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China is renowned globally for its illustrious civilization, encompassing a rich tapestry of music, dance, calligraphy, drama, sculpture, and paper-cutting. However, the developmental trajectory of the saxophone within China has hitherto lacked an authentic infusion of the nation's distinctive cultural essence, and the global awareness of the Chinese saxophone style remains limited. As a devoted saxophone player hailing from China, I harbor a profound sense of national identity and a genuine interest in the intricacies of Chinese culture. Within the framework of this dissertation, I endeavor to integrate Chinese *Yuan Zaju* into the domain of saxophone music.

The composition titled *Serendipity, Grievance, and Entanglement: A Diorama of Lu Zhai Lang* (2024) was commissioned by me from composer Wang Ziyu, drawing inspiration from *Yuan Zaju: Lu Zhai Lang*(鲁斋郎). This work represents an exploration of incorporating *Yuan Zaju* elements into the domain of saxophone music for the first time and this dissertation demonstrate how saxophone repertoire can be expanded through the incorporation of traditional Chinese drama.

THE APPLICATION OF ANCIENT CHINESE DRAMA IN THE FIELD OF  
SAXOPHONE—TAKING *YUAN ZAJU* AS AN EXAMPLE

by

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE

### EMERGENCE OF *YUAN ZAJU*

#### **Introduction**

The intersection of ancient Chinese drama and contemporary musical expression presents a rich tapestry of cultural fusion and creative exploration. This paper delves into the realm of saxophone performance, focusing on the incorporation of elements from the traditional art form of *Yuan Zaju*. By delving into this unique synthesis, I aim to illuminate the innovative potential and transformative power that arises when ancient narratives find resonance through modern musical interpretations. Through a detailed analysis centered on *Yuan Zaju*, we unravel the intricate threads that bind the past with the present, paving the way for a harmonious convergence of heritage and innovation in the realm of saxophone artistry.

This paper comprises eight distinct chapters that collectively form a comprehensive exploration of the subject *The Application of Ancient Chinese Drama in the Field of Saxophone— Taking Yuan Zaju as an Example*. The initial chapters, one and two, provide an overview of the historical context surrounding *Yuan Zaju*, along with an in-depth examination of the narrative and musical intricacies present in *Lu Zhai Lang*. Subsequent chapters, three through six, offer a meticulous breakdown and technical elucidation of *Serendipity, Grievance, and Entanglement: A Diorama of Lu Zhai Lang*. Chapter seven sheds light on the collaborative process with the composer, offering insights into the creative partnership. Lastly, chapter eight encapsulates the findings and conclusions drawn from the research endeavors. The overarching aspiration of this study, alongside the subsequent dissemination and performance of *Serendipity, Grievance, and Entanglement: A Diorama of Lu Zhai Lang*, is to facilitate a greater

understanding and practical application of *Yuan Zaju* among composers and saxophonists. By fostering this deeper connection, I seek to stimulate fresh ingenuity in the amalgamation of Chinese *Yuan Zaju* and saxophone, thereby invigorating the artistic landscape with novel inspirations.

### **The Historical Backgrounds of The Emergence of *Yuan Zaju***

The Yuan Dynasty marked a period of Mongol rule, with the Mongols tracing their lineage directly to the Shiwei tribes, sharing a linguistic affiliation with the Xianbei and Khitan tribes. Positioned expansively during the Sui and Tang Dynasties, the Shiwei tribes spanned north of the Khitan, west of the Tatars, and east of the Turks—stretching from the Nenjiang River to Hulunbair, north of the Taoer River. Economic development within Mongolian tribes exhibited considerable disparities. By the twelfth century, most relied on hunting and nomadic lifestyles, emphasizing proficiency in horsemanship and archery, coupled with a penchant for force and strength. Subsequently, trade with the Central Plains facilitated the acquisition of iron tools,<sup>1</sup> leading to the introduction of agriculture to Mongolia and accentuating class distinctions. Inter-tribal conflicts among slave owners ensued in a quest for wealth until 1204 when Temujin, Mongolian tribal leader, achieved unification through warfare on the Mongolian plateau. In 1206, he assumed the title of Genghis Khan, Emperor Genghis, establishing political dominance in Mobei and founding the Mongol Empire, officially named Great Mongolia.<sup>2</sup> This event marked the cessation of prolonged inter-tribal conflicts in Mongolian territories.

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<sup>1</sup> 黎东方. 《黎东方讲史：细说元朝》. 上海. 上海人民出版社. 2007

<sup>2</sup> 中国文明史编辑部编, 《中国文明史 · 〈元代 · 第一章 · 双重体制的政治〉》, 台北, 地球出版社, 1993年, pp. 3-10

Following the establishment of the Great Mongolia, a series of military campaigns were undertaken against foreign nations. After an extended period characterized by expansion, warfare, and alliances, Kublai Khan officially claimed the nation as Yuan in 1271, with its capital situated in Dadu, present-day Beijing.<sup>3</sup> In 1279, the Yuan Dynasty military decisively quelled the last vestiges of resistance from the Southern Song Dynasty, resulting in its demise. This triumph not only concluded the longstanding division between northern and southern China but also terminated the enduring fragmentation of diverse ethnic groups dating back to the separatism of vassal towns in the late Tang Dynasty. The Yuan Dynasty played a pivotal role in fostering the unity and development of a multi-ethnic nation.

Following the subjugation of the Song Dynasty, Kublai Khan initiated a sequence of military campaigns against neighboring nations, tried to deploy forces to Annam (northern Vietnam), Champa (currently southern Vietnam), Java (present-day Java Island, Indonesia), Myanmar, and Japan. The protracted warfare exerted significant economic strain on the Yuan Dynasty. In an attempt to alleviate domestic financial challenges, the Yuan rulers indiscriminately issued banknotes to exchange for gold and silver held by the populace, resulting in a substantial inflow of precious metals to the imperial court, where they were recklessly expended. This imprudent fiscal policy precipitated widespread inflation, rendering the currency valueless and causing the dispossession of small familial wealth.

Years of foreign conflicts and the imperative to construct ships for the Eastern Expedition imposed escalating corvée obligations on the coastal and Jiangnan regions' inhabitants, leading to profound societal distress. *Zui Tai Ping Xiao Ling*<sup>4</sup> in *Chuogeng Lu* (see figure below), a

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<sup>3</sup> 徐俊. 中国古代王朝和政权名号探源. 武汉. 华中师范大学出版社. 2000. 294-297

historical account by Tao Zongyi, a Yuan Dynasty writer, poignantly articulates the populace's suffering during this era. This *Zui Tai Ping Xiao Ling*<sup>4</sup> describes the Yuan Dynasty as plagued by treacherous rulers, rampant corruption, overflowing rivers of depreciated currency, and the resultant dire straits of the people. Excessive official regulations, severe criminal statutes, and a pervasive sense of resentment among the populace are highlighted. Tao further laments the disconcerting amalgamation of thieves and officials, portraying a societal environment where virtuous individuals are marginalized. Within this societal context, the ordinary populace sought a channel for emotional release, while literati sought avenues to articulate their sentiments. These circumstances laid the foundation for the emergence and progression of *Yuan Zaju*.

Figure 1. *Zui Tai Ping Xiao Ling* (醉太平小令)



<sup>4</sup>Tao, Zongyi (陶宗儀), active 1360-1368, *Chuo Geng Lu* (辍耕录), Mao Shi Ji gu ge (毛氏汲古阁), 明末 i.e. between 1621 and 1644.

Translations of *Zui Tai Ping Xiao Ling*:

In Yuan's vast embrace, corruption's shadow loomed,  
Rivers surged, banknotes birthed, in plenty they bloomed.  
Currency's swift descent, a dire fate unfurls,  
Millions rose, Red Turbans, in tumultuous swirls.  
Taxes high, a labyrinthine scheme,  
Harsh laws, a weight unbearable, a people's dream.  
Cannibal whispers, an eerie refrain,  
A ghastly exchange, where money met pain.  
Traitors ascended, officials all corrupt,  
Wisdom ignored, in the chaos, disrupt.  
A lament, a sorrow, in verses profound,  
How sad, how pitiful, in Yuan's realm unbound.<sup>5</sup>

The emergence of *Yuan Zaju* is significantly influenced by another crucial social factor, namely, the four-class system. The four-class system, as delineated by modern scholars, encapsulates the hierarchical structure wherein distinct ethnic groups experienced disparate treatment during the Yuan Dynasty.<sup>6</sup> This system categorized the political landscape into four classes: Mongols, Semu people (encompassing ethnic groups in western China during the Yuan Dynasty, predominantly referring to those who followed the Mongols in their western expedition and subsequently settled in the Yuan Dynasty from Central Asia and Eastern Europe), Han people (pertaining to the northern populace), and Nan people (representing Han people in the

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<sup>5</sup> Translated by Xin Ma

<sup>6</sup> 屠寄《蒙兀儿史记》卷六《忽必烈可汗》（1934）

south). The Yuan Dynasty was the first dynasty in China established by ethnic minorities (in China, non-Han ethnic groups are collectively referred to as ethnic minorities). Despite the Mongols constituting the ruling class, their numerical disadvantage vis-à-vis the Han people necessitated strategic measures. To ensure effective control over the Central Plains and sustain the autocratic rule of Mongolian nobility, the Yuan Dynasty rulers, in collaboration with ethnic groups from Central Asia, jointly constituted the ruling class. Simultaneously, efforts were undertaken to divide and disintegrate the Han people, a framework crystallized as the renowned four-class system.

The implementation of the four-class system resulted in severe oppression of the Han people during this historical period. In *Da Yuan Sheng Zheng Guo Chao Dian Zhang*, there is a record saying that: “Henceforth, in the event of Qie Xue Dai Mongolian individuals traversing the region, it is imperative that provisions of sustenance and lodging be extended to them in adherence to established protocols, thereby mitigating the likelihood of confrontations. In instances where Qie Xue Dai Mongolian personnel engage in physical altercations with Han people, it is explicitly prohibited for Han individuals to retaliate. In the event of discernible signs of altercation, aggrieved parties are to formally file a lawsuit within the jurisdiction of the local court. Strict penalties shall be imposed upon any transgressions of these stipulations. It is incumbent upon all concerned parties to rigorously adhere to the aforementioned directives.”<sup>7</sup>

The original Chinese text is as follows:

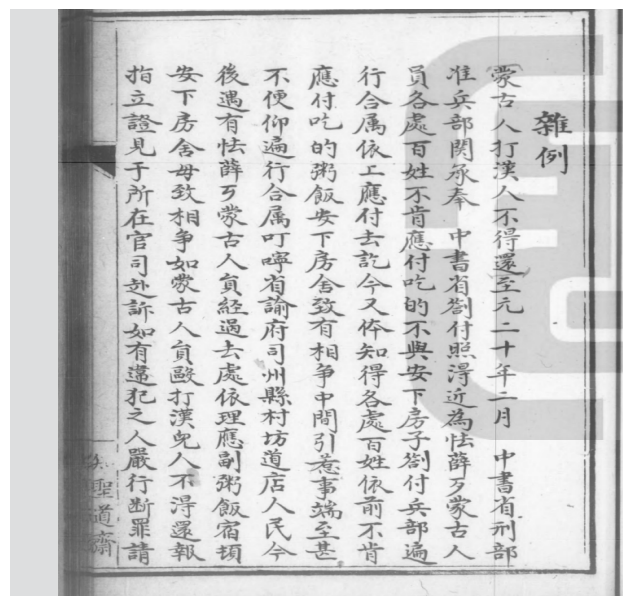
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<sup>7</sup> *Yuan Dian Zhang* (元典章, 大元圣政国朝典章), 元延祐七年至至治二年刊本.



“至元二十年二月，中书省刑部准兵部关：承奉中书省札付，照得，近为怯薛歹蒙古人员，各处百姓不肯应付吃的，不与安下房子，札付兵部，遍行合属依上应付去讫。今又体知得，各处百姓依前不肯应付吃的粥饭，安下房舍，致有相争中间，引惹争端，至甚不便。仰遍行合属，叮咛省谕府、州、司、县、村、坊、道、店人民，今后遇有怯薛歹蒙古人过去处，依理应付粥饭宿顿，安下房舍，毋致相争。如有蒙古人员殴打汉儿人，不得还报，指痒痒证见，于所在官司赴诉。如有违犯之人，严行断罪。请依上施行。”<sup>8</sup>

**Figure 2. The Mongolians hit the Han, Han cannot fight back**



The restrictions imposed by the Mongolian rulers upon the Han people manifested within the official administrative structure. As detailed in "Yuan History Renzong Ji San," during the fourth year of Yanyou (1317 AD), Renzong appointed Hesan as the right prime minister. In a statement recorded in historical accounts, Hesan asserted, "The prime minister must utilize Mongolian honorary ministers."<sup>9</sup> Subsequently he tendered his sincere resignation. Renzong then

<sup>8</sup> Yuan Dian Zhang(元典章，大元圣政国朝典章)，元延祐七年至至治二年刊本。

<sup>9</sup> Yuan Dian Zhang(元典章，大元圣政国朝典章)，元延祐七年至至治二年刊本。

appointed Bo Dasha, the envoy of Xuanhui, as the right prime minister of Zhongshu. This historical documentation elucidates that the Prime Minister, the highest official in the Zhongshu Province, was subject to limitations expressly confined to Mongolian individuals. The original Chinese text is as follows:

延祐四年（公元 1317 年），仁宗任命合散为右丞相，“合散言：‘故事丞相必用蒙古勋臣，合散回回人，不厌人望’，遂恳辞；制以宣徽使伯答沙为中书右丞相，合散为左丞相”。

**Figure 3. The prime minister must utilize Mongolian honorary ministers**



The restrictions imposed by the Mongolian rulers upon the Han people were also discernible in the realm of talent selection. The imperial examination, an ancient Chinese system for selecting candidates of government officials through rigorous examinations, originated in the Sui Dynasty, evolved through the Tang Dynasty, reached culmination in the Song Dynasty, and endured through the Yuan Dynasty, Ming Dynasty, and Qing Dynasty, spanning a period of 1,300 years. While the Song Dynasty witnessed the widespread prevalence of the imperial examination system, offering scholars a pathway to gain success through diligent study, its usage

during the Yuan Dynasty was notably limited. Based on historical documentation, it is noted that the imperial examinations were conducted for a duration encompassing less than half of the 97-year reign of the Yuan Dynasty.<sup>1011</sup>

Nevertheless, the Yuan Dynasty rulers' interference with Han scholars extended beyond mere persecution. Historical records substantiate that the rulers implemented the four-class system within the imperial examinations. In the Yuan Dynasty's imperial examinations, encompassing both rural and joint assessments, Mongolian and Semu participants were subjected to a restricted scope, engaging in two tests: five questions on "Jingwen" and a single policy. In contrast, Han individuals and those from the southern regions faced a more comprehensive evaluation, involving three tests: two inquiries on "Ming Jing" and "Jing Yi,"<sup>12</sup> along with a line

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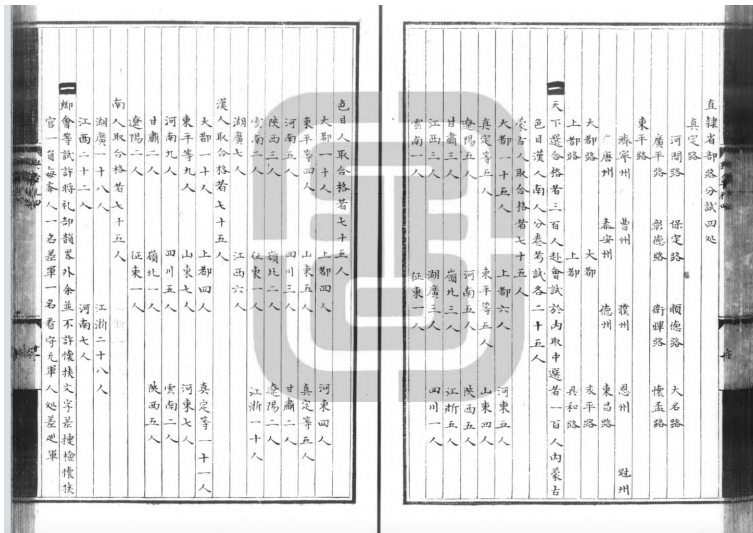
<sup>10</sup> Several factors rooted in the political and economic conditions of the early Yuan Dynasty elucidate this departure from the established system. Firstly, the early Yuan Dynasty boasted a relatively abundant official source, reducing the immediate necessity to recruit scholars through examinations. Secondly, the imperial examination system's increasing corruption hindered its acceptance by the Mongolian rulers. Thirdly, Kublai Khan's discord with Confucian officials in financial management further contributed to his skepticism or outright rejection of the imperial examination. Lastly, the institutionalization of officials' entry into positions impeded the efficacy of the imperial examination. These four reasons underscore the cultural disparities between the Mongolian rulers and the Han Dynasty in the Central Plains, rendering the imperial examination unfeasible during the early Yuan Dynasty. (resources collected from 韩儒林, 《元朝史》, 人民出版社, 2008.4)

<sup>11</sup> Yuan Dian Zhang (元典章, 大元圣政国朝典章), 元延祐七年至至治二年刊本.

<sup>12</sup> 宋濂 (1310—1381), 王祜 (1321—1343), 《元史》卷 81 《选举志》, 1370.

of classics and meanings, ancient *fu* (賦), *edict* (諭), *Zhang* (章), and *Biao* (表). Notably, despite all four groups receiving one question each during the Imperial Examination, Mongolian and Semu participants were confined to a 500-word limit, while Han and Southern individuals were compelled to produce responses exceeding 1,000 words. This disparity amplified the challenges faced by Han scholars in successfully navigating the imperial examination process and realizing their life aspirations. Furthermore, distinct categorizations were evident in the rankings. Due to the Mongols' imposition of a right-sided hierarchy, Mongolian and Semu individuals found placement on the "right list," while Han and Southern individuals were collectively designated on the "left list."

**Figure 4. Mongolian and Semu were on the "right list", while Han and Southern individual were on the "left list"**



Given the prevailing social conditions, the traditional status of Han scholars underwent considerable diminishment, leaving them with limited avenues for advancement. Consequently, many scholars found themselves compelled to transition into the realm of drama and opera creation as an alternative pursuit. In the conventional societal framework, individuals involved in

performing arts were typically associated with lower social strata. This marked a distinct phenomenon in the Yuan Dynasty, where individuals with a background in reading, learning, and creative endeavors merged their intellectual capabilities with people who got performing talents to craft *Yuan Zaju*, leaving a lasting impact on subsequent generations. *Lu Zhai Lang* (鲁斋郎) is one of the outstanding representative works of *Yuan Zaju*.

## CHAPTER II: PREPARATION FOR APPLYING *YUAN ZAJU: LU ZHAI LANG* TO THE SAXOPHONE REPERTOIRE

Understanding the background of the emergence of *Yuan Zaju* reveals the significant hardships faced by the oppressed common people during the Yuan Dynasty. As a marginalized group, contemporary literati keenly perceived the myriad social problems caused by the Yuan rulers. The work *Lu Zhai Lang* champions the cause of the oppressed nations, classes, and individuals, giving them a voice and satirizing the powerful rulers who oppress them. In *Lu Zhai Lang*, the author devotes considerable attention to depicting the anger, struggle, helplessness, and sadness of ordinary people confronting authority. By adopting the perspective of common individuals, the author explores broader issues such as social injustice. This motivation underlies my choice of *Lu Zhai lang* as a source of inspiration.

*Lu Zhai Lang* stands as a quintessential exemplar of *Yuan Zaju* literature attributed to Guan Hanqing, an eminent figure of the Yuan Dynasty. *Yuan Zaju*, an operatic form, gained widespread popularity during this era, encompassing both *Sanqu*<sup>13</sup> and *Zaju*.<sup>14</sup> Structurally, *Yuan Zaju* comprises four integral components: plot, musical and lyrical elements, *Bin bai*<sup>15</sup>, and *Ke jie*.<sup>16</sup> Typically, *Yuan Zaju* scripts are delineated into four acts, each corresponding to distinct stages of exposition, development, climax, and ending. Furthermore, to elucidate narrative

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<sup>13</sup> *Sanqu*, 散曲 one of the ancient Chinese literary genres, flourished in the Yuan Dynasty and was a literature of the same generation as Tang poetry and Song Ci. Derived from the vulgarization of Song Ci, it was Hele lyrics written to match the popular music tunes in the north at that time. It was a Chinese music literature that originated from the new folk sounds. It was a new poetry style that was appreciated by both refined and popular people at that time.

<sup>14</sup> *Zaju*, 杂剧 is a traditional Chinese art form that combines music, dialogue and dance.

<sup>15</sup> *Bin bai*, 宾白, the dialogue in the drama

<sup>16</sup> *Kejie*, 科介 refers to the prompts used to express character movements, expressions and stage effects in the creation and performance of ancient operas.

intricacies or enhance continuity, playwrights often incorporate an introductory scene referred to as *Xie Zi* (楔子).<sup>17</sup> In the case of *Lu Zhai Lang*, this composition consists of four acts accompanied by a *Xie Zi*, positioned at the outset akin to a prologue but potentially interspersed between acts. Notably, the script culminates with a concise summary, referred to as "title rectification," comprising either two or four concluding sentences, with the final sentence often serving as the drama's titular designation.

To enhance the integration of *Yuan Zaju* into the realm of the saxophone, an acknowledgment of drama content is warranted. Regrettably, a substantial portion of *Yuan Zaju* has been lost to time. Scrutiny of Chinese historical materials have yielded the recovery of merely 171 extant pieces.<sup>18</sup> However, despite this limitation, the surviving corpus of 171 *Yuan Zaju* imparts a rich and varied array of themes, affording future generations a substantive and profound resource for reference. *Yuan Zaju* encapsulates a broad spectrum of themes, spanning from historical and legendary narratives to romantic and comedic plots. This thematic diversity facilitates a wide range of dramatic expression. Within the extant corpus of *Yuan Zaju*, five distinct themes emerge: The Love Theme, Confusion Themes, Taoist and Buddhist Themes, The Recluse Theme, and Social Justice.<sup>19</sup> These thematic categories contribute to the multifaceted nature of *Yuan Zaju*, allowing for a nuanced exploration of various aspects of human experience and societal dynamics.

*Lu Zhai Lang*, formally titled *Bao Dai Zhi Zhi Zhan Lu Zhai Lang* (包待制智斩鲁斋郎 *Bāo dài zhì zhì zhǎn lǔ zhāi láng*; *The Wife-Snatcher*), stands as a renowned masterpiece of *Yuan*

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<sup>17</sup> *Xie Zi* refers to opera, novel introduction, generally at the beginning of the article, to point out, supplement the text.

<sup>18</sup> Chung-wen Shih, *The golden age of Chinese Drama: Yuan Tsa-Chu*, Princeton Legacy Library, 1976.

<sup>19</sup> *ibid*

*Zaju* literature crafted by the esteemed Chinese playwright Guan Hanqing during the Yuan Dynasty. Guan Hanqing (about before 1234—about 1300), a prominent figure of Han ethnicity, is credited as a seminal figure in the establishment of *Yuan Zaju*, alongside Bai Pu, Ma Zhiyuan, and Zheng Guangzu, collectively recognized as the four preeminent masters of *Yuan Zaju*, with Guan Hanqing assuming a leadership role among them. Throughout his prolific career, Guan Hanqing authored over sixty dramatic compositions, encompassing a diverse array of tragic and comedic narratives that grappled with profound societal themes, serving as poignant exposés of the grim and decadent social realities prevailing during the Yuan Dynasty. Among his oeuvre, *Lu Zhai Lang* emerges as a quintessential representation, exemplifying themes of social justice. Set against the backdrop of the Song Dynasty, the narrative of *Lu Zhai Lang* allegorically mirrors the pervasive suffering endured by the populace of the Yuan Dynasty under Mongol rule, boldly denouncing the oppressive tyranny of the era.

### ***Lu Zhai Lang* Characters**

LU ZHAI LANG, a powerful bully

ZHANG LONG, Lu Zhai Lang's servant

LI SI, a silversmith

LI'S WIFE (Surname ZHANG)

XI TONG (also translated as HAPPY BOY), Li's son

JIAO ER (also translated as SWEET MAID), Li's daughter

ZHANG GUI, a clerk in the local government

ZHANG'S WIFE (Surname LI)

JIN LANG (also translated as GOLDEN BOY), Zhang's son

YU JIE (also translated as JADE MAID), Zhang's daughter

BAO ZHENG, Perfect of Kaifeng



## Content Overview

### Xie Zi

Lu Zhai Lang epitomized wealth, privilege, dominance, and lust. Upon encountering the alluring wife of silversmith Li Si by chance, Lu resorted to deceit to claim her, under the pretense of repairing a silver pot. This despicable act stirred profound sorrow and rage within Li Si, compelling him to journey to Zhengzhou<sup>20</sup> to seek legal redress against Lu Zhai Lang's transgressions. Along the arduous journey, Li Si was stricken with sudden heartache, only to be fortuitously aided by *Kong Mu*<sup>21</sup> Zhang Gui. Upon learning of Li Si's shared surname with his own wife, Zhang Gui extended familial solidarity to him. In recounting the tale of Lu Zhai Lang's nefarious deeds, Li Si found solace in confiding in Zhang Gui. However, cognizant of the formidable power wielded by Lu Zhai Lang, Zhang Gui advised Li Si to abandon his pursuit of justice and return home. Tragically, upon Li Si's return, his neglect resulted in the disappearance of his two children, as there was no one to care for them.

### Act I

Following his despicable act of robbing Li Si's wife, Lu Zhai Lang grew weary of her and sought a new paramour. During the Qing Ming Festival,<sup>22</sup> while Zhang Gui's family paid respects to their departed relatives, Lu Zhai Lang recklessly shot birds with a slingshot, inadvertently injuring Zhang Gui's son, Jinlang. Initially unaware of the perpetrator's identity, Zhang Gui was incensed by this reckless behavior and vehemently cursed the assailant. Upon

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<sup>20</sup> Name of a Place, now located in Henan Province

<sup>21</sup> In the Song Dynasty, it was an official who managed a small number of people; in the Yuan Dynasty, it generally referred to a judge, a type of official with a bureaucracy.

<sup>22</sup> Chinese tradition festival

discovering that Lu Zhai Lang was responsible for his son's injury, Zhang Gui was filled with dread. Subsequently, Lu Zhai Lang, captivated by the beauty of Zhang Gui's wife, coerced Zhang Gui into surrendering her to him.

### **Act II and Act III**

Unexpectedly, Zhang Gui perpetrated deceit upon his wife by delivering her to Lu Zhai Lang. Delighted by this treachery, Lu Zhai Lang rewarded Zhang Gui a woman that he doesn't like anymore, whom he had previously abducted. Coincidentally, Li Si arrived to visit Zhang Gui and encountered the woman that Lu Zhai Lang rewarded him. He surprisingly found out that this woman is his own wife in this tumultuous scenario. Concurrently, Zhang Gui's two children, Jin Lang and Yu Jie, found themselves separated. Overwhelmed by frustration and remorse, Zhang Gui returned Li Si's wife and chose to renounce worldly life by embracing monasticism himself.

### **Act IV**

Bao Zheng, upon assuming the role of prefect in Kaifeng,<sup>23</sup> embarked on a survey mission to Wunan where he encountered siblings Xi Tong, Jiao Er, Jin Lang, and Yu Jie. Recognizing their plight, he took them under his wing, providing them with education and support. Upon learning that their mothers had been abducted by Lu Zhai Lang, a notorious wrongdoer, Bao Zheng resolved to bring him to justice. Concerned that Lu Zhai Lang might have influential protectors, Bao Zheng reported the matter to the emperor, invoking the name "Yu Qi Ji"<sup>24</sup> to ensure a fair trial. Consequently, Lu Zhai Lang was sentenced to execution. Only later did the Emperor discover that Lu Zhai Lang was the one who had been executed. Subsequently, Xi Tong excelled in the Imperial Examination, while Jin Lang attained an official

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<sup>23</sup> Name of a Place, now located in Henan Province

<sup>24</sup> The Chinese writing in *Lu Zhai Lang* is similar to Yu Qi Ji (鲁斋郎—鱼奇即)

position. Bao Zheng then instructed the siblings to offer prayers for their parents at Yuntai Guan.<sup>25</sup> Serendipitously, they encountered Li Si, his wife, Zhang Gui's wife, and Zhang Gui himself while en route. This fortuitous meeting facilitated the reunion of the two families. To solidify their bond, Bao Zheng arranged marriages for the siblings, thereby fostering closer ties between the two families.

### **Music in *Lu Zhai Lang***

Music constitutes an indispensable facet of *Yuan Zaju*, wherein the distinct genre of *Yuan Zaju* manifests as a fusion of both dramatic and musical components. This form incorporates singing and instrumental music as integral elements, playing a pivotal role in conveying emotions and propelling the narrative. Accompanied by percussion instruments and occasionally wind instruments like the flute, the music enhances the overall dramatic experience. Regrettably, the majority of extant music scores for *Yuan Zaju* have been lost to time, with remnants preserved in works such as the *Jiugong Dacheng Nanbei Ci GongPu* (《九宫大成南北词宫谱》 *Jiǔgōng dàchéng nánběi cí gōng pǔ*). Consequently, the reproduction of *Yuan Zaju* in subsequent generations necessitates the creation of music based on the original scripts.

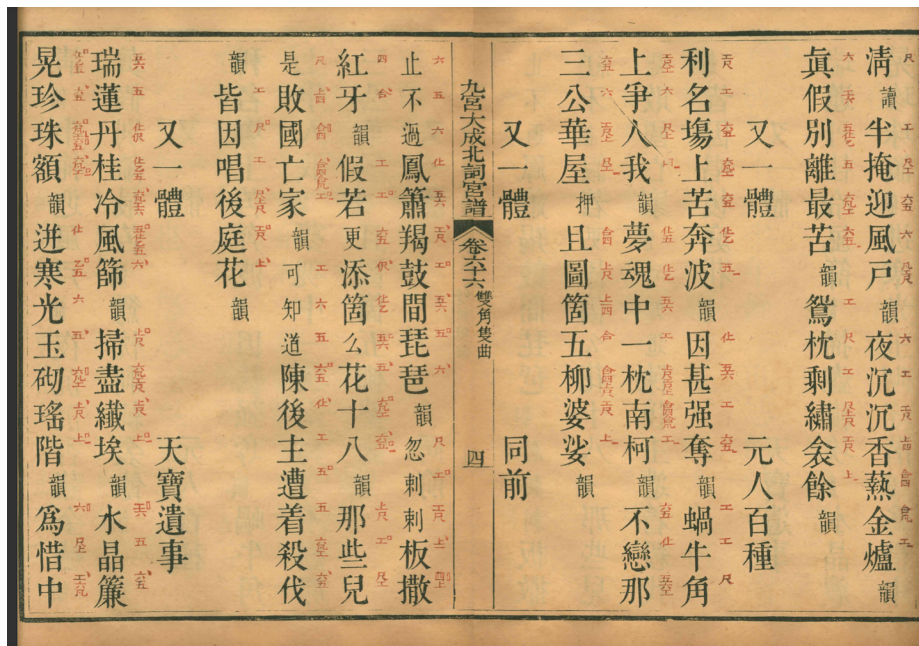
*Jiugong Dacheng Nanbei Ci GongPu*, commonly known as *Jiugong Dacheng*, is a compilation of opera and music scores dating from the Qing Dynasty. In the sixth year of Emperor Qianlong's reign, Prince Zhuang of the First Rank Yunlu was tasked with overseeing its compilation. Over the course of five years, musicians Zhou Xiangyu, Zou Jinsheng, Xu Xinghua, Wang Wenlu, Zhu Tingliu, Xu Yinglong, and others diligently gathered information for its compilation, which was completed in the eleventh year of Emperor Qianlong's reign. Comprising

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<sup>25</sup> Name of a Tempe

82 volumes, the collection encompasses a total of 2094 tunes and 4466 variations. It includes a diverse array of compositions, such as Tang and Song lyrics, Song and Yuan court music, Yuan and Ming *sanqu*, Southern opera, *Zaju*, as well as Ming and Qing legends, among others. Furthermore, the compilation features 185 sets of Northern Song tunes and 36 sets of North and South combinations. Within this extensive collection, a few entries detail the music score of *Yuan Zaju Lu Zhai Lang*, providing a foundational musical reference for incorporating *Yuan Zaju* into saxophone repertoire.

**Figure 5. The specific musical notation is documented in Volume 66 of *Jiugong Dacheng***



The entirety of the music score employs the ancient Chinese notation system known as Gongche Notation (公尺譜, gōng chǐ pǔ). Gongche Notation represents one of the traditional notation methods utilized by the Han Chinese. Originating from the Tang Dynasty in China, it subsequently spread to regions such as Japan, Vietnam, the Korean Peninsula, and Ryukyu, among others, within the cultural sphere of Chinese characters. Characterized as a form of character notation, Gongche Notation was widely utilized in ancient times, although its

contemporary usage is primarily confined to actors and students of traditional opera for singing or music notation purposes. Modern Chinese orchestras typically employ Numbered Musical Notation or Western Musical Notation. Traditionally, Gongche Notation was written vertically from right to left, akin to characters, although it can now also be written horizontally. The musical translation of *Lu Zhai Lang* is derived from *Xinding Jiugong Dacheng Nanbei Ci Gong Pu Jiaoyi*, authored by Liu Chongde,<sup>26</sup> whose scholarly pursuits primarily revolve around the compilation and investigation of ancient literature and history. It is noteworthy that the rhythmic structure within this composition exhibits a degree of flexibility. Liu Chongde elucidated that the piece adheres to a *Sanban*<sup>27</sup> rhythm. The original score merely denoted " \_ " at the conclusion of each line, without specifying the actual rhythm. To mitigate the risk of misinterpretation, given that *Sanban* is often erroneously perceived as a composition characterized by a one-word, one-beat structure, the rhythm is delineated based on the emotive context of the music. Thus, it is not a rigidly fixed beat but rather serves as a guideline for interpretation purposes.

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<sup>26</sup> Chongde Liu, *Xin ding jiu gong da cheng nan bei ci gong pu jiao yi*, Tianjin: 天津古籍出版社 1998)

<sup>27</sup> Sanban means “free rhythm” in China.

Figure 6. Music from *Lu Zhai Lang* in Western Notation, Chongde Liu, 1998

(九十八) 鲁 斋 郎  
第四折 (双调新水令残套)

无名氏  
《九宫大成》卷六十六

[风入松] 散板

利 名 场 上 苦 奔 波,  
因 甚 强 夺? 蜗 牛 角 上 争 人 我,  
梦 魂 中 一 枕 南 柯。  
不 恋 那 三 公 华 屋,  
且 图 个 五 柳 婆 娑。

In ancient China, playwrights tasked with composing lyrics for *Yuan Zaju* invariably turned to *Qupai* (曲牌; qǔpái). Each *Qupai* is characterized by a specific melody and prescribes the number of words in each line of lyrics, as well as the grammatical structure, and tonal patterns. For instance, in the fourth Act, *Lu Zhai Lang* employs the *qupai* known as *Feng Ru Song*. The lyrics of this piece adhere to a structured format of 7+4+7+7+7+7 syllables, with the rhyme scheme following the sound of the vowel "o".

【风入松】 Fēng Rù Sōng

Number of words

lì míng chǎng shàng kǔ bēn bō , yīn shèn qiáng duó

Lyrics            利 名 场 上 苦 奔 波 , 因 甚 强 夺?            7, 4

Translation      Running around in the world of fame and fortune, why do you want to rob?

wō niú jiǎo shàng zhēng rén wǒ, mèng hún zhōng yī zhěn nán kē

蜗牛角上争人我，梦魂中一枕南柯。 7,7

People living in this world are as if they are cramped on a small snail's corner.

The space is so narrow, what is there to fight for?

Looking back, I realized it was just a big dream.

bú liàn nà sān gōng huá wū, qiě tú gè wu liǔ pó suō

不恋那三公华屋，且图个五柳婆婆。 7,7

Not greedy for glory and wealth, just want to live in leisurely seclusion.

### Tonal Patterns

Chinese is classified as a tonal language, wherein each word is associated with a specific tone. Variances in tone, despite identical pronunciation, convey distinct meanings. The tonal structure of a *Qupai* in *Yuan Zaju* is established through the juxtaposition of *ping* and *ze* tones, as illustrated in the figure below.

平 Píng: 【平】: long and held

【上】: turning upward

仄 Zè: 【去】: turning downward

【入】: short

中 Zhōng: 【平 Píng/仄 Zè】

Each *QuPai* adheres to a distinct tonal pattern, dictating the selection and deployment of words within the lyrics. An illustrative instance is found in the *Feng Ru Song Zhengti* (风入松,

正体) employed within *Lu Zhai Lang*'s musical arrangement. Below, the composition "Feng Rusong·Liuyin Courtyard Apricot Wall" serves as a demonstrative example:

liǔ yīn tíng yuàn yǎo shāo qiáng. yī jiù wū yáng.

柳阴庭院杏梢墙。依旧巫阳。

The tonal pattern would translate into:

zhōng píng zhōng zè zè píng píng. zhōng zè píng píng.

中平中仄仄平平。中仄平平。<sup>28</sup>

The aforementioned elements are those utilized in works inspired by the Yuan Dynasty drama *Lu Zhai Lang*. In the subsequent chapters, we will focus on how to incorporate the discussed and studied elements of *Lu Zhai Lang* to create new works.

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<sup>28</sup>晏几道 (active 1038—1110), 风入松·柳阴庭院杏梢墙



## CHAPTER III: SERENDIPITY, GRIEVANCE, AND ENTANGLEMENT: A DIORAMA OF LU

### ZHAI LANG -缘·怨·鸳: 《鲁斋郎》印象

*Serendipity, Grievance, and Entanglement: A Diorama of Lu Zhai Lang* is a composition crafted from the script and musical composition of the original drama *Lu Zhai Lang*, specifically tailored for saxophone and electronic accompaniment. The musical arrangement comprises an introductory segment followed by three distinct movements, totaling approximately twelve minutes in duration. Each of the titular words correlates with a corresponding movement within the composition. Dr. Wang Ziyu, an alumna of Arizona State University, is the composer behind this creation. Notable entries in her portfolio encompass: *Fold* (2022), for mixed ensemble; *is. Nova.in?* (2022), for solo flute and audiovisual media; *A Monkey Reaching for the Moon* (2021), for solo double bass.

#### **Introduction Fluctuating tempo, dramatic**

The Introduction movement aims to evoke the ambiance of ancient Chinese society, imbued with a sense of vagueness yet rich in distinctive features. To accomplish this, each phrase adheres to the same pentatonic scale, albeit transposing with each iteration. This musical approach resembles a mosaic, characterized by abstraction while retaining a discernible thematic focus. Consequently, saxophonists may envision street scenes bustling with individuals engaged in their daily routines, thereby capturing the essence of the era. The story of *Lu Zhai Lang* in *Yuan Zaju* is rooted in the historical context of the Song Dynasty (February 4, 960 - March 19, 1279). To aid saxophonists in envisioning the daily lives of ordinary people during this period in ancient China, reference can be drawn from the Northern Song Dynasty painter Zhang Zeduan's renowned work, *Along the River During the Qingming Festival*. This masterpiece offers a

glimpse into the cityscape of Dongjing (now Kaifeng, Henan Province) during the Northern Song Dynasty, particularly highlighting the natural scenery and bustling activity along the Bianhe River and in the prosperous city of Bianjing. The *Qingming Shanghe* (清明上河) was a prevalent folk custom of the era, akin to contemporary festival gatherings. The painting vividly captures the grandeur of these gatherings, serving as an invaluable testament to the era's social dynamics. *Along the River During the Qingming Festival* stands as a significant realist artistic treasure, providing firsthand insights into the commerce, craftsmanship, cultural practices, architectural landscape, and transportation infrastructure of Northern Song Dynasty metropolises. Consequently, it holds considerable historical documentary value.

**Figure 7. Zeduan Zhang, *Along the River During the Qingming Festival***



The main motive comes from the fifth phrase of the Gongche notation of *Lu Zhai Lang*. In the melismatic original phrase “不恋那三公华屋”(“Not greedy for glory and wealth”), the composer applied gesture G-A-C-A-G, and manipulated them through transposition (Db-Eb-Gb-Eb-Db), inversion (E-D-B-D-E), expansion (Eb-F-Ab-Bb-Ab-F-Eb). Symmetry and retrograde

motion serve as prominent features within the introduction. Drawing inspiration from the *Qupai Feng Ru Song* as elucidated in Chapter 2 of *Lu Zhai Lang*, this segment meticulously recreates the syntactical structure of *Feng Ru Song*: 7+4+7+7+7+7 (refer to example). Symmetrical beauty encapsulates a fundamental yet profound aesthetic experience, embodying elements such as balance, harmony, tidiness, solemnity, and simplicity.

Figure 8. Original music from *Lu Zhai Lang*



Figure 9. Main motif of the Introduction

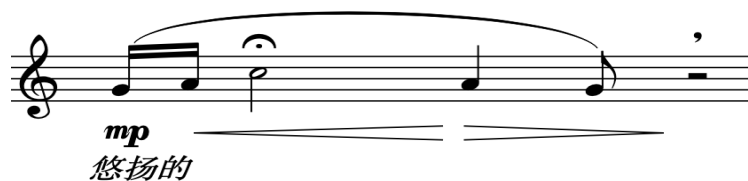


Figure 10. Transposition

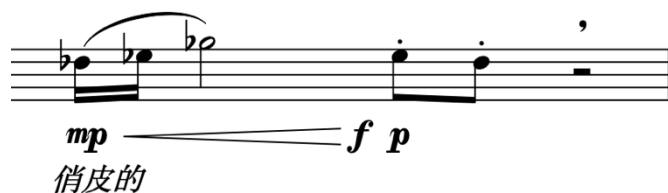


Figure 11. Inversion and expansion



Figure 12. *Feng Ru Song* tonal pattern application

The musical score consists of two staves. The first staff (labeled '2') begins with the tempo marking '悠扬的' (悠扬的) and the dynamic 'mf'. It features a slur over the first two measures with the annotation '前慢后快' (前慢后快). The third measure is marked '俏皮的' (俏皮的) and 'p', with a slur and the annotation '连贯自如' (连贯自如). The fourth measure is marked 'molto rit. 4' and 'p'. The second staff (labeled '3') begins with 'poco accel.' and 'mf', with a slur and the annotation '像山歌一样' (像山歌一样). It includes 'short rest...' and 'even shorter' annotations with slurs. The final measure is marked 'A tempo ♩ = 66' and 'f', with the annotation '京剧亮相做派' (京剧亮相做派).

The expression markings within the composition draw inspiration from various sources, including folk songs sung in mountainous regions, elements of Peking opera, and traditional poetic metaphors, with the aim of evoking the visual and auditory essence of Chinese traditional culture. Notably, in the third bar, the composer's annotations correspond to the description "reminiscent of folk songs sung in the mountains." These folk songs, originating from the agricultural communities, are characterized by their elevated pitch, simplicity, and unstructured rhythm, often praising the diligence, affection, and familial bonds of the laboring populace. The saxophonist is encouraged to interpret this section with a sense of freedom, maintaining a demeanor characterized by relaxation and contentment. *Liangxiang* (亮相) embodies a distinctive performance convention within Peking Opera. It occurs when the principal character makes an entrance, exits the stage, or following the culmination of a dance sequence, wherein a sudden "pause" accompanies the accompaniment of gongs and drums. Notably, this pause, marked by a shift in rhythm rather than a complete cessation, prompts the actors to assume various poses synchronized with the music's cadence. Drawing upon the principles of aestheticism inherent in visual arts, this technique serves to accentuate the character's inner

temperament and psychological disposition, thereby leaving an enduring impression on the audience. Within this composition, in the fourth measure (as illustrated in the musical score), the composer employs three consecutive accents and tenuto markings to evoke the essence of *Liangxiang* (亮相) in Peking Opera, thereby foreshadowing the character's appearance and signaling the commencement of the narrative.

**Figure 13. *Liangxiang* in Peking Opera**



The introduction utilizes the entire range of the alto saxophone, effectively showcasing the contrasting tones and timbres between its high and low registers (see figure below). During performance, it is important for the performer to convey the instrument's inherent flexibility. Visualizing this phrase as akin to a cascading waterfall aids in capturing this expressive quality, thereby ensuring a seamless rendition.

**Figure 14. Waterfall**



## **Parallel Universes**

The saxophonist is advised to play rhythmic freedom during the introduction, followed by the recording of multiple takes. These recordings are subsequently incorporated into the electronic tape with the intention of evoking a metaphorical representation of "parallel universes," reminiscent of traditional folk storytelling where each storyteller presents their unique rendition influenced by variables such as the day, audience response, or personal mood. This concept aligns with the original version's deliberately ambiguous rhythmic notation. While narrating the musical tale or vividly depicting its scenery, the saxophonist should maintain a degree of fidelity to the foundational narrative structure.

## CHAPTER IV: MOVEMENT I. 缘 *SERENDIPITY*

This movement embodies a mood of jubilation, exuberance, and innocence, narrating the tale of the couple Zhang Gui and Li as they transition from blissful togetherness to the tragic separation imposed by Lu Zhai Lang. Commencing with the vibrant twittering of birds, the composer employs symmetrical bird calls to draw parallels between the two couples, namely Li Si and Zhang, and Zhang Gui and Li. The buoyant rhythm captures the joy preceding Lu Zhai Lang's disruptive intervention. Saxophone performance in this segment is characterized by a lively and straightforward approach, featuring abstract bird calls imbued with Chinese stylistic elements. These calls, presented in pairs to simulate dialogue between the instrument's high and low registers, maintain a symmetrical arrangement. Melodic inversions and timbral techniques serve as distinguishing features of these pairs, as depicted in the provided musical notation. Within this segment, the composer incorporates three saxophone extended techniques—flutter-tongue, slap-tongue, and altissimo—to emulate the form and sound of birds. Flutter-tongue articulation replicates the fluttering of wings, while slap-tongue mimics a bird pecking at objects with its beak, and altissimo evoke the bird's piercing, high-pitched cry. Fermata markings are strategically employed to demarcate each grouping of bird movements, with the saxophonist tasked with executing these pauses in an unpredictable manner, mirroring the natural behavior of birds. Subsequently, pre-recorded electronics join the ensemble at bar 25, introducing further variations of bird calls and enriching the auditory landscape with additional layers of sound.

The initial movement draws its thematic inspiration from the Chinese folk melody *Bai Niao Chao Feng* (All Birds Paying Homage to the Phoenix, 百鸟朝凤). This composition is famously performed as a *suona* (唢呐) concerto, wherein the solo double-reed instrument imitates bird calls and engages in musical dialogue with the ensemble. Originating from a

wedding scene in the *Yuju* opera (豫剧) *Tai Hua Jiao* (To Carry a Bridal Sedan Chair), the music accompanies the procession of a bridal sedan chair, a customary feature of Chinese weddings. Traditionally, the sedan chair is carried by either four or eight individuals. In the depicted scene of *Carrying the Sedan Chair*, four bearers transport the bride within a grand, red sedan chair, flanked by colorful flags and *suonas*. As they traverse, lively music fills the air, accompanied by the festive sounds of firecrackers, creating an atmosphere of jubilation and prosperity. The bearers engage in playful antics, causing the sedan to tilt and sway, eliciting laughter from onlookers. This jovial and vibrant procession is a highlight of the bridal journey. It is incumbent upon the saxophonist to convey this spirited and celebratory ambiance during the designated section (measure 9-24). At measure 25, the saxophonist is tasked with performing the cantabile section with a sense of interpretive freedom, transitioning thereafter into a realm characterized by irregular geometric patterns. Saxophonists are advised to treat eighth-note rests as *accelerando* rests, symbolizing the escalating unpredictability of the real world. Upon reaching measure 34, the performer is directed to detach the mouthpiece from the saxophone body, utilizing only the mouthpiece to emulate the calls of cuckoo birds indigenous to mainland China. This transformation from paired, cheerful birds to solitary calls reflects the narrative of two couples torn asunder by the reprehensible actions of Lu Zhai Lang.



Figure 15. Bird in Pairs

9 *mf* *p* *f* *pp* *mf* *p* *f* *pp*  
 欢快轻巧(高音区) 模仿, 略僵硬(低音区) 得意

13 *mf* *p* *f* *pp* *ff* 稍激烈

16 *f* *f* *f* *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp*  
 slap-tongue

19 *mp* *ppp* *mp* *ppp* *fff* 更激烈 *p*

22 *f* *mp* *sfz* *sfz* *mp* *f* *mp*

Figure 16. World in irregular geometric patterns

25 先是长音，弱的；然后变的busy，换现场演长音

rest上的accelerando；越说越快的样子

*p cantabile* *mf*

28

31

33 *ppp*

To Remove mouthpiece from saxophone

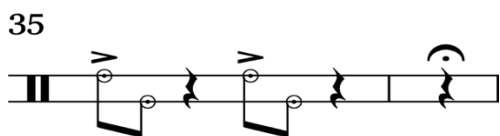
本乐章到这大概1min

Commencing at measure 41, the saxophonist embarks upon the task of emulating the calls of ten distinct cuckoo birds, thereby showcasing adept control over the instrument's mouthpiece. Manipulation of the saxophone mouthpiece affords the saxophonists control over tone, rhythm, and performance effects. To achieve lower pitches, the player tightens their grip on the mouthpiece, minimizing air leakage during play. Conversely, for higher pitches, the player loosens the mouthpiece to facilitate maximum airflow. Furthermore, performers can manipulate pitch using their fingers by inserting them into the mouthpiece during performance, thereby

regulating airflow obstruction to control pitch. In specialized performances, techniques for mouthpiece control may entail additional nuances and specificity.

In this passage, the saxophone mouthpiece solo evokes the narrative of separation between Zhang Gui and Li Si from their spouses. The initial portrayal introduces the common cuckoo, scientifically known as *Cuculus canorus*. Its distinct vocalization features a succession of continuous eighth notes spanning minor thirds. To execute this passage, the saxophonist grips the mouthpiece between the thumb and index finger, while moving the remaining three fingers up and down to produce the continuous minor thirds (see figure below)

**Figure 17. *Cuculus canorus*'s call**



模仿普通杜鹃 (布谷鸟)  
一高一低即可, 大约小三度

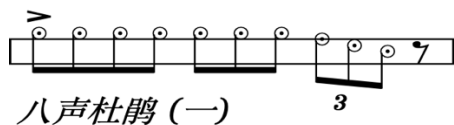
The subsequent avian melody originates from Asian Drongo-cuckoo, scientifically identified as *Surniculus lugubris*. Its vocalization is distinguished by a quarter note with glissando, transitioning into a continuous ascending sixteenth note. Central to the saxophonist's execution is the mastery of slide control. Performing a portamento on the mouthpiece necessitates simultaneous management of both the grip/release speed of the mouthpiece and the airflow rate. Upon releasing the mouthpiece, the player must enhance the airflow velocity towards the mouthpiece, thereby naturally eliciting the desired glissando effect (see figure below).

**Figure 18. *Surniculus Lugubris*'s call**

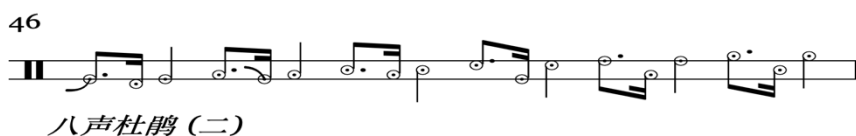


The third avian melody featured originates from the Plaintive cuckoo, scientifically known as *Cacomantis merulinus*, which exhibits two distinctive calls. The first call comprises continuous eighth notes followed by a descending triplet. To emulate this call, the saxophonist aims to impart a slight wavering quality to the notes, achieved by subtly modulating the hand position during play. This technique enhances the fidelity of the rendition to the Plaintive cuckoo's calls. The second call of the Plaintive cuckoo is characterized by a melodious quality, with intervals defined by a continuous chromatic scale. Its rhythmic structure consists of a dotted eighth note followed by a sixteenth note, forming a rhythmic group, which is repeated thrice to complete the chant. Notably, the starting pitch of each group varies, with the first group commencing at the highest pitch, the second group at a lower pitch than the first and third groups, and the third group mirroring the starting pitch of the first group.

**Figure 19. *Cacomantis merulinus*'s call #1**

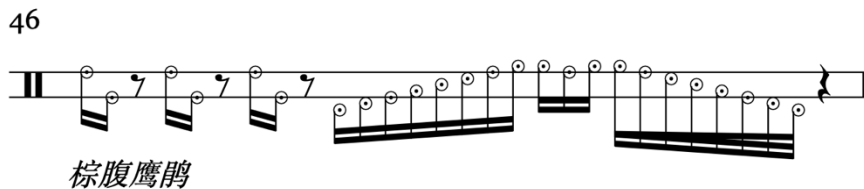


**Figure 20. *Cacomantis merulinus*'s call #2**



The subsequent avian species featured is the brown-bellied eagle cuckoo, scientifically classified as *Hierococcyx nisicolor*, predominantly found in southern regions of China. This relatively diminutive bird species favors perching on lofty branches while vocalizing. The call of the brown-bellied eagle cuckoo comprises two distinct segments. The first segment consists of two sixteenth notes with differing pitches, separated by a major second interval, with the initial pitch higher than the subsequent one. To accurately replicate this call, the saxophonist should incorporate an upward glissando on the second note, closely resembling the characteristic call of the brown-bellied eagle cuckoo. The second segment of the call features continuous sixteenth notes, with tonal characteristics mirroring the shape delineated in the notation. While maintaining fidelity to the musical shape, the saxophonist is not required to adhere strictly to specific pitches, but rather to convey the distinctive curling call of the brown-bellied eagle cuckoo.

**Figure 21. *Hierococcyx nisicolor*'s call**



Hodgson's Hawk Cuckoo, with its widespread distribution across South Asia, East Asia, and Southeast Asia, bears the scientific designation *Centropus bengalensis*. Its vocalization is typified by a succession of rapid, staccato-like sounds reminiscent of a bouncing ball, followed by a series of continuous downward glides. Saxophonists tasked with replicating this call are advised to modulate their airflow into the mouthpiece while simultaneously exerting increased pressure from the tongue against the reed to produce short, percussive notes resembling the bouncing motion of a rubber ball. The technique for executing the continuous downward

glissando mirrors that of the upward glissando described previously for the cuckoo, thus obviating the need for further elaboration.

**Figure 22. *Centropus bengalensis*'s call**

怀远/鸣羽

48 **poco accel.**

小杜鹃

49 **A tempo** **poco accel.**

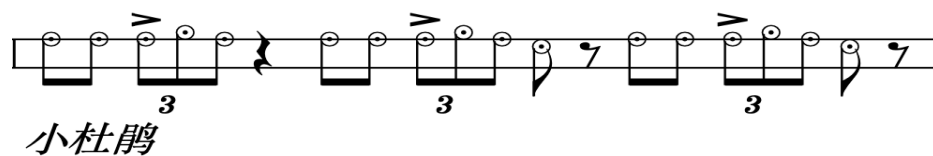
The Indian cuckoo, found throughout all provinces and autonomous regions of China except Tibet, Xinjiang, and Qinghai, bears the scientific designation *Cuculus micropterus*. Its call is notably distinct, comprising four consecutive eighth notes with varying pitches. To faithfully reproduce the Indian cuckoo's calls, saxophonists should prioritize accuracy in intervals. The interval relationship between the first and second eighth notes approximates a major second, while that between the third and fourth eighth notes should be a minor third. Additionally, the first eighth note should be slightly higher than the third, with their interval relationship being less than a minor second. The call of the Indian cuckoo is characterized by a relatively delicate quality, and saxophonists should strive to execute it with utmost lightness while maintaining pitch accuracy.

**Figure 23. *Cuculus micropterus*'s call**

四声杜鹃

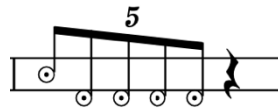
The Little Rhododendron, distributed across Afghanistan, northern Pakistan, and Kashmir, is also prevalent in several regions of China, notably southern Heilongjiang, Jilin, Liaoning, Shanxi, Shaanxi, southern Gansu, and Sichuan. Scientifically designated as *Cuculus poliocephalus*, this species exhibits distinct song characteristics, encompassing both rhythm and pitch elements. Rhythmic traits are evident in the provided musical examples, while pitch characteristics primarily manifest in triplets. Within a triplet, the interval between the first and second notes is a major second, mirroring that between the second and third notes, with the first and third notes sharing the same pitch. Subsequently, the triplet is followed by a descending eighth note spanning a minor third interval, encapsulating the pitch characteristics of the Little Rhododendron's song. Saxophonists are advised to meticulously control pitch to adhere to the corresponding interval relationships during performance.

**Figure 24. *Cuculus poliocephalus*'s call**



The subsequent bird sound featured is that of the Himalayan cuckoo, scientifically identified as *Cuculus saturatus*. The Himalayan cuckoo's song consists of quintuplets, with each quintuplet constituting a single song. A notable characteristic of the Himalayan cuckoo's call is that, aside from the initial note, the subsequent four notes maintain an identical deep pitch. To accurately replicate the deep call of the Himalayan cuckoo, saxophonists should apply firm pressure to the mouthpiece, thereby restricting the airflow during play. Unlike other bird calls, the pitch interval relationship in the Himalayan cuckoo's calls is not a primary focus.

**Figure 25. *Cuculus saturatus*'s call**



中杜鹃

The Asian koel, scientifically designated as *Eudynamys scolopaceus*, is colloquially referred to as "the wronged soul bird" by the Chinese populace due to its piercing cry, reminiscent of a tormented soul calling out for its life. It holds a unique significance among the selected bird calls featured in this movement. This composition incorporates two distinct calls of the Asian koel. The first call entails a continuous ascending glide. When executing this call, saxophonists must meticulously control the upward portamento, employing a technique consistent with that employed for the cuckoo's portamento described earlier. Details regarding this technique will not be reiterated here. The second call of the Asian koel necessitates both pitch and portamento control. Each group comprises three notes, with the interval relationship between the first and second notes constituting a major second, and that between the second and third notes a minor third. Notably, the high ascending and descending movements in pitch are executed through portamento, effectively capturing the shrill characteristics of the Asian Koel's calls.

**Figure 26. *Eudynamys scolopaceus*'s call #1**

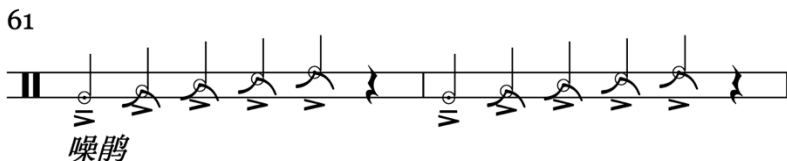
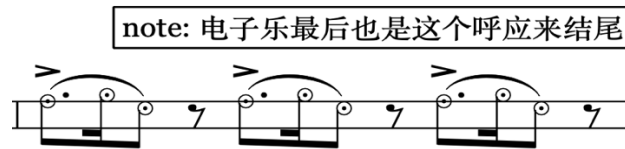




Figure 27. *Eudynamys scolopaceus*'s call #2



The composer utilizes the persistent, piercing cries of the Asian Koel to convey the profound sorrow experienced by the two couples subsequent to their separation by Lu Zhai Lang. Zhang Gui's decision to send his wife away, driven by fear of Lu Zhai Lang's power, encapsulates a tumultuous internal conflict, accompanied by anguish and haunting dreams akin to a tormented spirit seeking redemption. The composer commences the ensuing movement with the mournful wail of the Asian Koel, serving as a prelude to *Grievance*, a composition dedicated to Zhang Gui's plight.

## CHAPTER V: MOVEMENT II. 怨 *GRIEVANCE*

In contrast to first movement, the second movement assumes an introspective and melancholic tone. It serves as a pseudo-aria depicting the internal turmoil of Zhang Gui, who, out of fear for his life, was compelled to surrender his wife to Lu Zhai Lang. While Lu Zhai Lang embodies dominance, lust, and cruelty, juxtaposed against Li Si's integrity and benevolence, Zhang Gui emerges as a complex tragic figure within the narrative. His tragic fate is compounded by his inherent kindness, sense of justice, and underlying cowardice. Throughout the script, Zhang Gui's character is delineated by instances of both altruism and moral weakness. For instance, upon witnessing Li Si's distress following the abduction of his wife, Zhang Gui promptly intervenes, offering solace and assistance. This act underscores Zhang Gui's compassionate nature, contrasting starkly with his subsequent betrayal of his own wife to Lu Zhai Lang. Despite harboring resentment and fear towards Lu Zhai Lang, Zhang Gui rationalizes his actions as inevitable consequences of fate, embodying the archetype of a tragic figure. The second movement employs music as a vehicle to elucidate Zhang Gui's internal conflict and anguish with precision and depth.

The second movement commences with three renditions of the call of the native cuckoo bird of China, the Asian Koel (*Eudynamys scolopaceus* or 噪鹛). In Chinese culture, these calls are imbued with a haunting and melancholic quality, often likened to the cries of wronged souls. Alongside this initial avian motif, another thematic motif emerges intermittently throughout the movement, denoted as the "theme of Zhang Gui." This motif is a variation of the first measure of the Introduction, characterized by its utilization of retrograde motion.

Figure 28. *Eudynamys scolopaceus*'s call

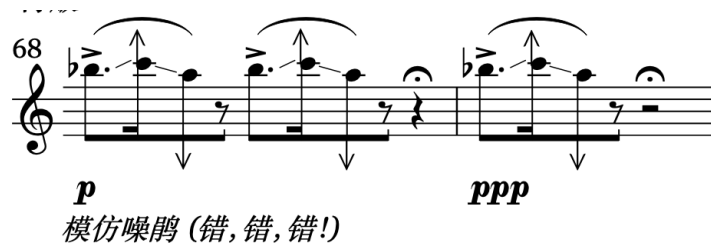


Figure 29. Theme of Zhang Gui



Facing the power of Lu Zhai Lang and his own weakness, Zhang Gui is in agony, struggling, and deeply desires to find a way out. Therefore, in the music, the composer uses wide intervals to depict Zhang Gui's process of seeking a way out upon learning that his wife has caught the eye of Lu Zhai Lang (bars 75—80). Subsequently, the calls of the high-pitched cuckoo birds resonate like summoning spirits, while the low-pitched Asian Koels echo the high-pitched cuckoos, immersing both the saxophonist and the audience into Zhang Gui's inner world.

Figure 30. Zhang Gui is seeking a way out

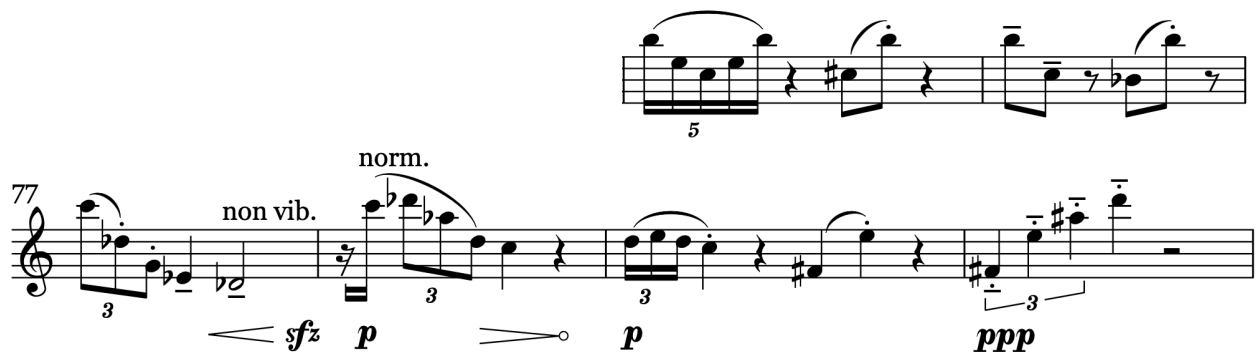


Figure 31. Bird Calls

The musical score is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It begins with a measure marked '81'. The first two measures are marked *mf* and contain the notes G4, A4, and B4. The third measure is marked *p* and contains a half note G4 with a fermata. Above this note is the instruction 'non vib.'. The fourth measure contains a half note A4 with a fermata, followed by a quarter note B4. Above the A4 note is the instruction 'more air, less pitch' with a dashed arrow pointing right. The fifth measure contains a quarter note C5 with a fermata, followed by a quarter note B4. Above the C5 note is the instruction 'more air, less pitch' with a dashed arrow pointing right. The sixth measure contains a quarter note A4 with a fermata, followed by a quarter note G4. Above the A4 note is the instruction 'more air, less pitch' with a dashed arrow pointing right. The seventh measure contains a quarter note F#4 with a fermata, followed by a quarter note E4. Above the F#4 note is the instruction 'more air, less pitch' with a dashed arrow pointing right. The eighth measure contains a quarter note D4 with a fermata, followed by a quarter note C4. Above the D4 note is the instruction 'more air, less pitch' with a dashed arrow pointing right. The score ends with a double bar line and two dots (//). Below the first two measures is the dynamic marking *mf* and the text 'conjuring' and '招魂似的'. Below the third measure is the dynamic marking *p*.

*Huiwen* (回文) is a grammatical structure used in Chinese, where identical words or sentences are reversed or rearranged in subsequent text without changing the meaning. The poem *Pu Sa Man· Huiwen Xia Guiyuan* (菩萨蛮·回文夏闺怨) by Su Shi of the Song Dynasty is a classic example of this application of palindromes. Upon delving into Zhang Gui's inner world, the musical phrases employing palindrome syntax illustrate Zhang Gui's internal struggles and helplessness. When Zhang Gui's wife catches the eye of Lu Zhai Lang, Zhang Gui is reluctant to surrender his wife to another, yet in such societal circumstances, he perceives resistance to yield useless. Zhang Gui finds himself torn between resistance and resignation to fate. His kindness, compassion, and sense of justice are tightly confined within the confines of power, unable to break free. The application of palindrome syntax demonstrates how, despite the repeated struggles of Zhang Gui and Li Si against figures of authority like Lu Zhai Lang, the outcome remains unchanged.

Figure 32. *Huiwen* 回文

81 *mf* conjuring 招魂似的 *p* *pp* 极有感情的诵诗 (自怨自艾、感时伤逝那种) *norm.*

85 *f* *p* *ffff* *p* *pp*

In this section, Zhang Gui's inner world is depicted on three levels. The first level portrays Zhang Gui's self-pity and lamentation towards his fate through the use of *Huiwen*. Subsequently, the composer leads the audience and saxophonist into the second level of Zhang Gui's inner activity by employing the mournful cries of cuckoos and Asian Koels (bars 89—90), representing Zhang Gui's reminiscence of the sweet life before encountering Lu Zhai Lang (bars 92—94). Finally, Zhang Gui's memories gradually turn painful, accompanied by feelings of resentment and anger towards figures of authority like Lu Zhai Lang (bars 95—98), with the escalating triplet notes aiding the saxophonist in constructing this scene.

Figure 33. Birds Calls

89 *as soft as possible*

Figure 34. Recall of sweet life before encountering Lu Zhai Lang



Figure 35. Feelings of resentment and anger



After the intense anguish and anger, the music transitions into a quiet atmosphere of sorrow. Within Zhang Gui's inner world, there persists a desire to seek a resolution, whether in practical terms or on a psychological level. Consequently, the composer utilizes wide interval leaps to replicate Zhang Gui's inner turmoil as he searches fruitlessly in the absence of hope. The saxophonist portrays a segment corresponding to the pessimistic, hopeless, and despondent emotions. As Zhang Gui's second attempt to find a solution proves futile, feelings of resignation and anger propel the second movement to its climax. In Peking Opera, "flower face" refers to a type of facial makeup used by actors, where various colors are used to draw specific patterns on the face to depict the character's personality, traits, or other characteristics. The "wā yā yā yā" in Peking Opera is a unique performance style associated with "flower face," often depicting characters in a state of anxious anger with frantic cries. Drawing inspiration from this performance style, the composer utilizes repetition, high pitch, and rapid sixteenth notes to vividly portray the voices of the Yuan Dynasty commoners oppressed by authority.

Figure 36. Zhang Gui's inner turmoil

♩ = 76

100 ord.

sorrowfully *mf* *pp*

*p* arievinaly

104 non vib.

*ppp* *mf* bleak

上下求索 carefully  
(with more patience this time)

*molto accel.*

Figure 37. Flower Face in Peaking Opera

*molto accel.*

108 norm.

*p* emotional

♩ = 120 *accel.*

112 *f*

115 *ppp* “哇呀呀呀” - 京剧花脸, 怒

*molto rit.*

117 *f*

*molto rit.*

After the anger subsides, the call of the cuckoo bird resurfaces. The solitary bird (symbolizing Zhang Gui) sings, seeking its mate. The composer employs the calls of cuckoos from different registers to depict this scene (bars 121—123). However, the cuckoo (representing Zhang Gui) calls out in either high or low pitches but receives no response, unable to find its spouse and offspring. The composer uses major thirds, not belonging to the cuckoo's calls, from different registers to represent the unanswered cuckoo, symbolizing Zhang Gui unable to find his family. Subsequently, the mournful cries of the Asian Koel lead the second movement to the end.

**Figure 38. Bird calls: Zhang Gui cannot find his family**



**Figure 39. Asian Koel cries**



The conclusion of the second movement is structured in *Huiwen* (measure 131—141). After repeated inner struggles, Zhang Gui gradually calms down, ultimately accepting the departure of his wife and children, and the consequence of their absence. In contrast to the first occurrence of a *Huiwen*, this time Zhang Gui reluctantly accepts, albeit unwillingly, because he fears authority. Compared to the six-bar *Huiwen* in the first instance, the *Huiwen* in the conclusion is more expansive. The composer employs a twelve-bar *Huiwen* to express the lament that even if time were to reverse, Zhang Gui's fate would remain unchanged.



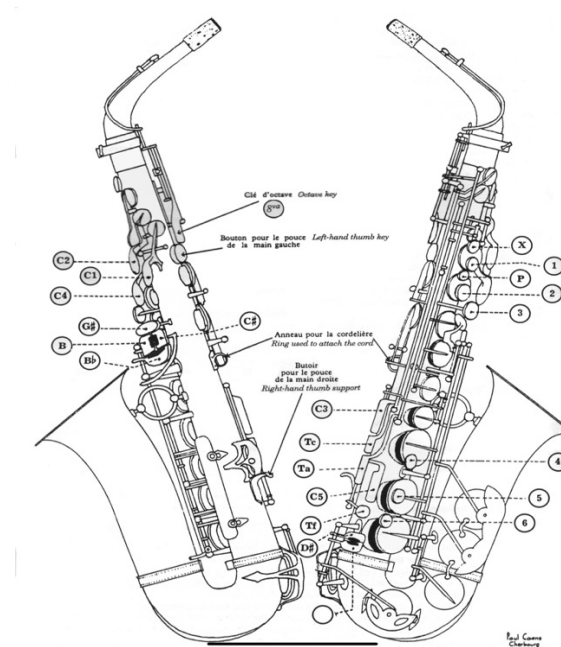
Figure 40. *Huiwen* 回文

In addition to analyzing the content of the second movement, mastery of performance techniques is essential for saxophonists. The *guqin* (古琴), an ancient Chinese string instrument, also known as the *yaoqin* (瑶琴), *yuqin*(玉琴), or *qixianqin*(七弦琴), has a history of over three thousand years. Among the various playing techniques of the *guqin*, the *lunzhi*(轮指) technique is the most widely used. In this movement, the composer references the *lunzhi* technique of the *guqin* to deepen the audience's impression of the second palindrome (bars 133 and 136). The *lunzhi* technique used in the second movement is applied to the B and C notes. After experimentation, when the saxophonist performs the *lunzhi* technique on the B note, they should press down on the B key and simultaneously press key 3 (please see figure below)<sup>29</sup> up and down, accompanied by articulation to mimic the plucking action of the *guqin*. The saxophonist

<sup>29</sup> Jean-Marie Loudeix, *Hello! Mr. Sax, ou Parametres du Saxophone*, Alphonse Leduc, 1989

then proceeds to execute continuous trills to complete the *guqin lunzhi* technique. The next *lunzhi* technique is applied to the C note, where the saxophonist should press down on the C key and simultaneously press key 4 up and down, with the technique being the same as before. It is important to emphasize that in imitating the *guqin lunzhi* technique, the selection of pitches is crucial. The saxophonist should choose pitches that are different from the *lunzhi* pitches but closest to them to execute this technique effectively.

**Figure 41. Jean- Marie Loudeix, *Hello! Mr. Sax, ou Parametres du Saxophone***



Throughout the second movement, the composer employs glissando techniques extensively. One part of these glissandos mimics the mournful call of the Asian Koel, while another part emulates the descending glissando technique of the *guqin*, illustrating the saxophone's adept fusion with Eastern classical instruments within the Western musical context. The first occurrence of the *guqin's* descending glissando technique in this piece is noted at bar 70. Unlike conventional saxophone glissandos, the *guqin's* technique prioritizes pitch accuracy. The saxophonist is advised to slide down to a quarter tone below the target pitch. For instance, at

bar 70, the descending glissando begins on the B note. The saxophonist should delicately press keys No. four, five, and six while playing the B note, ensuring they are not fully pressed, to achieve the desired quarter-tone descent effect.

Saturated with self-doubt and a sense of powerlessness, this movement utilizes dissonance, quartertones, and glissandi to emotionally contrast with the first movement. Unlike with the first movement, this movement is purely solo without electronics, delicately depicting Zhang Gui's inner world with rich saxophone techniques.

CHAPTER VI: MOVEMENT III. 鴛 ENTANGLEMENT

The third movement essentially serves as a final recapitulation, incorporating a montage-like expression to reiterate materials from the introduction, first movement, and second movement in various ways. Additionally, the composer integrates the tonal pattern of the known tune *Feng Ru Song* with the music from *Lu Zhai Lang's* lost script, presenting the complete musical outline of *Feng Ru Song*. These two threads form the structure of the entire third movement.

The third movement commences with an introduction of electronic music, featuring segments previously recorded by the saxophonist from the first and second movements as well as the introduction section. The composer initiates the third movement through a montage-like musical language. The referencing of the *Feng Ru Song* tune establishes the overarching framework of the third movement. Utilizing the tonal pattern's variations of ascending and descending tones, the composer delineates the musical contours of the *Feng Ru Song* melody. For instance, the tonal pattern of the first line of *Feng Ru Song* is as follows:

"zhong ping zhong ze ze ping ping"<sup>30</sup>

Figure 42. Tonal pattern and its corresponding music

Figure 42 shows a musical score in 2/4 time, starting at measure 144. Above the staff, a tonal pattern is indicated by notes with horizontal lines: 平 (level), 平 (level), 平 (level), 仄 (fall), 仄 (fall), 平 (level), 平 (level). The music features dynamics of *mf*, *p*, and *mf*, with a crescendo and decrescendo marking the *p* section.

<sup>30</sup> 晏几道 (active 1038—1110), 风入松·柳阴庭院杏梢墙

In conjunction with the incorporation of the tonal patterns from the *Feng Ru Song*, the composer revisits materials employed in the introduction, first movement, and second movement, presenting them in various forms within the third movement to echo earlier characters and themes, thereby providing a comprehensive recapitulation of the entire composition. For instance, in measures 207 and 213, the composer alludes to content from the introduction section with specific adaptations. Notably, measure 207 features elements of symmetry, retrograde motion, and a pentatonic scale, while measure 213 introduces cascading segments reminiscent of a waterfall (refer to the figure below). Additionally, in measures 155, 161, 163, and 189, the composer recalls the calls of the Asian Koel and the Cuckoo Bird from the first movement. At measure 164, the composer introduces variations on content from the opening of the first movement. At measure 172, the composer references the theme of Zhang Gui from the second movement, incorporating alterations. Finally, at measure 193, the composer utilizes materials from the middle section of the second movement, thus crafting a montage-like musical language in the third movement.

The third movement stands out for its incorporation of electronic music in a new way. Diverging from its predecessors, this movement integrates electronic elements derived from motifs found in earlier sections, establishing a foundation for a montage-like musical narrative. Approximately thirty seconds later, the saxophone introduces the melodic theme of *Feng Ru Song* in a cantabile manner. Throughout this transition, the electronic accompaniment persists in the background, continually referencing materials from preceding movements, including the thematic content associated with Zhang Gui. The production of electronic music is facilitated through the utilization of Max/MSP, enabling the composer and performer to select appropriate

filters that align with their aesthetic preferences, thereby enhancing the live saxophone performance with additional layers of musical depth.

In *Lu Zhai Lang*, the reunion of Zhang Gui and Li Si's couple, alongside the joyful familial reunion facilitated by the introduction of the character Bao Zheng, epitomizes a conventional happy ending. However, the character of Bao Zheng is excessively theatrical, and the happy ending hinges entirely on his presence, thereby diluting the sense of realism and fostering the impression among the audience that the playwright Guan Hanqing forces happy ending. Paradoxically, it is precisely this exaggerated depiction of Bao Zheng and the absence of an authentic happy ending resolution that accentuates the tragic underpinning of this farcical narrative.

Consider the conceptualization: Guan Hanqing devised an all-powerful, astute, benevolent, and just character, Bao, with the intention of compelling Lu Zhai Lang, a formidable figure steeped in wrongdoing, to desist from his malevolent deeds and face the consequences thereof. This scenario undeniably embodies a significant irony inherent in the actual denouement. Guan Hanqing employed the improbable, optimistic resolution within the play to serve as a mirror reflecting the tragedies of real-life circumstances. In the concluding moments of the third movement, the composer utilized the mournful lament of the cuckoo to encapsulate the tragic essence underlying the ostensibly comedic resolution of *Lu Zhai Lang's* narrative arc.

## CHAPTER VII: COLLABORATION

In the creation of this piece, I engaged in numerous discussions, collaborating with the composer Wang Ziyu. In this chapter, I will elaborate on the work in detail from three perspectives: electronic music, saxophone techniques, and the overall final effect of the piece.

First and foremost, this piece consists of two primary components: a saxophone solo and an electronic music background. During the preparation of the electronic music background, I collaborated closely with the composer to determine its presentation. For instance, we considered using electronic music effects to evoke the social atmosphere of ancient China in the introduction and to mimic bird calls in the first movement. Additionally, we explored using software synthesizers to convey the surreal aspects of the story of *Lu Zhai Lang*. After Ziyu sent me the introduction, I practiced and recorded it on the saxophone, enabling her to hear the actual sound of the saxophone playing the introduction. Ultimately, we decided to use my recorded saxophone performance as the electronic music background for this piece, thus maximizing the instrument's tonal charm. Furthermore, we emphasized unity in our approach, aiming to convey the depth of the work with minimal material and thematic elements.

The subsequent challenge was to make the background electronic music engaging while aiding the performers in presenting the *Yuan Zaju Lu Zhai Lang* on stage. To address this, Ziyu and I engaged in extensive discussions. When recording the electronic music for this piece, I captured the introduction and each section of the first movement, each featuring at least three distinct musical expressions. These expressions were designed to portray the social atmosphere of ancient China in three dimensions: horizontal, vertical, and detailed, and to create a parallel universe that reflects the story of *Lu Zhai Lang* in the *Yuan Zaju*, providing the audience with a rich, immersive experience.

I divided the introduction into two sections: measures 1-3 and measures 4-8. Over the course of one week, I recorded each section three times, employing different musical expressions for each recording. For instance, in measures 1-3, my first recording strictly adhered to the score markings while stretching each phrase to draw inspiration from the characteristics of Chinese folk songs. This extended music, when combined with the same section played live, created a perfect echo effect, enhancing the vertical layering of the piece. The overall effect was reminiscent of music emanating from a distant place, evoking the unique atmosphere of ancient China.

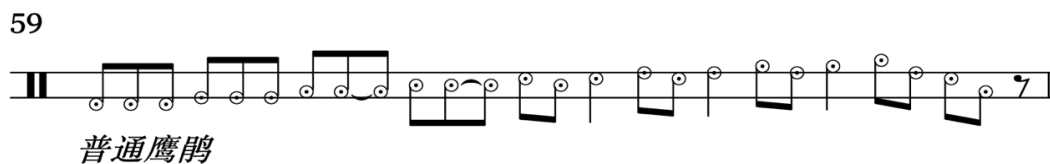
In the second recording, I concentrated on varying the vibrato to convey a sense of depth, illustrating the layered effect of the music transitioning from far to near and vice versa. When controlling the saxophone's vibrato, I typically adjust two elements: the amplitude and the frequency. By altering these aspects, I was able to create a horizontal layering effect, enhancing the perception of the sound's movement from distant to close and back again.

For the third recording, I focused on adjusting the tempo and pauses. After Ziyu listened to the first two versions, we discussed specific details of the introduction. For instance, in the third measure (*Poco accelerando*), Ziyu suggested considering the duration of the eighth rest within the free rhythm without a time signature. The pause duration of the eighth rest could be modified to suit the phrase's expression, such as progressively shortening the pauses throughout the phrase to create a more compact atmosphere. This approach effectively leads into the fourth measure, setting the stage for the story and the introduction of characters. Using these three versions, Ziyu edited them together, giving each recording a different start time. This technique allows the audience to experience the layered parallel worlds of *Lu Zhai Lang* in the *Yuan Zaju*.

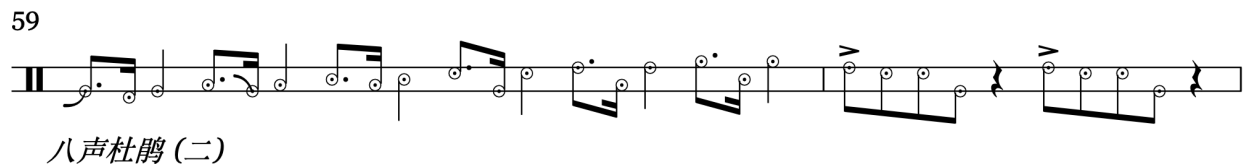


Next, Ziyu and I collaborated on the unique bird calls featured in the first movement. We experimented with several versions of solo bird calls. In the original version, Ziyu had chosen the call of the *Hierococcyx varius* (see figure below). However, while imitating and practicing *Hierococcyx varius*'s call using the saxophone mouthpiece, I discovered that its pitch and rhythm varied significantly with each call. These variations made it challenging for the audience to quickly recognize the characteristics of the *Hierococcyx varius*'s call. After listening to and practicing different bird calls, I proposed *Cacomantis merulinus*'s call, which I found to be more suitable and distinctive. I played this version for Ziyu and discussed my idea with her. She appreciated the suggestion and incorporated the eight-note cuckoo call into the latest version of the score.

**Figure 43. *Hierococcyx varius*'s call #1**



**Figure 44. *Cacomantis merulinus* #2**

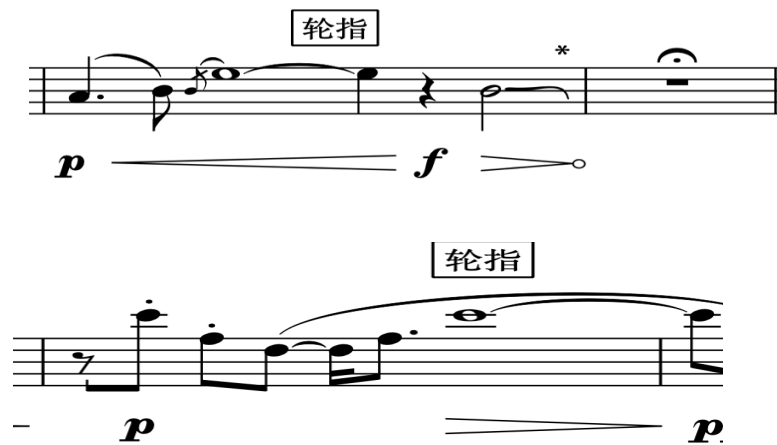


Secondly, in the second movement of the electronic music without background, Ziyu and I discussed and collaborated on extended, or contemporary saxophone techniques. Ziyu introduced the Chinese *guqin*'s finger rolling technique to enhance the audience's and performers' sense of ancient Chinese society. The *guqin*'s sound is profoundly bleak and sorrowful, providing an emotional tone for Zhang Gui's inner turmoil in the second movement. However, replicating

the *guqin*'s finger rolling technique on the saxophone proved challenging. Initially, Ziyu considered using a software synthesizer to reproduce this technique but was concerned about the performance quality due to her lack of experience with this method.

During my practice sessions, I repeatedly listened to recordings of the *guqin*'s finger rolling technique, attempting to find a suitable method to mimic it on the saxophone. With guidance from my teacher, Dr. Stusek, he suggested I try a way to reproduce the technique using the existing keys of the saxophone and modifying the traditional trills' continuous tonguing method (specific methods are detailed in Chapter 5). Upon learning that this technique could be successfully adapted for the saxophone, Ziyu incorporated it into more appropriate phrases in the score, specifically in measures 70 and 94 (see figure below)

**Figure 45. Lunzhi Technique**



Finally, Ziyu and I collaborated extensively on the final presentation of the piece. This work premiered at the 2024 Asian Classical Music Initiative International Conference at Mount Saint Mary's University in Los Angeles. Based on this performance experience, we made further adjustments to the live presentation. For instance, in the second movement, from bars 108 to 120, I suggested that the saxophonist could achieve a better performance by playing the entire phrase

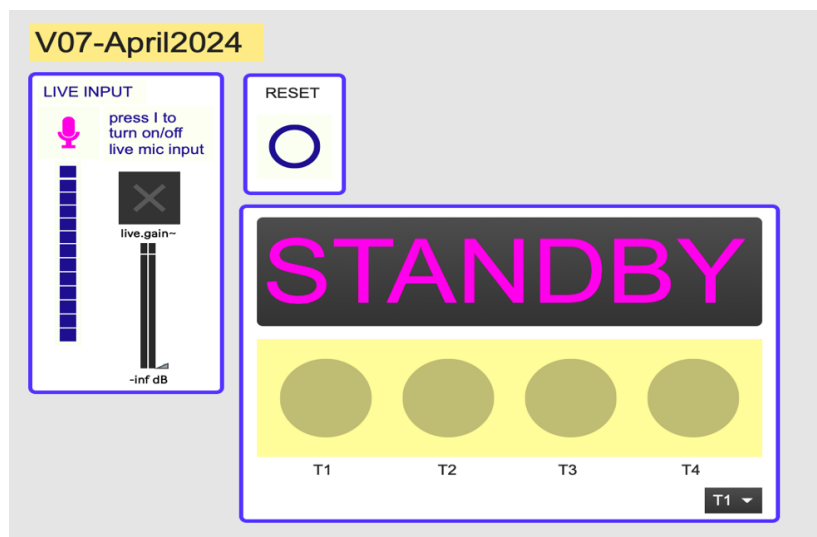
without taking a breath, as this would maintain the continuity of the phrase and the progression of emotions. However, this made the live performance more challenging. After discussing this with Ziyu, we decided to shorten the section by deleting bar 116 from the original score. This adjustment allowed the saxophonist to complete the phrase without taking a breath while preserving the intended emotional progression.

Furthermore, following the initial premiere of the composition, enhancements were made to refine the saxophonist's mastery of the integration of electronic elements in real-time. The incorporation of electronic components in the piece necessitates the saxophonist to regulate each modified recording via a Bluetooth pedal connected beforehand, engaging with it at specified points in the score to transmit the electronic accompaniment through pre-linked speakers. Initially, the left pedal was designated for standby mode, wherein all music would remain in its original state to ensure performance stability. This setup allowed the saxophonist to halt all background electronic music by activating the left pedal in instances of chaotic electronic cues, enabling them to carry on with the performance independently. Conversely, the right pedal was configured for transitioning to the next section, sequentially activating Triggers 1 (T1), T2, T3, and T4. However, it was observed that the left pedal failed to function as intended during performances. In the event of electronic music complications on stage, the preset function of the left pedal rendered the saxophonist unable to address the issue discreetly, potentially drawing attention from the audience. Consequently, any performance mishaps would become more conspicuous following activation of the left pedal. Taking these factors into account, I communicated my apprehensions regarding these issues to Ziyu.

Through extensive deliberations and experimentation, a unanimous consensus was reached on the redundancy of the standby configuration of the left pedal, which posed an

increased risk of inadvertent activation by performers during live renditions. Consequently, the conclusive resolution entails eliminating any functional significance attributed to the left pedal in the electronic music manipulation of this composition. Subsequently, the saxophonist is entrusted with overseeing triggers t1, t2, t3, and t4 using the right pedal, where each successive trigger press automatically halts the preceding one, irrespective of its completion status. This modification serves to mitigate the likelihood of unintended pedal engagements on stage and empowers the saxophonist to rectify potential issues seamlessly.

**Figure 46. Max Msp presentation mode for *Serendipity, Grievance, and Entanglement: A Diorama of Lu Zhai Lang***



Presently, the audio recordings, videos, and scores of this composition are readily accessible for streaming and download at the composer Wang Ziyu's official website: [wangziyu.art](http://wangziyu.art). The aspiration underlying this publication and performance of saxophone pieces is to foster a deeper comprehension and utilization of *Yuan Zaju* among composers and saxophonists. It is envisaged that this endeavor will catalyze fresh creativity in amalgamating

Chinese *Yuan Zaju* with the saxophone, offering a source of renewed inspiration to the artistic community.

## CHAPTER VIII: CONCLUSION

The emergence and evolution of *Yuan Zaju* are intricately linked to historical circumstances. Following the establishment of the Yuan Dynasty, persistent warfare inflicted significant hardship upon the Han populace. The implementation of the four-class system exacerbated ethnic tensions between the Han and Mongolian communities, while the suspension of the imperial examination system deprived Han scholars of vital avenues to central governance. Consequently, Han intellectuals were compelled to engage in various societal endeavors for survival, precipitating the genesis of *Yuan Zaju*. *Yuan Zaju* playwrights traversed diverse societal strata, immersing themselves in the plight of marginalized groups, thereby crafting works that poignantly mirrored the social maladies of the era. The staging and dissemination of these dramas provided catharsis for the oppressed populace and conferred practical significance upon literary compositions. The subjugation of women by Yuan and Mongolian aristocrats and influential families constituted a grave societal injustice during the era, as evidenced by historical accounts such as "Marco Polo's Travels," which details the exploitation of women by figures like Ahema, a political minister in Pingzhang.<sup>31</sup> The depiction of powerful men exploiting ordinary

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<sup>31</sup> Marco Polo 1254-1323, Henry Yule, The book of Ser Marco Polo, Concerning the Kingdoms and Marvels of the East. Volume 1. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, [2010] : "Moreover, there was no beautiful woman whom he might desire, but he got hold of her ; if she were unmarried, forcing her to be his wife, if otherwise, compelling her to consent to his desires. Whenever he knew of any one who had a pretty daughter, certain ruffians of his would go to the father, and say: " What say you ? Here is this pretty daughter of yours; give her in marriage to the Bailo Achmath (for they called him ' the Bailo,' or, as we should say, ' the Vicegerent '), and we will arrange for his giving you such a government or such an office for three years." And so the man would surrender his daughter. And Achmath would go to the Emperor, and say: " Such a government is vacant, or will be vacant on such a day. So-and-So is a proper man for the post." And the Emperor would reply: "Do as you think best;" and the father of the girl was immediately appointed to the government. Thus either through the ambition of the parents, or through fear of the Minister, all the beautiful women were at his beck, either as wives or mistresses. Also he had some five-and-twenty sons who held offices of importance, and some of these, under the protection of

women in *Yuan Zaju* like *Lu Zhai Lang* underscores the critical and pragmatic import of such narratives. Author Guan Hanqing aptly represents the Yuan Dynasty's aristocracy and affluent elite through the character of Lu Zhai Lang, thereby illuminating the pervasive influence and authority wielded by the ruling class in the eyes of ordinary citizens. Concurrently, Guan Hanqing advocates for the downtrodden masses by employing Zhang Gui as a conduit to convey the suffering and anguish experienced by common folk.

*Serendipity, Grievance, and Entanglement: A Diorama of Lu Zhai Lang* intricately weaves the narrative of the original *Zaju Lu Zhai Lang* with remnants of music from the *Jiugong Dacheng Nanbei Ci Gongpu*, alongside the established *Feng Ru Song qupai* and montage narrative techniques. This amalgamation enables *Yuan Zaju*, dating back over six centuries, to be reintroduced to contemporary audiences through a modern musical interpretation. Additionally, the composer incorporates elements of Chinese opera, metaphorical rhetorical devices, and *Huiwen* to align the presentation of *Yuan Zaju* with ancient Chinese aesthetic principles. Leveraging the saxophone's versatility, extended techniques, and allusions to *guqin* technology significantly enhance the performance dynamics of the composition. Drawing insights from ancient musical traditions while infusing personal interpretation, the composer approaches this work from the perspective of the common folk, embodying the societal aspirations of the Han populace under Mongolian governance, who yearned for upright officials.

*Serendipity, Grievance, and Entanglement: A Diorama of Lu Zhai Lang* delves into the collaboration between the saxophone and electronic music, addressing the challenge of utilizing the various effects of electronic music while preserving the saxophone's uniqueness as a solo

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their father's name, committed scandals like his own, and many other abominable iniquities.” This Achmath also had amassed great treasure, for every- body who wanted office sent him a heavy bribe.”

instrument. To resolve this, all electronic music samples in this piece are derived from the performer's own saxophone recording. The performer interprets each part of the work uniquely, based on personal understanding. Through editing, splicing, and the application of electronic effects, the saxophone's characteristics are preserved to the greatest extent.

The story of *Lu Zhai Lang* is rooted in the theme of powerful men seizing women by force. Unfortunately, Guan Hanqing's portrayal of female characters in the play, such as Zhang Gui's wife and Li Si's wife, is minimal. Audiences do not witness the consciousness of resistance among women in such dire circumstances, making it difficult to express corresponding sentiments in the creation of *Serendipity, Grievance, and Entanglement: A Diorama of Lu Zhai Lang*. However, Guan Hanqing's *Jiu Feng Chen* compensates for this deficiency in *Lu Zhai Lang*'s works. *Jiu Feng Chen* centers on a courtesan protagonist, showcasing a powerful female figure who fights for gender equality and personal happiness. Through literary works, author Guan Hanqing expresses his yearning for a better society. In the next saxophone composition inspired by *Yuan Zaju*, I intend to address the shortcomings in female character portrayal by showcasing the strength of women in feudal society through the language of the saxophone.



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