



**A Memorial Celebration of
Rulan Chao Pian and Theodore H.H. Pian**

4-6pm, March 30th, 2014
Cabot House, Harvard University

Master of Ceremony

Thomas Pian, Nephew of Professors Theodore and Rulan Pian

REFLECTIONS

John Dugundji, Professor of Aeronautics and Astronautics, *Emeritus*, MIT

Satya Atluri, Professor, Department of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering,
University of California, Irvine

Allen Counter, Director of Harvard Foundation; Professor of Neurology,
Harvard Medical School

Kay Kaufman Shelemay, G. Gordon Watts Professor of Music, Harvard

Carlson Pian, Nephew of Professors Theodore and Rulan Pian

READING FROM PROF. RULAN CHAO PIAN'S WRITINGS

Joseph Lam, Professor of Musicology, University of Michigan

PERFORMANCES

~ *Yangguan Sandie* 陽關三疊

(Three Repetitions of the Yangguan Tune, or Farewell to an Old Friend)

Qin - Bell Yung, Professor of Music, *Emeritus*, University of Pittsburgh

~ *Jiaowo Ruhe Buxiangta* 教我如何不想他

[How Can I Help But Think of You?]

Lyrics by Liu Bannong 劉半農; Music by Yuen Ren Chao 趙元任

Voice - Samuel Wu, Professor of Ophthalmology, Baylor College of Medicine

Erhu - Siu Wah Yu, Associate Professor of Music, The Chinese University of
Hong Kong

Piano - Bell Yung

SLIDE SHOW

Visuals - Thomas Pian

Music - Lei Liang, Associate Professor of Music, University of California, San
Diego

Violin - Haldan Martinson, Principal Second Violin, Boston Symphony
Orchestra

Cello - Mickey Katz, Boston Symphony Orchestra

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Yangguan Sandie 陽關三疊

(Three Repetitions of the Yangguan Tune, or Farewell to an Old Friend)

The earliest extant notation of this beloved piece for *qin* and voice dates from 1491. Its preface attributes the composition to the Tang dynasty poet Wang Wei (699-759), whose short four-line poem attached to the notation commemorates seeing an old friend off on a long journey. Today the piece is often performed without the voice, but the sentiment expressed in the poem is indelibly attached to the music. The poem reads: 渭城朝雨浥輕塵，客舍青青柳色新。勸君更進一杯酒，西出陽關無故人。

In the city of Wei, the morning rain wets the soft dust;
At the guest house, green, green are the fresh hues of the willows.
I urge you to empty another cup of wine;
West of Yangguan there will be no more old friends.

[Translation by Rulan Chao Pian]

Jiaowo Ruhe Buxiangta 教我如何不想他

(How Can I Help But Think of You?)

Possibly the best known and most often sung Chinese art song, it was composed in 1926 by Rulan Chao Pian's father, Yuen Ren Chao, a pre-eminent linguist but best known among the Chinese as a composer. The second pronoun in the song's title could mean either "him" or "her"; Rulan Chao Pian translated it as "you".

The first of four verses reads as follows: 天上飄着些微雲，地上吹着些微風，啊！微風吹動了我頭髮，教我如何不想他？

A few wispy clouds float above,
A gentle breeze wafts below;
Ah! The breeze ruffles my hair,
How can I help but think of you?

[Translation by Rulan Chao Pian]

Theodore H.H. Pian (1919-2009)

Theodore Hsueh-huang Pian was born in Shanghai in 1919. By his passing in June 2009, he had not only advanced analytical methods in the aerospace and other industries, but also helped to develop the people and institutions involved.

Professor Pian earned the BS degree in 1940 from Tsinghua University in Beijing, and the MS (1944) and Doctor of Science (1948) degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He spent his entire academic career at MIT, rising to Professor of Aeronautics and Astronautics in 1966, and emeritus. He was also a visiting professor at many Chinese universities, the California Institute of Technology, and other leading aeronautical institutions worldwide.

Professor Pian's contributions to the knowledge of structural mechanics and finite element methods are as inspiring as they are broad in impact. His work explored, expanded and explained new ways of thinking about and analyzing structural mechanics. Since the early 1960s, his work dealt primarily with finite element methods in solid mechanics. In 1964, he published a seminal paper that was the foundation of hybrid and mixed finite element methods.

In 1974, Professor Pian received the von Karman Memorial Prize for outstanding contributions to aerospace structural materials. He was also selected an honorary member of the American Society for Mechanical Engineering, and elected a Member of the National Academy of Engineering, the highest honor bestowed on an engineer in the United States.

To colleagues and students, his contributions were far more than intellectual. Professor Pian also focused on growing talented students and associates, helping them to thrive individually, and on strengthening organizations that would advance aeronautical technology and teaching. His associates at MIT and many other institutions expressed genuine affection and admiration for Theodore Pian as a person. Many graduate students earned degrees at MIT under his guidance. "Each came away with not only a technical education, but also as a more mature human being with a strong sense of such values as humility, patience and perseverance," according to his colleagues.

Professor Pian helped re-establish professional engineering and university relations with China after a quarter-century hiatus. He could not respond to every last invitation to lecture at China's top technical institutions, nor welcome every professional colleague who came through Cambridge. But he tried.

As family, friends, and colleagues, we all have particular remembrances of Theodore Pian. Our recollections always reveal that he was reflective, yet determined to achieve. Open-minded, yet focused on accomplishments.

Patient with others, yet productive in time and effort. Quiet in manner, but not isolated from those he cared about. Exhibiting humility, but with pride in his traditions and community. These are the contrasts of his life that magnified his strong and enduring impacts on so many others.

At the dawn of his career, China's war effort harnessed his technical talents and energies as the aviation industry moved from the north towards southwest China. Professor Pian then made an arduous journey from Chengdu over the Himalayas, through India, Australia, South America, and finally, to Cambridge. Along the way, he began to establish a network of ties among his cohort of Chinese engineers going to American graduate schools. He also proudly served as a U. S. Marine before the war concluded.

In his more than 60-year association with MIT, Professor Pian was variously a graduate student, teacher, researcher and consultant to the U.S. Air Force and aerospace industry. He was also a tireless adviser and mentor. His influence extended to Harvard because his wife, Rulan Chao Pian, played many of the same roles in her institution up the Charles River.

At 14 Brattle Circle, the Professors Pian offered legendary hospitality, endless intellectual stimulation and a lot of great Chinese food. They shared their home with legions of visitors, some lodging in the rustic basement "hostel" with its warmth and camaraderie. Countless students, academic colleagues, friends and family, and members of Chinese delegations benefited from the nurture and sustenance for the mind and the body that Ted and Rulan Pian served up.

While husband to Rulan, Ted Pian was also a dutiful son-in-law to Y.R. Chao and Buwei Yang Chao, father to Canta, father-in-law to Michael, and grandfather to Jessica. He was also a mentor to many nephews and nieces who embarked on engineering and scientific careers.

Their frequent travels allowed Ted and Rulan to enjoy and contribute to the warmth of a far-flung community of family, friends, students, and colleagues. Members of the Pian, Chao, Yan, and Lu families the world over knew that the most likely relative to visit was Uncle Theodore. He also painstakingly hand-wrote letters, and later, learned to use email and the Internet. Social media and their networking value would have fascinated him.

Theodore Pian was the link to a large community, enjoying the traditions of China, the fruits and demands of the modern world, and always with appreciation for and enjoyment of the local Chinese cuisine.

He is missed by all who have been touched by the human kindness, intellect, and quiet *joie de vivre* that he and Rulan brought to their worldwide activities and circles of family and friends.

Rulan Chao Pian (1922-2013)

Rulan Chao Pian, an eminent scholar of Chinese music, a dedicated educator and mentor, and an influential Chinese language teacher, died peacefully on November 30, 2013, at the age of 91 in her Cambridge home.

Much respected and dearly beloved, Professor Pian shaped many academic careers and lives and expanded the intellectual scope of Chinese music studies. These she achieved through her path-breaking publications, including her Kinkeldey award-winning *Song Dynasty Musical Sources and Their Interpretation* (1967, 2003 reprint) and numerous articles on Chinese operas and narrative songs; through her academic courses and her public lectures in Asia and North America; through her many decades of Chinese language teaching; and through her mentorship at Harvard University.

She was a charter member of and moving force behind two pioneering scholarly organizations: Conference on Chinese Oral and Performing Literature (CHINOPERL) and the Association for Chinese Music Research (ACMR). Honors bestowed on her included Fellow of the Academia Sinica (Taiwan, 1991), Honorary Member of the Society for Ethnomusicology (2004), and honorary professorships and fellowships in China, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Rulan Chao Pian was born on April 20, 1922, in Cambridge MA, eldest daughter of the eminent linguist and composer Yuen Ren Chao. Her childhood was spent in several cities in China and the U.S., almost a year in Paris, and finally settling in Cambridge. Her life-long association with Harvard began at Radcliffe, where she received the degrees of B.A. (1944) and M.A. (1946), both in Western music history, and Ph.D. (1960) in Musicology and Sinology.

Her teaching career at Harvard began in 1947 as a Chinese language teaching assistant in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, and she was later promoted to instructor and lecturer. Through her tutelage, and using as a textbook her own *A Syllabus for the Mandarin Primer* (1961), she laid the linguistic foundation for her students, many of whom later became influential China specialists. In 1961, she started teaching courses related to Chinese music in the Department of Music, and later began mentoring graduate students in both the Departments of Music and EALC. In 1974, she was promoted to Professor in both departments. She was one of the first women professors at Harvard, a position she held until 1992, when she retired as Professor Emerita.

In 1975-78, she and her husband, Theodore H. H. Pian, were appointed Co-Housemasters of South House (now Cabot House). They were the first ethnic minorities to hold a housemastership position at Harvard. After her retirement, she devoted her time almost entirely to the compilation and editing of the

complete works of her father, Yuen Ren Chao, which was published as the 20-volume *Zhao Yuanren Quanjì* (2002).

Pian's interest in music fell into two main areas: music history and the traditional genres of modern China. Each of these demands different theories, methods, and source materials. Her study of history adheres to a long tradition of historical musicology at Harvard and the centuries-old tradition of historical studies in China. Her interest in modern China placed her among the ranks of ethnomusicologists and took her on field trips to many parts of China.

Pian made two other important contributions to the study of Chinese music. Under the influence of her father, and through her years of language teaching and self-study, she acquired intimate knowledge of the workings of a language and of linguistic theories. This provided her with insights into the workings of music, which enabled her to make original contributions to musicology. Secondly, straddling the realms of language and music was Pian's research into the nature of and the issues related to the Chinese oral and performing literature. Pian was among the first to study such literature from a musicological perspective. No one disputes the fact that speech and music are wedded in song; Pian showed that there is music in speech.

Pian's lively mind, warm personality, and generous disposition nurtured many young scholars. To her disciples, she set an example not only of how to be scholars and teachers, but also how to live fully, joyously, and humbly. Her personal library was always available to them, and her home was theirs if they needed one. Ever inviting, ever stimulating, the Pian house in Cambridge was often filled with students, friends and colleagues of both hers and her husband's. There were countless hours of stimulating discussion in their studies, around the fireplace, or over food at the dining room table. These sessions extended into the wee hours of the morning, when she would magically bring out some piping hot *hongdou xifan* (red bean porridge) to nourish the body and warm the heart.

Pian's influence extended to scholars in China, where she lectured regularly and frequently since 1974 when she made her first visit after the 1930s. She introduced contemporary Western theories and methods of research in musicology and ethnomusicology, recent scholarship in Chinese music outside of China, and her own work. She brought gifts of books and recordings, as well as the most advanced electronic equipment. A generation of Chinese scholars gained a broader perspective on musical scholarship than would otherwise have been available to them. In 2009, she donated almost the entirety of her personal collection, including over 5,500 items of audio-visual material and 250 boxes of books and notes, to the library of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. These materials will continue to enlighten young minds for many generations to come.

Acknowledgement

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