinese culture.

These two educational institutions play a major role in the way that students learn about Chinese culture and language. Each institution offers its own Chinese language and culture contest, which promotes students’ knowledge of the Chinese heritage. These
educational organizations also foster language acquisition and maintenance. Because many second- and third-generation Chinese Americans do not know how to speak Chinese and lack a deep understanding of Chinese culture, the students who attend these institutions become more aware of their identities through participating in these activities. They become more closely connected to what is happening in China and to Chinese people living in the diaspora. Beyond this, the Confucius Institute encourages them to read and write more Chinese. Thus, the educational setting plays a supportive and significant role in the maintenance of students’ Chinese identity.

The Confucius Institute

The Confucius Institute notes a rising trend because “China’s economy and exchanges with the world have seen rapid growth,” which has led to “a sharp increase in the world’s demands for Chinese learning.” By 2011, 353 Confucius Institutes had been established in 104 countries and regions in the world. Since that time, they have continued to develop steadily. The Confucius Institute is a non-profit, educational organization that falls under the direction and supervision of the National Office for

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78 Ibid.
79 Ibid.
Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, located in Beijing. Its purpose is promoting the Chinese language and culture and enhancing the understanding of China in other countries. The Ministry of China Education and Office of Chinese Language Council International decided to send Chinese language advisors and teachers to work in other countries. There they collaborate with ministries of education, universities, and public schools. According to the Confucius Institute Constitution and By-Laws, the mission of this organization is “to enhance the understanding of the world toward the Chinese language and culture, to develop friendships between China and other countries, to promote diverse cultures, and to build a harmonious world.”

Despite the rapid growth of Confucius Institutes worldwide, there is little research in the United States on the role that music plays within these educational settings. Further study is clearly needed since most instructors believe that they need to do more than simply teach Chinese language skills to produce students who are fully proficient in and knowledgeable about Chinese culture. For this reason, the Confucius Institute provides an environment that includes musical activities to facilitate students’ acquisition of the language. It is therefore important to know what music the instructors use in their teaching.

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classes and daily activities to develop their program of Chinese language instruction and cultural education.

In this chapter, I examine the views of faculty, staff, and students about how the use of Chinese music enhances their educational values and supports their understanding of Chinese culture in Miami. Furthermore, this chapter illustrates the role of these educational institutions in encouraging local Chinese American communities. The chapter draws upon the results of surveys and interviews to shed light on these important issues, and it analyzes the musical classes and events through which Chinese identity in Miami is promoted and sustained.

Confucius Institute at Miami Dade College

The Confucius Institute at Miami Dade College was established in April 2010 as a cooperative partnership between Miami Dade College, the Office of Chinese Language Council International, and Xuzhou Normal University in China. According to the Miami Dade Community College website, the institution is committed to the ideals of: (1) offering Chinese language and culture programs to college and public school students and to the South Florida community; (2) implementing cultural programming to support
educational and community outreach programs; (3) fostering educational exchange, international education, and global citizenship between China and South Florida; and (4) contributing to business relationships with China. As a dynamic and innovative center, the Confucius Institute aims to connect South Florida, China, Latin America, and the world through its activities at the large and influential Miami Dade College campus.

To examine the use of music in the Chinese educational institution I attended the 2013 Spring Annual Conference and Training Workshop in Miami. Thanks to Xuejun Yu, the Director of the Confucius Institute in Miami, I was invited to participate in this event, which was sponsored by the Chinese Language Teachers Association of Florida (CLTAF) at Florida Atlantic University. This conference addressed Chinese language teaching in Florida. An important theme was making Chinese studies interesting and enjoyable through participating in cultural activities such as Chinese singing, dancing, Tai Chi, and paper cutting. At this conference, I distributed questionnaires on the role of Chinese music in language teaching, which are cited in Appendix B. Teacher survey results, obtained in 2012-13, suggested that the contributing factors to students’ success included effective Chinese language and culture instruction, and various school activities.

The teachers’ survey shows how music plays an important role and serves as a major part of classroom teaching. Traditional instrumental performance and folk song, both of which represent the Chinese culture, are the student’s favorites. Mei-Ju Chen, a full-time teacher who has 13 years experience teaching Chinese, said: “I like to provide different types of music: traditional or pop … old or current. [Both] are great for students. Students love [the music] … all [the songs] are great!”\(^\text{82}\) Yunyan Chen, a teacher of five years, points out: “Music is very effective in class, but I think [that a] strong beat is the best—too soft will make the students sleepy.”\(^\text{83}\) Wenyu Qu mentions that popular children’s songs will be easier and more fun for students to learn. Jiaming Yu also believes that music can help children learn through hearing, because they feel relaxed, have fun, and experience less pressure. Director Yu believes that music helps students retain their knowledge of Chinese. He asserts that those who may need to stop their classes at the Confucius Institute temporarily will remember what they learned more easily if they have studied music. He believes in the power of music to reinforce social and linguistic memory. For this reason, the school is not just a center for language study, but aims to create a sense of place. The students want to do more than speak a “cool”

\(^{82}\) Interview by the author, Florida, Miami, 23 March 2013.

\(^{83}\) Ibid.
language—they also want to develop insights into an intriguing culture that provides an alternative to traditional images of Miami.

The teachers’ surveys most often mentioned the pieces: “Jasmine Flower,” “Farewell,” and “The Butterfly Lovers.” “Jasmine Flower” was adapted from elements of Jiangsu folk music in the southern region of the country during the 18th century.

“Farewell,” based on traditional Chinese poetry, was created in 1915 and more generally refers to classical Chinese culture. “The Butterfly Lovers,” adapted in 1959, uses the traditional pentatonic scale and evokes images of ancient China through reference to a legend of the same name. Together, these songs serve as non-linguistic markers of a shared social identity. In Charles Peirce’s theories of semiotics, he uses the concept of indexicality to refer to signs that correlate with their objects in time and place. The ethnomusicologist Thomas Turino applies Peirce’s semiotic theories to analyze emotion and identity in music. Drawing upon Turino’s and Peirce’s ideas, I trace these songs back to their ethnic ties to specific regions of China that connect their listeners to their roots and allow them to perceive themselves as Chinese.

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One example of this association is “Jasmine Flower,” which connects listeners to a remembered homeland in the southern part of China. This is a famous Chinese folk song that is also popular abroad because the melody became known to Western listeners after it was included in Giacomo Puccini’s opera Turandot (posthumous, 1926). In addition, Chinese listeners regard this music as their second national anthem because they feel that it reflects the distinctive culture of their nation. The melody of “Jasmine Flower” uses the Chinese pentatonic scale. It derives from a traditional folk song named “Flowers’ Tune,” which reflects the natural scenery of the Jiangsu region. “Jasmine Flower” has a conjunct and delicate melody with four phrases: a, b, c, and d, followed by a short coda. This balanced structure characterizes a great deal of Chinese folk music.

This song is about a young girl’s true love of life and nature and of her decision whether to pluck a jasmine flower or not. She wants to own the jasmine flower, but she is afraid that it will die if she picks it. The threefold repetition of the word “worried” in the song lyrics reflects this sentiment. The words of the poetry and the simple strophic form show the unique aesthetics of Chinese traditional culture. According to Jiaming Yu, the folk song, “Jasmine Flower” “represents Chinese culture and beauty.”

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85 Interview by the author, Florida, Miami, 23 March 2013.
“It is easy for students to pick up the rhythm and melody.” He believes that they can easily understand the meaning of the piece and the way it connects with the song lyrics.

Musical Example 3.1 Melodic Line in “Jasmine Flower”:

“Jasmine Flower” lyrics:

See the pretty jasmine blooming in the sunshine,
The flower is more fragrant than other kinds.
I want to pluck one out,
But I’m worried that the gardener will give me a scolding.

See the pretty jasmine sleeping in the moonshine,
The flower’s white glaze surpasses everything.
I want to pluck one out,
But I’m worried others will laugh at me, so brazen.

See the pretty jasmine bathing in the fine rain,
It’s the best flower in the whole garden.
I want to pluck one out,
But I’m worried next year it won’t bloom again.

Shutong Li (1880–1942) was the composer who arranged and popularized the classic song “Farewell.” Li, as an artist and musician, was one of the pioneers to spread

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86 Ibid.
87 Translated by author.
Western music and the arts to China; he also spent many years in Tokyo studying music.

He based this piece on an original melody by the American composer, John Pond Ordway, who wrote the song “Dream of Home and Mother.” Li constructed this song’s lyrics in a Chinese poetic format that uses literary or Classical Chinese. Because many children learn this song at home and in school, it forms part of their collective national consciousness. The lyrics to this song read:

On the ancient road by the Farewell pavilion,
Green grass stretches far into the sky,
With willow trees in evening wind and sounds of a staccato flute,
The setting sun silhouettes layers of hills,
In the far distant quarters of heaven and earth,
Half of my friends are gone.
With a cup of turbid wine to swallow my merriment,
I wait for a chilly farewell dream tonight.88

The musical and poetic style of “Farewell” maintain the integrity of China’s cultural traditions. The simple melody with the poetic lyrics helps listeners create a sense of nostalgia. The ancient road, farewell pavilion, green grass, willow trees, staccato flute, hills, and turbid wine are all classical images in Chinese poetry. The purity and beauty of the lyrics are enhanced by Western music. Even among diaspora communities overseas, every Chinese educated child can sing “Farewell” and many Chinese Americans also

88 Ibid.
know this piece. It therefore has a widespread appeal that connects Chinese people from generation to generation and even across the Pacific. The simple poetic lyrics and refined expression are easily understood. This classical song shares Chinese symbols and identity, and creates a sense of nostalgia among Chinese Americans.

Musical Example 3.2. Melodic Line in “Farewell”:

In the survey given to teachers, another important piece is “The Butterfly Lovers.” Composed by Gang Chen and Zhanhao He in 1959, it is one of the classic contemporary works of Chinese music. As William Safran explains, people living in the diaspora “retain a collective memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland—its physical location, history, and achievements.”

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legend familiar to Chinese people for over 1600 years—a faithful story that tells of the two lovers, Liang and Zhu, who have been oppressed cruelly by a feudal power. In this story they die, but transform into butterflies and never are separated again. This ancient story represents the strength of the Chinese people. It portrays their determination not to give in and offers hope for a better future. One student in the Confucius Institute notes that not only is it a beautiful story, but its spirit makes you feel like you can triumph over anything.

In addition to the traditional story, Chen and Zhanhao used the pentatonic scale, a Chinese folk melody, “Yellow River,” and Chinese instrumental techniques. The violin imitates the style of playing the guzheng, and the harp and strings resemble pipa playing. The composers cast these elements within a Western orchestral arrangement that uses an instrumentation consisting of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, trumpets, trombones, timpani, harp, piano, percussion and strings. All of these features are readily appreciated by Chinese and Chinese American audiences who are accustomed to listening to European classical music.

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90 The guzheng is a 21-string plucked zither that has remained popular since the Qin Dynasty. It is performed either as a soloist or in combination with other instruments.

91 The pipa is a short-necked four-string plucked Chinese lute.
Because of its deep embeddness in Chinese society and culture, this piece has been designated a part of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity at UNESCO. It became one of the most representative symphonic works in China and overseas. The teacher Yan Man mentioned that she enjoyed using “The Butterfly Lovers” for her students because the violin concerto format made it easier for Chinese Americans to accept, since some found Chinese traditional instruments too unfamiliar or challenging.

Musical Example 3.3 “The Butterfly Lovers” Love Theme:

Another favorite song the teachers mentioned in their survey was: “Moon Reflected in the Second Spring.” This piece was first composed and performed by Yanjun Hua (1893-1950), more commonly known as Abing, who was an important figure in the development of erhu music. This music calls to mind Abing’s life as a blind musician, who suffered from poverty and disease during World War II. This street performer was discovered in 1949 by a group of early Chinese ethnomusicologists, who recorded his music. The spirit of this piece runs contrary to its romantic title, “Moon Reflected in the Second Spring,” which is named after the place where Abing played erhu.
Musically, the piece expresses sentiments of grief with its slow tempo and narrow range. The *erhu* plays in the low register and its descending opening melody evokes the sound of a moan. These musical characteristics are associated with heartbreak and sorrow among Chinese listeners. Moreover, the *erhu* is a musical instrument that marks the identity of working-class Chinese and the difficult times they once experienced. The instrument was typically used to perform sorrowful pieces because of its deep sound. This piece marks the end of the old China and its feudalist society; it represents a fresh beginning and reflects a new Chinese identity.

“Moon Reflected in the Second Spring” has become a beloved classic piece of folk music in both China and overseas. In Safran’s previously cited statement, diaspora is the place where collective memories of a homeland reside. When performed among diasporic Chinese, “Moon Reflected in the Second Spring” exemplifies this sense of collective memory. Metaphorically, it encourages people to think about their challenging past and appreciate the improvement in their lives. Yan Man said that “Moon Reflected in the Second Spring” was her favorite music piece, which was representative of her homeland. In the United States, she plays recordings of the piece to introduce it to her Chinese American students and other students in her classes. She says that: “Chinese

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92 Turino, “Introduction: Identity and the Arts in Diaspora Communities”, 83-84.
culture is our daily life and it’s very important to carry on and pass it on to the next generation.”

Through music this piece reveals the social problems of that time. Abing uses music to express people’s feelings, and arouse their sense of awakening.

The main theme of “Moon Reflected in the Second Spring” is made up of three short melodic segments. The entire piece can be divided into six motivically related sections, and each section consists of variations of the three short melodic ideas. The moving melody evokes traditional cultural experiences among listeners in the diaspora. Today, this solo erhu masterpiece has become one of the most frequently performed pieces both domestically and overseas.

Musical Example 3.4 Three melodic segments in “Moon Reflected in the Second Spring”:

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93 Interview by the author, Florida, Miami, 23 March 2013.
Musical Activities at the Confucius Institute

In addition to the music heard in classes, the Confucius Institute holds the Celebrating Spring Festival every year. This celebration includes traditional Chinese solo instruments and ensembles. Regarding this festival, Director Yu states: “It is an opportunity to see traditional, authentic Chinese musical performances that normally cannot be found away from the coastal states [West Coast].”\textsuperscript{94} The Chinese New Year, referred to as the Lunar New Year or Spring Festival, falls on the first day of the first month of the Chinese lunar calendar. In the United States, “the celebration of the Chinese New Year by Chinese immigrants with music and opera has a long history, beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century with the earliest Cantonese migrants.”\textsuperscript{95} This celebration can take place anytime between the beginning of January and the end of February. The festival ushers in the Chinese New Year, involving various food traditions, along with religious and cultural events. The name of this event in 2013 was “Celebrating Spring Festival and Sharing Harmony,” and it involved an important cultural exchange.

\textsuperscript{94} Interview by the author, Florida, Miami, 25 February 2013.

\textsuperscript{95} Zheng, \textit{Claiming Diaspora}, 181.
with Nanjing University. As part of this exchange, students from the Traditional Instrument Orchestra of Nanjing University came to perform in the United States.

The Chinese students were selected from a group of 70 amateur instrumentalists at the university level in various schools throughout the country. This group mainly plays folk music on Chinese traditional instruments, including bowed and plucked strings, winds, and percussion. With members from all over the country, the orchestra can also skillfully play traditional music from northern and southern China. As a famous student ensemble, the orchestra holds regular concerts every semester on and off campus and gives special performances for university guests—both domestically and overseas. Its distinguished reputation has resulted in many invited concert tours across the country. Sponsored by several U.S. universities (including UC Berkley, the University of Texas at Dallas, and John Hopkins University), the group aims to use music—the international language—to promote the cultural exchange and friendship between Chinese and American people.

The orchestra focuses on traditional Chinese instruments that are used within a large ensemble, small ensemble, and solo performance context. The group uses Chinese traditional bowed and plucked strings, as well as Chinese wind and percussion instruments. The members of the large ensemble can play in unison or can have their own
independent parts. Their performances feature erhu ensemble, pipa ensemble, and solo flute with orchestra, among other combinations. Their repertory generally consists of music popularized in contemporary China.

At the Spring Festival, their program began with the large ensemble, which played the “Spring Festival Overture” and “Jasmine Flower.” The first piece, “Spring Festival Overture,” is one of the most frequently performed traditional orchestral works for celebrating the Chinese New Year. It was composed by a well-known Chinese musician Huanzhi Li (1919-2000) in 1955. Like its title implies, “Spring Festival Overture” is an evocative piece that portrays a scene of local people from the Shanbei region who celebrate the Chinese New Year. The theme of the “Spring Festival Overture” was adapted from elements of northern folk music and is currently performed throughout China during the Spring Festival. Each year, this music will be heard at the festival, either at the opening or the closing ceremony.

This composition evokes a happy atmosphere and prosperous scene through its association with an original folk melody that is widely heard in China and played at various festive occasions. When this lively and energetic melody is played, Chinese listeners recognize its original source, which attracts the audience’s attention.
After an energetic opening, the piece moves into a contrasting moderato theme that has a lyrical and nostalgic character. This melody, drawn from a typical tune and rhythm of the folk song and dance—*Yangge* from northern China, shows a strong feature of the local color.

“Spring Festival Overture” uses a traditional Chinese melody and Western instruments, such as flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, trumpets, trombones, and tuba. It combines the Chinese cymbals, bass drum, and strings. It reveals a special integration of Chinese and Western musical elements. For Chinese American and U.S.
students, this piece represents traditional Chinese culture. For overseas Chinese students
who rely on memories of their homeland, this music helps define a sense of self and
creates a sense of identity within their new place. For the performers, this song is
inevitably informed by their nostalgia for the culture of their homeland.

Diasporic Chinese music-makers create diverse genres of Chinese music;
however, traditional music is still a significant source of inspiration for these overseas
performers. The next piece, the “Dance of the Yi Ethnic Minority,” features the pipa—a
Chinese four-stringed lute-like instrument that made its first appearance as early as the
Qin and Han Dynasties and grew popular during the North Dynasty. Around the fourth
century, it was brought to the Yangtze River basin and representations of the instrument
appear in cave paintings of the Tang Dynasty. This piece shows the dance performance of
local people—the Yi ethnic minority. It is usually performed by groups of two or more
people and portrays activities from daily life.

The “Spring Visiting the Xiang River” is performed by dizi (horizontal flute).
This flute is usually made of bamboo and is therefore called the “bamboo flute.” This
piece of music highlights the Hunan Flower Drum in the orchestra. The characteristic of
the melody based on this instrument uses the notes G♯ and E♭ (D♯). It is a kind of
refreshing melody varying from passion to tranquility. The beginning of this piece evokes
the image of the fog on the Xiang River when spring is coming. It portrays the natural scenery along this river and the local people’s aspiration toward a better future for their village:

Musical Example 3.7 “Spring Visiting the Xiang River” Opening:

“Dance of Yao Ethnic Minority,” performed by the last group in the festival, is adapted from Chinese folk song and dance. The melodies reflect a unique local flavor from the Yao ethnic people in the mountainous southwest region. This ensemble demonstrates to overseas Chinese audiences the life of Yao ethnic people who are good at singing and dancing.

In this spring festival program, the performances in this ensemble and this particular combination of instruments and musical repertoire inspires the audience, and creates a sense of Chinese identity. This festival performance by contemporary Chinese
musicians playing their traditional repertoire maintains and preserves Chinese cultural practices. The different regions reflected in the music evoke a strong sense of cultural memory for Chinese American communities in Miami.

Beyond the Celebrating Spring Festival, the Confucius Institute offers an affordable alternative place to study Chinese music with live instrumental ensembles. Going beyond a mere language class, the institute also serves as a social, economic, and musical center. Performing Chinese music creates community within groups, and this symbolic act establishes a bond that reinforces Chinese identity. Infusing traditional musical practices in the Confucius Institute, Chinese and Chinese American students have found another viable outlet in which to exercise their creativity and renew their ethnic ties.

Below is the program the group performed in Miami:

2013 “Celebrating Spring Festival and Sharing Harmony” Program

“Spring Festival Overture” Li Huanzhi
“Beautiful Jiangnan” Qu Chunquan
Large Ensemble

“Dance of Yi Ethnic Minority” Wang Huiran
Pipa solo

“Spring Visiting the Xiang River” Mi Baosheng
Bamboo Flute (dizi) and Orchestra
“Camel Caravan Bells”
   Plucked Instruments Ensemble

“Horse Racing”
   Erhu ensemble

Chinese Painting & Calligraphy and Zheng Harmony

“Qinhuai Lantern Festival”
   Large Ensemble

“The Beautiful Lake Tai”
   Female Solo

“Tapping Dates Off the Trees”
   Suona Solo

“Dance of Yao Ethnic Minority”
   Liu Tieshan, Mao ruan

“Theme Song of Dream of the Red Chamber”
   Wang Liping

“Beijing Good News Reaches the Border Villages”
   Zheng Lu, Ma Hongye

Large ensemble

Musical Activities at the University of Miami

The Chinese Students and Scholars Association at the University of Miami organized various events for traditional Chinese holidays. One notable example is the Moon Festival Celebration in mid-Autumn and the Spring Festival during the Chinese New Year. The second Annual Chinese New Year Celebration, held by the Chinese Students and Scholars Association and the Asian American Students Association, included performances on campus and provided cultural activities on February 18, 2013.
on the Coral Gables campus. The Spring Festival comes every year, and it is one of the most important holidays in China, involving a great deal of merry making and festivities. This event featured a number of cultural dances, songs, and other traditional presentations.

When the ethnomusicologist Frederick Lau discussed the Chinese Qingming Festival in Honolulu, Hawaii, he stated that: “It is more than an ethnic festivity; it is a story that the local Chinese tell about themselves through music, public ritual, and performance.”97 I have observed the same situation at the University of Miami, where all the Chinese and Chinese American students come together to celebrate. As one of the Chinese students who participated in this event recalled: “We can speak Chinese, sing Chinese songs, eat Chinese food, and we feel we are in China.”98 At this event, Chinese artists and students presented their show to overseas Chinese people at the university and gave them a sense of “home.” Yifan Zhang, Vice President of the Chinese Students and Scholars Association said: “We felt that building from the foundation of last year’s event that this year we would showcase Chinese culture and enrich the cultural experience of


98 Interview by the author, Florida, Miami, 18 February 2013.
the students on campus to an even fuller extent, both with our tent activities and
performances.”

The Opening Dragon and Lion Dance signifies the new beginning of every year.
The dynamic drum music is the echoing sound of the vast land. It is said that the drum is
an imperative component in the band. Of all the percussion instruments, it has the longest
history and largest variety. Drums in China produce dynamic sounds that are used in
different settings from battlefields to New Year celebrations, where they symbolize a rich
harvest and happy life.

The Dragon and Lion Dance Team in Miami is popular in overseas Chinese
communities because it provides entertainment for immigrants, Chinese businesses, and
cultural organizations. This group performs music that evokes memories of a collective
homeland. As a special group maintaining a sense of Chinese regional identity, this
ensemble retains traditional Chinese cultural practices. At the University of Miami, the
group reaches out to Chinese and Chinese American students, and it participates in
community events centered around other ethnic groups throughout the city. These

99 “UM Celebrates Chinese New Year,” University of Miami website,
<http://www.miami.edu/index.php/news/releases/um_celebrates_chinese_new_year> (accessed 23 April
2013).
multiple functions of the Dragon and Lion Dance Team are prevalent in overseas communities.

The Dragon and Lion Dance Drums are usually played in a traditional manner, but performers at the UM celebration have also created a new drumming style. At the end of the drum dance, the performers add the Korean musician Psy’s hit song “Gangnam Style.” All these drums provide excitement, while retaining a strong sense of Chinese tradition. John Wai, one of the elderly players said: “Tradition is good and worth the practice of players. However, it is not enough to play in the traditional way.” Wai continues: “I wish to transform the ancient drum music into the new symbols of fashion. And I want to have more people listen to the drum music of modern fashion where echoes travelling from the distant past can be heard.”

At the University of Miami Festival, after hearing Psy’s “Gangnam Style” with Dragon and Lion Dance Drum, the audience stood up and stamped their feet on the ground. They were in an excited state when cheering the performance. This group has played many times in public and their musical focus has recently combined with popular music. This shift signifies the growing demand for Chinese music and culture in Miami.

100 Interview by the author, Florida, Miami, 18 February 2013.
101 Ibid.
Blending elements of popular culture gives this music a broader appeal that attracts the interest of both Chinese Americans and outside members of the community.

Figure 3.1. Opening Dragon and Lion Dance

As stated by Johnson: “The investigation of festivals in diaspora contexts is an area of research that is especially significant in a modern-day world of cultural flows and travel, and thus deserves to be rethought in light of linking music to identity construction and expressions of self or collective identity.” The Chinese New Year performance builds an educational bridge that links both Chinese and American cultures. It serves Americans who are interested in Chinese culture and those Chinese students who want to explore their own traditions in the United States. Thus, this celebration promotes cultural diversity at the University of Miami campus. Chinese and Chinese Americans join in the

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celebration and treat the Chinese New Year as their own activity in Miami. A growing
demand for and appreciation of Chinese music performance has recently occurred at the
institutional level. Because of the Chinese student population growth in recent years, the
University of Miami has begun to pay more attention to Chinese culture. Below is the
performance schedule for the Chinese New Year:

“Opening Dragon and Lion Dance”
  John Wai
Traditional

“Kun Fu Demonstration”
  John Wai
Traditional

“Ballet Juggling”
  Zhang Nan
Traditional

“Han Dynasty Dance”
  Chinese students in UM
Traditional

“SiChuan Opera Mask Changing”
  Zhang Nan
Traditional

“Musical: “Reflection” from Mulan”
  Chinese students in UM
Traditional

“Taichi and Calligraphy performance with Chinese Instruments”
  Chinese students in UM
Traditional

“Hula Hoop Performance”
  Zhang Nan
Traditional

“Fire Hooping Performance”
  Chinese students in UM
Traditional

“Traditional Costume Show”
  Chinese students in UM
Traditional

“Bingling Flower Dance in Sign Language”
  Chinese students in UM
Traditional
Chinese cultural practices and expressions in the Chinese New Year performance at the University of Miami arose as important activities through which Chinese identity was maintained and expressed. Some examples consist of the Kung Fu Demonstration, Si Chuan Opera Mask Changing, and Tai Chi and Calligraphy Performances with Chinese instruments. These activities grew acceptable and desirable to the University of Miami, as Chinese and Chinese American students and faculty treated these events as a means to reaffirm their cultural community within a pluralistic society. Currently, Chinese student participants view Chinese music as an important cultural factor of multiethnic and multicultural Miami, as well as a marker of their own regional and national identities.

Conclusion

These two educational settings in Miami function as centers of cultural and recreational activities. They contribute to the multicultural contemporary makeup of Miami, facilitate Chinese cultural and language education, and enrich the celebration of a significant day of the year within the Chinese and Chinese American community. With a favorable environment for Chinese music, these educational settings have grown increasingly active and have played an increasingly important role in the practice of fostering Chinese music to identify and affirm both a national and diasporic identity.
CHAPTER 4

Conclusions

When the scholar Su Zheng examines Chinese American music culture, she describes the significant functional role it plays within contemporary social life, stating:

- It provides emotional shelter for feelings of nostalgia, creates ritualistic frames for community events, channels individual creativity, supports social interaction, showcases cultural pluralism, sustains diasporic sentiments, and expresses cultural difference and resistance as cultural identity.\(^{104}\)

Ever since the the 19\textsuperscript{th} and 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries, many Chinese American immigrants have historically left China and moved to the United States. After they arrived, they have been forced to grapple with problems of language, cultural differences, and the struggle to make a living. They must adapt to new circumstances and settle in the United States.

Many Chinese and Chinese Americans attend Chinese churches and take part in Chinese musical activities in order to maintain nostalgic bonds with their homeland. In this way, music provides an emotional refuge. Attending a Chinese church as a family and listening to musical groups in educational settings are activities that enrich new settlers’ lives. The music in these places plays a major role in the way that it reflects Chinese history and cultural identity, as well as religious faith within the community. All of these music-

\(^{104}\) Zheng, \textit{Claiming Diaspora}, 286.
making activities in Miami not only preserve the Chinese cultural heritage, but they also bring Chinese traditions into a foreign setting.

Miami has a relatively small and dispersed population of Chinese Americans with no Chinatown or other major Chinese cultural centers like larger cities such as New York and San Francisco. For example, Chinatown in New York City has a great many Chinese businesses such as grocery stores, as well as cultural organizations such as Chinese American music groups. These associations include: 12 Cantonese opera clubs and associations, 11 Peking opera clubs and associations, and four other opera associations. In addition, New York City is also home to three traditional Chinese instrumental ensembles.\(^{105}\) However, in Miami, because of its small Chinese American population, there are no Cantonese or Peking opera clubs or associations—just a few musical ensembles such as Lion Dance Groups.\(^{106}\) In addition, the musical organizations in educational settings that developed in recent years in Miami are not as prosperous as in New York and California. Although Miami has fewer Chinese restaurants and supermarkets than in New York or California, Chinese Americans in Miami do go to these places, which reflect and reinforce their Chinese American identity. Likewise, the


function of Chinese churches in Miami is more than a place of religious worship. To be precise, it is a small Chinese diasporic community. These different types of Chinese American settings—churches and educational institutions—provide unique opportunities for musical and cultural performances among communities in the diaspora. Music helps this community connect to its homeland. Most participants agree that they feel at home in these spaces.

The music in these important sites is an emblem of identity, showing Chinese Americans in Miami where they come from, and reminding them of their heritage. As Johnson explains: “For people who in the process of settling down it means a lot to them because they miss their homeland and they miss so many things related to their culture and heritage.”

The Chinese church has long been an important part of the Chinese diaspora in Miami, bringing people and communities together and reflecting the church’s multicultural “home” setting, for first and second generation Chinese immigrants. The term “generation” is generally used to describe people moving from one age group to another. However, for Chinese Americans, the most commonly discussed generational

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107 Johnson, “‘Happy Diwali!’ Performance, Multicultural Soundscapes and Intervention in Aotearoa/New Zealand,” 87.
conflicts are those that stem from different values. The Chinese Church functions as a link between the Chinese immigrants and the second generation born in the United States who received all of their education and socialization in this country. Speaking primarily English, they are less fluent in Chinese, and they may have conflicts with the culture and expectations of their parents. However, the bilingual worship services and musical activities of the Chinese Christian Church help the second generation children maintain connections with the cultural roots of their parents.

The musical environment of the church is more important to the second generation because it gives American-born Chinese valuable opportunities to learn about Chinese culture during their childhood. For Chinese American families, both age and culture form obstacles between generations. Social and political views that arise from cultural differences create generational barriers. The majority of parents have been socialized in China; their value systems diverge from that of their children who have been socialized in the U.S. and are raised under different circumstances. David D. Harnish notes that “religious festivals are highly charged environments; expressive elements like music and dance that represent a congregation have a special status in such settings.”

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The Chinese Church allows Chinese Americans to speak their ethnic languages, share, and sing. These communal experiences help them to solidify their ethnic identity.

The educational settings examined in this study establish links with Chinese American cultural groups and promote Chinese musical culture in Miami in effective ways. For most Chinese Americans, the music of the Celebrating Spring Festival reminds them of their traditional culture and shared experiences. “The performing arts are seen not only as a vehicle for exporting and promoting Chinese culture, but also as an asset having the potential to appeal to sentiments of nostalgia and patriotism.”109 This is a significant event for the diasporic community. The Confucius Institute and University of Miami introduce Chinese traditional music and dance to American people or American-born Chinese who might have viewed such cultural events on television but never had the opportunity to observe them in a live musical setting.

These institutions also provide opportunities for musicians to develop crosscultural works for performance. There Chinese cultural group perform traditional repertoires and make Chinese music known to the wider Miami community. Most importantly, the festival of Chinese music offers opportunities for Chinese Americans to find themselves and refashion their cultural identity in Miami.

Zheng perceives Chinese Americans’ musical aesthetics as the “elements of dialect, language, region, education, class, gender, generation, [and] political inclination.” Most importantly, she considers the “immigration and /or American experience,” which can “translate into an individual Chinese American’s musical choice, taste, and affiliation, as well as his or her intangible formation of musical aesthetics.”110 As such, there are bilingual worship services and Chinese hymns in the Chinese church in Miami; there are traditional music and dance performances at the Confucius Institute and the University of Miami. All these music-making activities exemplify the musical choices of Chinese Americans, which in turn reflect the identity of the Chinese diaspora communities.

Chinese musical performances in Miami do not simply replicate the music of China; they represent a new activity of Chinese American music-making in Miami. According to Ramnarine: “Diasporic music-making should not be understood as merely the result of population movements, the settlements of diasporic groups and cultural contact in the multicultural society.”111 Rather, it should be “understood in the ordinariness of creative production, as musicians working as individual agents in their

110 Zheng, Claiming Diaspora, 165.
everyday environments, making musical choices that suit them and their audiences.”\textsuperscript{112}

Therefore, in the words of Su Zheng, music among Chinese Americans is an important signifier that “produces complex cultural meanings.”\textsuperscript{113} It reiterates diversified Chinese cultural sources that are “deeply rooted in various enduring indigenous traditions and histories.”\textsuperscript{114} Moreover, “it embraces hybridity and heterogeneity while yearning for a sense of cultural belonging.”\textsuperscript{115} In Miami, music among Chinese Americans involves the preservation and enactment of cultural traditions in daily life, religion, and festivals through which diasporic communities can maintain a sense of identity and place. Chinese Americans have established their own hybrid musical traditions that are unique to their local and national roots and help shape the contemporary diaspora of Miami.

\textsuperscript{112} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{113} Zheng, \textit{Claiming Diaspora}, 7.

\textsuperscript{114} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid.
APPENDIX A

Chinese Church-Interview Questions

I. General Information

1. Could you please tell me your name?
2. What is your age?
3. What type of work do you do?
4. How long have you lived in the United States?
5. Have you always lived in Miami?

II. Information about the Church

1. How long have you participated in this church?
2. Did you participate continuously, or were there breaks in your attendance?
3. Have you joined this church as a member? If so, for how long?
4. Do other family members attend this church? If so, which ones?
5. Did you attend this church when you were growing up?
6. What are your earliest recollections of this church?
7. Do you have any other memorable experiences of the church?

III. Musical Activities

1. How would you describe the music activities in this church?
2. What music activities do you participate in?

3. Would you please describe your role in these activities?

4. Have you participated in different musical activities in the past?

5. What type of music in the church do you like the most? The least?

6. Do you prefer the Chinese music or American music? Could you please explain why?

7. Does the music you hear have a special significance for you? Is that a religious significance? Does it relate to your identity as a Chinese American?

8. Would you please tell me about your memorable music experiences in this church?

9. Do you think that this church maintains traditional Chinese values? Is this important to you or not? Why?

10. How would you summarize the meaning of this church and its music activities in your life?

11. Is there anything you would like to add that I have not already asked?
APPENDIX B

Chinese Institute-Interview Questions

I. General Information

1. Could you please tell me your name?

2. What is your age?

3. How long have you lived in the United States?

4. Have you always lived in Miami?

II. Information about the Chinese Institute

1. How long have you worked at the Chinese Institute?

2. What kind of students attend this institution?

3. Have you worked here continuously or were there breaks?

4. What type of work do you do here?

5. (If a teacher): What subjects do you teach?

6. What makes a good teacher here?

7. Do you teach in a traditional way?

8. What are your earliest recollections of the Chinese Institute? Do you have any other memorable experiences?

9. How would you summarize the role of the Chinese Institute in your life?
III. Musical Activities

1. How would you describe the musical activities at the Chinese Institute?

2. What musical activities do you participate in?

3. What type of music in the Chinese institute do you like the most? The least?
   Why?

4. Do you have a favorite song? What is it, and why? How about the students?

5. What are your memorable music experiences in the Chinese Institute?

6. Does the music you hear have a special significance for you? Is that a cultural significance? Does it relate to your identity as a Chinese American?

7. How would you describe some of traditional music and culture you experience here?

8. Do you think that this institute maintains traditional Chinese values? Is this important to you or not? Why?

9. How would you summarize the meaning of the Chinese Institute and its musical activities in your life?

10. Is there anything else you would like to add that I have not already asked?
APPENDIX C

University - Interview Questions

I. General Information

1. Could you please tell me your name?

2. What is your age?

3. How long have you lived in the United States?

4. Have you always lived in Miami?

II. Information about the University of Miami

1. How long have you worked at the university?

2. Have you worked here continuously or were there breaks?

3. What type of work do you do here?

4. What are your earliest recollections of the university? Do you have any other memorable experiences?

5. How would you summarize the role of the university in your life?

III. Musical Activities

1. How would you describe the musical activities at the university?

2. What musical activities do you participate in?
3. What type of music in the university do you like the most? The least? Why?

4. Do you have a favorite song? What is it, and why?

5. What are your memorable music experiences in the university?

6. Does the music you hear have a special significance for you? Is that a cultural significance? Does it relate to your identity as a Chinese American?

7. How would you describe some of traditional music and culture you experience here?

8. Do you think that this university maintains traditional Chinese values? Is this important to you or not? Why?

9. How would you summarize the meaning of the university and its musical activities in your life?

10. Is there anything else you would like to add that I have not already asked?
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