

An encounter with Chinese music in mid-eighteenth-century London.

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In eighteenth-century Britain, Chinese ceramics were being imported in significant quantities (**see fig. 1**), along with a wide variety of other artistic or decorative objects such as paintings on the reverse of glass (**see fig. 2**) and nodding-head 'mandarin-men' figures. As in other parts of Europe, those with the means to do so would often create interiors filled with Chinese objects, or place Chinese-influenced architectural structures in the grounds of their properties. Politician, author and antiquarian Horace Walpole (1717-1797) had a 'Chinese Closet' at his Strawberry Hill villa, for instance, and royal architect William Chambers (1723-1796) built the pagoda which still stands at Kew for Princess Augusta (the mother of King George III), along with other 'Chinese' structures. **(1)** An analogous saturation of the aural environment of the European elite by the sounds of Chinese music was not to be found, however, and information about Chinese music - let alone that music itself - was scarce in eighteenth-century Britain.

Clearly this imbalance in the reception of different areas of Chinese culture in Europe was largely to do with the intrinsic nature of music as a performing art, and thus its inability to travel freely till a more modern era where advances in recording technology allowed it to become easily embodied in portable material objects that could be mass produced, or at least until increasing possibilities for travel (by steamship and later plane) allowed Chinese musicians to appear before Western audiences. Chinese musical instruments, being portable physical objects, had the capacity to become tradable commodities even before those technological advances in sound recording and transport occurred, and examples were occasionally brought to the West at an early date. Nevertheless, they could remain enigmatic items in their new cultural environment, in the absence of skilled players able to bring them to life. (2)

Even when a reference to China is found in British music, as is the case with *The Fairy Queen* by Henry Purcell (1659-1695), first performed at the Dorset Garden theatre, London, on 2 May 1692, no encounter with Chinese music is present ('Purcell had no more knowledge of China than he had of the North Pole', his biographer Jonathan Keates writes). (3) 'A Chinese Man' and 'A Chinese Woman' sing solos in the masque of the fifth and final act of *The Fairy Queen*, in the setting of a 'Chinese garden', which seems to be employed to introduce a generalized sense of visual otherness (the stage directions mention that 'the Architecture, the Trees, the Plants, the Fruits, the Birds, the Beasts' are 'quite different to what we have in this part of the World'), but Purcell's music itself betrays no exotic traces. (4) Towards the end of the act a more specific reference is made to Chinese culture, in that 'six large vases of Porcelain' rise up from under the stage and shortly afterwards move to its front just as the final trio is about to be sung. We know little about the staging of *The Fairy Queen* at the Dorset Garden theatre, but it remains a possibility that actual Chinese vases were employed on stage. At the least there would have been some attempt to represent such items - more familiar to the elite members of a British audience than anything else of Chinese origin would be - with some degree of accuracy.

Again it is Chinese visual culture rather than Chinese music which is being featured at this climactic point of Purcell's piece, the vases becoming it seems like mute performers (perhaps, according to one suggestion, there were boys hidden within the bases of the vases to move them around on stage). (5) Almost certainly the vases were intended to remind the audience of the important collection of Chinese ceramics held by Queen Mary. (6) Since the vases contained orange trees, they would have recalled the King, William of Orange, too, and thus have provided an appropriate homage to the royal couple on the occasion of their fifteenth wedding anniversary, which was to be publicly celebrated a few months after the first performance of *The Fairy Queen*. (7)

Even if we jump forward in time to nearly the last quarter of the eighteenth century, a markedly different era in European music to that of Purcell, a musical response to China remains hard to find. For instance, as with *The Fairy Queen*, it was Chinese visual culture rather than Chinese musical culture which was on display in September 1773 at the Eszterháza palace in Fertőd, Hungary, on the occasion of a fancy dress ball held in honour of the visit of Empress Maria Theresa. As part of the entertainment arranged for them, the members of the imperial party were taken to the newly-built Chinese pavilion, where *Capellmeister* Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) and his musicians played for their enjoyment, all wearing 'Chinese' costume. (8) There is no evidence to suggest that the music being played in this Chinese-themed environment had anything Chinese about it, however, and given the poor state of knowledge about Chinese music in Europe of that time we should not find this surprising. (9)

Perhaps the first account of Chinese music to reach Europe was that given by the Portuguese Dominican Gaspar da Cruz in his *Treatise in which the Things of China are Related at Great Length*, which was published in Portuguese in 1569-70, and based at least in part on his own first-hand experiences of China. As Colin Mackerras notes da Cruz was not just the first but 'for quite a long time the only ... European writer to remark upon Chinese music. Moreover, he took the

trouble to understand some of the various musical instruments and singing styles, and did so not to condemn but to appreciate'. (10) Although I have not seen any evidence that da Cruz's brief remarks on Chinese music were picked up by later English-language commentators on the topic, his writings on China were translated into English at an early date, being published in 1625 in volume three of Samuel Purchas's four volume set of travel writings, *Purchas his Pilgrimes*. (11) In his account da Cruz mentions various musical instruments he observed in China, giving some information about how they are played. He also describes a musical performance which he and his Portuguese companions invited from a group of young men they had spotted coming along the river on a boat. He notes approvingly that the musicians began by carefully tuning their instruments, and then describes various aspects of the performance itself: 'they began not all together, but the one tarried for to enter with the other, making many divisions in the process of the music, some staying, other playing; and the most times they played all together in four parts. The parts were two small bandoraes for tenor [given as *violas* in the original Portuguese text], a great one for counter-tenor, a harpsichord that followed the rest [elsewhere da Cruz mentions 'a certain manner of harpsichord that hath many wire strings, upon which they play with their finger-nails for which purpose they let them grow long'], and sometimes a rebeck [*rabecas*] and sometimes a dulcimer [*doçianas*] for treble'. He adds that 'they used a good policy in not playing more than two strains, so that we might remain desirous for more'. (12)

While da Cruz's work had no deep impact on subsequent analysis of Chinese music, a later attempt to provide a comprehensive picture of China, Jean-Baptiste Du Halde's *Description géographique, historique, chronologique, politique, et physique de l'empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie chinoise* (first published in French in 1735), was to prove widely influential throughout Europe during the eighteenth century. An English translation by R. Brookes (published in 1738 and 1741) was to help aid its dissemination in Britain. Voltaire's *Orphélin de la Chine* of 1755 was based on a translation of a Chinese drama included in

Volume III of Du Halde's work, and a great many other important thinkers of the eighteenth century such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau were also to rely on his writing for their understanding of China. Although Du Halde (1674-1743) never himself visited China, and thus was not drawing on personal experience (a particular drawback perhaps when it comes to a topic such as music), his work was comprehensive in intention, and drew on reports sent back by Jesuit missionaries in China, some of whom had even found a place at the Chinese court. (13) Of particular note is that Du Halde, in addition to offering discussion of Chinese music at several points, also published five short Chinese pieces transcribed into European notation. These would have been the first representations of Chinese music to be widely disseminated in the West. (14)

Of the Jesuits based in China during the eighteenth century the one with the most profound interest in Chinese music was Joseph-Marie Amiot (1718-1793). Arriving in Beijing in 1751, he was to remain there till his death, becoming the most prominent of the last generation of Jesuits in China (Jesuit influence began to fade following the death of Emperor Kangxi in 1722, and had been much reduced already by the time of Pope Clement XIV's 1773 decree suppressing the Society of Jesus). Amiot, unlike Du Halde, actually had the opportunity to hear Chinese music performed, and wrote extensively on it. Not all his manuscripts on music in China were to be published in his own century, however, and even his study *Mémoire sur la musique des Chinois, tant anciens que modernes* (originally published by Nyon in Paris in 1779) lost a lot of its scholarly value due to the interventions of its editor, Abbé Pierre Joseph Roussier, who deleted many plates and sections of the text, as well as Chinese characters. (15)

Until the latter part of the century British knowledge about Chinese music was largely derived at second hand from these French Jesuit sources. Direct British contact with the Chinese court and a concomitant attempt to gather equally comprehensive information about China on an independent basis only really occurred at the very end of the eighteenth century with the embassy of Lord

Macartney in 1793. Macartney's own journal of his trip, which contains information in passing on Chinese music, was not to be published in full till 1962, but accounts written by other members of the party of nearly a hundred who traveled with him did see print not long after their return. Sir George Staunton's account (based on Macartney's papers and published in 1797) included some information on music, again in passing, but more detail was to be found in books by two other members of the entourage, John Barrow and Johann Christian Hüttner. (16)

In addition to these direct witnesses to Chinese music a significant interest in it was also expressed by the British music historian Charles Burney (1726-1814). Burney had in fact played a role in helping equip Macartney's embassy with (in his own words) 'whatever belonged to musical matters, whether instruments, compositions, band, or decoration, that might contribute in that line, to its magnificence', and he also gave Macartney a list of questions about Chinese music. (17) In the early 1770s Burney had already sought information on Chinese music from James Lind (1736-1812), who had visited China in 1766, as well as from other correspondents in China itself (he mentions having 'sent some queries to intelligent persons in that country by two or three ships'). (18) More fruitful help was subsequently also given by Matthew Raper (c. 1741-1826), a correspondent in Canton and perhaps one of those aforementioned 'intelligent persons', who in December 1775 provided Burney with a collection of Chinese musical instruments and helped arrange replies to his queries concerning Chinese music from a French and an Italian correspondent of his in Beijing. The first of these - perhaps the Jesuit missionary Jean-Joseph de Grammont (1736-c. 1808) - also provided specimens of Chinese music in both Chinese notation and European transcription. (19) Burney was not able to treat Chinese music in depth in his *A General History of Music* (published in London by the author in four volumes from 1776-1789), but the information provided by Raper, together with other later help from Macartney and Hüttner (who seems to have been delegated the task of responding to the list of queries concerning music given the

embassy's leader), allowed him to contribute an article on 'Chinese music' to volume VII of Abraham Rees's early-nineteenth-century work, *The Cyclopaedia; or Universal Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, and Literature*. **(20)** In addition to Burney's article there is also in the same volume of *The Cyclopaedia* some information on Chinese music in the main 'China' entry, under the subheading 'State of the arts'. This material is however borrowed word for word from Barrow's *Travels in China*, and Burney himself also relies on Barrow for the account he gives of the music prepared for Macartney and his suite on their arrival in Canton.

Evidence of the limited picture of Chinese music available in Britain even towards the end of the eighteenth century can be found in Burney's Autumn 1777 letter to Raper. Burney reveals there that he is still unsure as to whether Chinese music has semitones, a question which in his earlier correspondence with Lind he had indicated as the one he was most eager to answer about Chinese music. **(21)** He notes that the idea that there are no semitones in Chinese music is one that he has found from the Jesuit sources, and mentions Roussier, whom he had met personally in Paris in June 1770. **(22)**

Indeed, the response to Chinese music of eighteenth century British writers in general does not widely differ from that of the Jesuits. **(23)** They often highlight the same things in their accounts. Both Du Halde and Barrow, for instance, make a point of emphasizing that unison is a characteristic of Chinese music, that it avoids the use of parts. **(24)** Perhaps one of the few distinctive characteristics of the eighteenth-century reception of Chinese music in Britain was that commentators frequently observed a similarity between Chinese music and that of Scotland. Such a similarity is suggested to Burney by his informant Lind, and he later makes such a comparison himself in a letter to Raper and more publicly in the first volume of his *A General History of Music*. **(25)** Barrow describes an air he heard in CochinChina as having 'a slow melancholy movement' which 'breathed that kind of plaintive softness so peculiar to the

native airs of the Scotch', while Staunton noted of the music he heard at the Emperor's reception of the embassy at Jehol that 'the musicians affected mostly slow and plaintive airs, not unlike those of the Highlanders of Scotland'. (26) Aeneas Anderson's account of the Macartney embassy also mentions some music heard in Tianjin which featured wind instruments that to him appeared similar to French horns and clarinets. The sound of these instruments reminded him of the Scottish bagpipe. (27)

One early moment in the history of Chinese-Western cross-cultural musical interaction not so far mentioned is documented by the short sample of musical notation which was published during 1757 in the prominent British journal, the *Gentleman's Magazine*, under the heading 'A Chinese Air'. (28) Given the rarity of published transcriptions of Chinese music in Europe during the eighteenth century, this document (see fig. 3), not previously discussed in the scholarly literature, is deserving of note by those concerned with eighteenth-century music. This is particularly so since it predates publication of Amiot's book, and by an even greater time span the making public of data gathered by Burney or by members of the Macartney embassy, and because its place of publication was one of the most significant sites in Britain for the emergence of a public sphere of discourse in its time. (29) Its evaluation is by no means a simple matter, however, and ultimately it might be said to tell us more about the meeting of different cultures than about Chinese music per se.

'A Chinese Air' was not a purely textual exercise of transcribing a piece of music that had been previously written in Chinese notation, but was notated by ear from a particular performance given by a Chinese musician. Certainly analogous attempts to notate Chinese musical performances had been made at an earlier date by the Catholic missionaries at the Chinese court, but the performance that was being transcribed here was an extremely unusual and perhaps even unprecedented one in the whole history of Chinese music since it took place in London. (30) As such it may be the earliest performance of Chinese music in the

West that can be documented, albeit that it seems to have been given in informal circumstances, and by someone who was not a musician by profession.

According to the transcriber and author of a brief accompanying note, identified only as 'A.B.', the music was played by 'the *Chinese* merchant lately arrived in this city from *Canton* [modern day Guangzhou]'. The note states that its author 'accidentally fell in company' with the Chinese visitor 'a few days ago', and since the note is dated 'Dec. 16, 1756' we can conjecture the meeting and the performance transcribed might date to the second week of December 1756.

Although no name was given for this Chinese visitor in the *Gentleman's Magazine* account it seems highly probable to me, given the rarity of Chinese visitors to London during the eighteenth century, that this was 'Loum Kiqua', whose portrait was painted by Dominic Serres (c. 1719 -1793). (31) Although the location of this portrait, if it has survived, is not now known, an engraving after it by Thomas Burford (c. 1710 - c. 1776) does exist, showing a man in full Chinese dress and hat, and with a long pipe in his left hand (see fig. 4). The figure, who faces the viewer, is placed in a somewhat bare interior setting with chequered flooring. Behind can be seen an open view to a riverside landscape of a fanciful nature, perhaps (since it contains a pagoda) intended to represent the region of Canton and the Pearl River. Despite this imaginary aspect to the figure's setting, the print has a Latin inscription on it claiming that the original painted portrait was made from life. This information helps us to date the painting to around 1756, since the print also has some other information inscribed on it about its subject which includes a date of his arrival in London. This helpful inscription also allows us to learn more about the 'Chinese merchant', whose circumstances are not further described in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. It states that he 'came to Lisbon in 1755, was there at the Time of the Earthquake [1 November 1755], and providentially escaped with life; after many hardships & ill-treatments from the Portuguese, he came over to England in 1756, where he met with different usage, having had the honour of being seen by his Majesty and the rest of the Royal-Family, most of the Nobility, &e, by whom he was much

caress'd. Having made application to the Hon.^{ble} the East India Company, for his passage home, he was kindly received and generously accommodated on Board one of their Ships, to carry him to Canton, his Native Country'. In addition to the other biographic details which this inscription offers concerning Loum Kiqua, it is important to note that the year it records for his arrival in London coincides with that given for the encounter referred to in the *Gentleman's Magazine* note. It is this fact which most strongly supports an identification of Loum Kiqua with the 'Chinese merchant'.

The name 'Loum Kiqua' is given above the aforementioned inscription, and to its left a Chinese character equivalent allows us to identify his name with some certainty, despite the vagaries of romanization. In the *pinyin* romanization of modern standard Chinese his name would be 'Lin Qi', but the romanization is more consistent with the Cantonese pronunciation of the character for his common Chinese family name, which would nowadays often be romanized as 'Lam'. The 'qua' at the end of the name is not a part of his given name itself but an honorific title commonly appended in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to names of prominent Chinese when romanized. It might be roughly translated as 'Mr.' or 'Esquire', and has the literal meaning of 'official'.

Loum Kiqua was unusual for that time in being an independent traveler from China to the West, since most of the small handful of other such Chinese visitors in the eighteenth century or earlier were brought by sponsors, for example in a religious context. **(32)** The first recorded such visitor to reach Britain, Shen Fu-Tsung (Shen Fuzong in *pinyin*), who was in Britain and continental Europe during the 1680s, had been brought from China by the Jesuit priest Philippe Couplet. Another such independent traveler to London, the artist and shop-owner Chitqua, did however arrive in 1769 (around a decade later than Loum Kiqua), staying till about 1772. **(33)** Apart from the inscription on the engraving nothing else is known with certainty about Loum Kiqua, whose name I have not been able to find in any Western records concerning the trade at Canton. **(34)** Chinese sources

also appear to have no record of him, despite the novelty of his having made a trip to Europe, perhaps because as a merchant his social status was not sufficiently high to make him worthy of a place in the written record. Since he traveled first to Lisbon (unlike Chitqua who went directly to London) one can conjecture him as possibly having some connection with the Portuguese trading community which was based in the enclave of Macau, just below Canton at the mouth of the Pearl River. Given that the Portuguese had been in Macau since 1557 there had been ample opportunity and incentive for Chinese people living in or near the city to develop some level of attainment in the Portuguese language, and perhaps Loum Kiqua was one of them. With respect to his time in London, it is possible that Samuel Johnson (1709-1784) was amongst those who met him during his stay, since when Johnson's biographer James Boswell (1740-1795) records meeting Chitqua, he recalls a comment made by Johnson about a Chinese he had met some time before. **(35)** Several contemporary accounts of meetings with Chitqua survive, but none have come to light concerning Loum Kiqua, perhaps because his lack of English language skills (an impediment Chitqua didn't share) made intercourse with him less interesting to record in words. **(36)**

Intriguingly, in 1760 the celebrated eighteenth-century writer Oliver Goldsmith (c. 1730 - 1774) was to begin publishing his *The Citizen of the World* in the *Public Ledger* as a series of letters (it was later published in book form under that title in 1762). These letters offered satirical comments on British society purportedly written by a Chinese visitor to England, 'Lien Chi Altangi', and it is possible that one of the inspirations for this literary work by Goldsmith was the visit of Loum Kiqua. Goldsmith settled in London in 1756, the same year that Loum Kiqua arrived in the city, and he was a friend of Johnson, so it is entirely possible that Goldsmith and that Chinese visitor had encountered each other. The timing of Goldsmith's publication of *The Citizen of the World*, just a few years after Loum Kiqua's visit, also makes this conjecture of a connection between the two events seem more plausible. Perhaps the strongest hint of a possible connection,

however, comes from the name that Goldsmith uses for his fictional Chinese visitor, in that 'Lien Chi' is remarkably close in sound to Loum Kiqua's name when pronounced in Mandarin Chinese (the 'Qi' of Lin Qi' being broadly similar in pronunciation to the first syllable of the English word 'cheese'). (37)

The transcriber of the piece of music presented in the *Gentleman's Magazine* notes the difficulty of communicating with the Chinese visitor since 'he understands very little of our language'. A desire to be 'informed of some of the customs and manners of his native country' was therefore frustrated, but music proved an alternative means to the spoken word for cross-cultural dialogue: 'to make up the want of conversation, he played several *Chinese* tunes upon a musical instrument something resembling a guittar'. He comments that 'the airs he played, though very simple with respect to the composition, yet contained the life and spirit that are wanting in most of our country dances'.

The transcriber, who claims to 'have studied music for my amusement', states that the piece presented, one of the 'airs' played, was taken down in writing 'exactly as he played it, without the slightest alteration (except the adding a bass to it)'. He also explains that he has 'not attempted to make a dance to this air, being convinced it will be much better executed by others', and states he is offering it for publication so that 'the public may judge whether the travelers to *China* have given a true idea of the music of that country'.

Despite being offered as a faithful record of the performance (the added bass aside), the work cannot be said to display any obvious marked Chinese characteristics, and one might even wonder whether the piece is Chinese music at all. In one sense (assuming that the account is not an entire fabrication, which seems on the whole unlikely) it certainly was Chinese music in that it was music performed by a Chinese musician, and apparently on a Chinese musical instrument too. We can conjecture that the stringed instrument in question may perhaps have been a *Qinqin*, a lute-like fretted instrument with a wooden body

that is designed to be plucked. (38) The question of whether the piece itself was of Chinese origin is more difficult to resolve, however, as there is more than one way of accounting for the absence of apparent Chinese musical characteristics.

One possibility is that the performer was not even intending to play a Chinese piece, but was performing a European or European-style piece, perhaps out of courtesy to his audience or from certain assumptions about their musical tastes. Since Loum Kiqua had traveled via Lisbon he would already have had a quite extended opportunity to become directly acquainted with European culture before meeting the transcriber, and thus to learn examples of European music, but probably he would also have been afforded such opportunities before leaving his native Canton too. Eighteenth-century Canton was one of the largest and most cosmopolitan cities in the world at that time, and one of the main sites for trade between China and the West (from 1757 it was designated as the only such site, a status it retained till the British were ceded the island of Hong Kong in the 1842 Treaty of Nanjing). As a result it was perhaps the main place in the world at that time where Chinese and Westerners had regular and extended contact with each other (Macau was another major site for such cross-cultural meeting and one where - unlike Canton - music would have additionally played a public liturgical role). (39) Although much of that contact revolved more narrowly around trade in tea and other commodities, a cross-cultural musical encounter was even a part of the ceremonies associated with the arrival of a European trading vessel at Canton. Music was played on the occasion of the measuring ceremony (which allowed port fees to be determined based on the vessel's size), both by the band of the Hoppo (Chinese customs superintendent) and by musicians from the ship itself. (40) In addition we know that eighteenth-century Cantonese merchants, the social grouping to which Loum Kiqua belonged, were often extremely sophisticated in their cross-cultural knowledge. William Hickey (1749-1830), who visited Canton in 1769, records for example attending a pair of dinners for European and Chinese diners at the house of Pankeequa, a prominent Chinese merchant, in one of which Chinese food was served with chopsticks, followed by

a Chinese-style entertainment, and in the other of which Western food and wine was served with knives and forks, to be followed by a Western-style theatrical performance. (41) Eighteenth-century Cantonese merchants were accustomed to supplying ceramics with Western motifs or other products of cultural sophistication which catered directly to Western taste, so it would not have been impossible for that pattern of accommodating foreign preferences to have been at play in the instance of this Chinese musical performance in London. One such case from about three-quarters of a century later of a Chinese visitor to Europe playing a European tune on a Chinese instrument can be documented. A visitor to Germany known as 'Assing', who had met Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749 - 1832), is reported to have learnt to play an air from German opera on his erhu (a stringed instrument designed to be bowed). (42)

A further possible explanation for the piece's absence of overt Chinese characteristics is that it was indeed of Chinese origin, but that much of its original character was 'lost in translation'. Without any previous experience of Chinese music, and without the opportunity to make a recording of the sounds heard for reference, the transcriber would have had to rely on memory alone and may have assimilated the piece to his existing understanding of Western musical form. Certainly it would have been difficult for anyone in eighteenth-century London, with no pre-established aural template of what Chinese music characteristically sounds like, to define the distinctive features of an example when presented with it for the first time, and on a single occasion.

Burney felt that even the examples of Chinese music he had been supplied with, which had been gathered in more favourable circumstances than 'A Chinese Air' by an informant based in China with a pre-existing knowledge of that country's musical tradition, were probably lacking some of their original qualities. In his Autumn 1777 letter to Raper he notes: 'it seems, from the Specimens of Chinese Music with w^{ch} I am favoured from y^r Fr. [i.e. French] correspondent, that to reduce it to European Intervals & Measure is a very difficult task; for by its

wildness in these particulars, I am convinced that it is very different - & I suppose both can only be expressed in our Characters *à peu près*'. (43)

In his article on Chinese music for volume VII of Abraham Rees's *The Cyclopaedia* Burney recounts an attempt that was made by the Macartney embassy while in China to play some Chinese music for a Chinese audience using a suitably equipped barrel organ which they had taken with them, perhaps on Burney's suggestion (and with his help in preparation). Alongside 'our best popular tunes' 'were set several favourite airs of their own country, to some of which a base was added, and others were set on the barrel in their native state, without any accompaniment whatever'. These pieces were perhaps selected by Burney from amongst those he had earlier been provided with by Raper and his Beijing correspondent, and over the transcription of which he had expressed worries. This earliest known British presentation of Chinese music to a Chinese audience was not a success, however, and loss during transcription and interpretation is admitted by Burney as the probable explanation. 'The first [i.e. the Chinese music to which a bass had been added] they did not feel, and the others [i.e. the pieces still in their 'native state'], perhaps, from not being played in the time and with the expression to which they were accustomed, they would hardly acknowledge'. (44)

Despite the claim by the transcriber of 'A Chinese Air' that his version was exact, one might wonder whether he even felt constrained to produce an accurate record of the kind a modern ethnomusicologist might wish for. The very fact that he has added a bass of his own perhaps indicates that a modern notion of historical accuracy was not part of his frame of reference, and that he might have been thinking more practically about making the music available to his audience for their potential use with Western instruments. His comments on the possibility of making it into a dance suggest this emphasis on appropriation for use. The case of two pieces of Chinese music presented to European audiences at a later date demonstrates how such transformation could occur: Karl Kambra published

in London two samples of music gathered on the Macartney embassy, 'Moo-Lee-Chwa' and 'Higho Highau'. In an analogous way to the transcriber of 'A Chinese Air', Kambra claims that they were both taken down on the spot and notes that 'their originality, therefore, may be depended upon'. Like the transcriber, however, he adds a bass to each, explaining that in doing this he 'flatters himself to have rendered them more agreeable to the English Ear'. (45) When the two pieces were published in Germany in 1796 with comments by Hüttner, the editorial note accompanying it suggested that 'Higho Highau', a working song of oarsmen, could perhaps be played on a clavichord or pianoforte at a tea party, thereby allowing the tea drinkers to hear the very music to which their tea would have been transported to the European traders in Canton. (46)

A parallel can also be drawn between 'The Chinese Air' and the so-called 'Hindustani Airs' collected by European residents of India in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These 'Hindustani Airs', which like Kambra's two published examples are of a considerably later date than 'The Chinese Air', were based on native material, but were re-arranged for performance on Western instruments in such a way that their original Indian flavour was eroded to a significant extent. (47) Representing perhaps the first really sustained moment of British interest in the music of those cultures that had long been encountered in the New World or the East through trade and territorial conquest, the 'Hindustani Airs' show British music starting to incorporate traces from a very different cultural tradition. (48) 'A Chinese Air' may perhaps have been a rare early example of this process of acculturation, even if enrichment of native British music by exotic sources was not its explicit aim.

Clearly there remain unresolved issues in the interpretation of 'A Chinese Air', and one reason for wishing to bring this piece to public attention is to elicit engagement with it by those whose knowledge of early Chinese and European music far exceeds my own, in the hope that further light might be shed. Whatever the true answer to this musical conundrum may be, however, 'A Chinese Air'

offers an interesting window onto Asian-Western musical interchange in the middle of the eighteenth century. It reminds us that the musical world of that time was not so divided up as we might at first think, and that the musical hybridity and cross-cultural interchange of our own more globalized era was sometimes also present even a quarter of a millennium ago.

Notes:

1) On Horace Walpole's villa see Horace Walpole, 'A Description of the Villa of Mr. Horace Walpole', Twickenham, 1784. The Kew pagoda dates to 1762. On Chambers's work at Kew and his relationship with George III see the chapters by John Harris and Jane Roberts respectively in John Harris and Michael Snodin (eds.), *Sir William Chambers, Architect to George III*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1996; and H. F. Clark, 'Eighteenth Century Elysiums: The Rôle of "Association" in the Landscape Movement', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, Vol. 6, 1943, p165-189. William Chambers had traveled to Canton himself in an earlier trading career, and he presented information about Chinese architecture and material culture in his *Designs of Chinese Buildings, Furniture, Dresses, Machines and Utensils*, London (published for the author), 1757.

2) Charles Burney, in a letter to Matthew Raper of Autumn 1777, asks for information about 'the manner of blowing' of one Chinese instrument (apparently a *sheng* – he names it elsewhere 'the Ching') which Raper had sent him. He mentions that a similar instrument is owned by the Queen, 'but no one here can judge of its effects for want of skill in playing upon it' (see Alvaro Ribeiro, ed., *The Letters of Dr Charles Burney, Volume I, 1751-1784*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991, p234). Some Chinese instruments were most likely brought back to Britain as decorative curiosities by early visitors with no special interest in music: China trader Henry Talbot kept a Chinese gong at his home Chart Park, for instance, which he must have acquired by 1730 when he departed from China on his final voyage there (see Doris Mercer and Edith Mercer, *Chart Park: Dorking. A Vanished Surrey Mansion*, Dorking, Dorking Local History Group, 1993; and Conrad Gill, *Merchants and Mariners of the Eighteenth Century*, London, E. Arnold, 1961).

3) Jonathan Keates, *Purcell: A Biography*, London, Chatto and Windus, 1995, p234.

4) For the text of *The Fairy-Queen* see Michael Burden (ed.), *Henry Purcell's Operas: The Complete Texts*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, p337–402.

5) This suggestion is made in Frans Muller and Julie Muller, 'Completing the picture: the importance of reconstructing early opera', *Early Music*, 33:4, p667-682 (see p678), a detailed attempt to reconstruct the staging of the Act 5 masque of *The Fairy Queen* which offers a number of useful suggestions as to the visual and written sources for its Chinese elements (which might have been introduced by Thomas Betterton, the Dorset Garden theatre's actor-manager).

6) Queen Mary brought her extensive collection of Chinese porcelain with her in 1689 from the Netherlands, where a taste for such work had become widespread at an earlier date than in Britain (Charles Ralph Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire: 1600-1800*, London, Hutchinson, p194-5, notes that the Dutch were the first to import Chinese porcelain to Northern Europe on a large scale, estimating that more than three million pieces were shipped by the Dutch between 1602 and 1657). Rooms at Hampton Court, and at the Water Gallery (where Queen Mary resided while work was still taking place on Hampton Court), were prepared to allow display of her collection of Chinese ware. See Arthur Lane, 'Queen Mary II's Porcelain Collection at Hampton Court', *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society, Volume 25, 1949-1950*, London, 1952, p21-31.

7) The subject of marriage is being directly addressed at this point of *The Fairy Queen*, with Hymen, the god of marriage, making an appearance at the play's end. Queen Mary was to attend a performance of *The Fairy Queen* herself. On Queen Mary and *The Fairy Queen* see Muller and Muller, 'Completing the picture: the importance of reconstructing early opera', p680 (note 1).

8) Concerning this occasion, see H. C. Robbins Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works. Haydn at Eszterháza, 1766-1790*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1978, esp. p26, p192 (where a contemporary account is given), and p198. A description of the palace from 1796 notes many Chinese and Japanese figurines (see p29).

9) Although there is nothing Chinese about Haydn's music, one can argue that certain exotic elements are indeed present in it – see Matthew Head, 'Haydn's exoticisms: "difference" and the Enlightenment', in Caryl Clark (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Haydn*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005, p77-92. Head makes interesting points about the musical presentation of cultural alterity in eighteenth-century Europe which are relevant to the present study. On musical responses to Turkey in eighteenth-century Europe see Frank Harrison, 'Observation, Elucidation, Utilization: Western Attitudes to Eastern Musics, ca. 1600-ca. 1830', in M.H. Brown and R.J. Wiley (eds.), *Slavonic and Western Music: Essays for Gerald Abraham*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1985, p22-26.

10) See Colin Mackerras, *Western Images of China*, Hong Kong, Oxford University Press, 1989, p24. Perhaps the earliest known English language account of a Chinese musical performance is given in the diary of Richard Cocks, an employee of the East India Company. He was present at a performance by Chinese musicians in Nagasaki, Japan, in February 1618, arranged by a Chinese merchant known to the English as 'Captain Whaw', but does not attempt to analyze the music as da Cruz does (see Ian Woodfield, *English Musicians in the Age of Exploration*, Stuyvesant, N. Y., Pendragon Press, 1995, p279). Other early European mentions of Chinese music (of a later date than da Cruz) are Diego de Pantoya (1602, published 1608) and Athanasius Kircher (1650): see Harrison, 'Observation, Elucidation, Utilization', p6-7.

11) For Samuel Purchas's translation of da Cruz see his *Purchas his Pilgrimes* (vol. III), London, Printed by William Stansby for Henrie Fetherstone, 1625, p166-198.

12) Quoted from the English translation of da Cruz's text given in Charles Ralph Boxer (ed.), *South China in the Sixteenth Century*, London, Hakluyt Society, 1953, p 145 (da Cruz's account of Chinese music is given on p144-146). Although this modern translation is based on that given in *Purchas his Pilgrimes* it includes material from the original Portuguese text which Purchas omits.

13) Some key excerpts from Du Halde's writings on music (but not a comprehensive record of them) are given and discussed in Frank Harrison, *Time, Place and Music: An Anthology of Ethnomusicological Observation c. 1550 to c. 1800*, Amsterdam, Frits Knuf, 1973, p161-166.

14) See Harrison, *Time, Place and Music*, p207-208, for the transcripts of Chinese music given in Du Halde. Du Halde's transcripts were known to the minor Swedish composer, Per Brant (1714-1767), who produced his own settings of them (manuscript in the Statens Musikbibliotek, Stockholm). Cathleen Morgan Cameron ('China' as *Theatrical Locus: Performances at the Swedish Court, 1753-1770*, PhD thesis, Indiana University, 2005) argues convincingly that these Chinese-influenced pieces may have been performed on 24 July 1753 as part of a Chinese-themed celebration of the thirty-third birthday of Queen Lovisa Ulrika, which involved musicians and others in 'Chinese' dress and the unveiling of a 'Chinese' pavilion (see especially p36-88, Brant's settings are reproduced as part of Appendix 1 of the thesis).

15) A reprint of Amiot's book was published in 1761 by Éditions Minkoff, Geneva. In 1754 Amiot had sent to France a manuscript entitled *De la musique moderne des Chinois*, and although not published in its entirety some passages from it were put in print by Abbé François Arnaud in 1761 and 1768 without attribution to

their correct source. In 1779 Amiot also completed *Divertissements chinois ou concerts de musique chinoise*, a set of three books containing a large number of Chinese tunes in both the Chinese system of notation and in transcription. This never saw print, however, so these examples of Chinese music were not widely disseminated in eighteenth-century Europe. Amiot's research does seem to have been the source, though, for a selection of Chinese tunes in European transcription that were sent by French missionary Antoine Gaubil (1689-1759) from Beijing in 1751 to Cromwell Mortimer (c. 1693-1752), Secretary of the Royal Society in Britain: see Kii-Ming Lo, 'New Documents on the Encounter Between European and Chinese Music', *Revista de Musicologia*, Vol. XVI, No. 4, 1993, p1896-1911, especially p1904, and more generally on the Jesuits as an important source on China for the Royal Society see Han Qi, 'Sino-British Scientific Relations through Jesuits in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries', in Michel Cartier (ed.), *La Chine entre amour et haine: Actes du VIII^e colloque international de sinologie (Chantilly, 1995)*, Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 1998, p43-59. Some of the Chinese music Amiot collected has been recorded by XVIII-21, Musique des Lumières on the CD *Teodorico Pedrini: Concert Baroque À La Cité Interdite*, Auvidis, France, 1996 (which features liner notes by François Picard). On Amiot see the entry on him by Frederic Lieberman in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (ed. Stanley Sadie), New York, Macmillan, 2001, Vol. 1, p507. On the rich topic of the eighteenth-century French reception of Chinese music in general see Ysia Tchen, *La Musique Chinoise en France au XVIII^e Siècle*, Paris, L'Association Langues et Civilizations, 1974; and Harrison, 'Observation, Elucidation, Utilization'. The musical activities of the Jesuits at the Chinese court, a topic which has received much scholarly attention and which is not a focus of the present study in its own right, is also treated in Nicolas Standaert (ed.), *Handbook of Christianity in China*, Leiden, Brill, 2001, p851-860. For an overview of scholarship on Chinese music history as a whole see Stephen Jones, 'Source and Stream: Early Music and Living Traditions in China', *Early Music*, Vol. 24, No. 3, August 1996, p375-388.

16) Macartney's journals were published as J.L. Cranmer-Byng, *An embassy to China, being the journal kept by Lord Macartney during his embassy to the Emperor Ch'ien-lung, 1793-1794*, London, Longmans, 1962. Other accounts springing from the embassy are: Sir George Leonard Staunton, *An authentic account of an embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China*, London, G. Nicol, 1797; John Barrow, *Travels in China, Containing Descriptions, Observations, and Comparisons, Made and Collected in the Course of a Short residence at the Imperial palace of Yuen-min-yuen, and on a Subsequent Journey through the Country from Peking to Canton*, London, T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1806 (second edition); and Johann Christian Hüttner, *Nachricht von der Britischen Gesandtschaftsreise durch China und einen Theil der tartarei*, Berlin, 1797. For discussion of these and other related primary texts on Chinese music, as well as excerpts, see Harrison, *Time, Place and Music*, especially p167-194.

17) Charles Burney is quoted here from Harrison, *Time, Place and Music*, p168 (see p168-9 on Burney and Chinese music). A band of five German musicians led by John Zupfel accompanied Macartney's embassy. Burney mentions this band in his entry on Chinese music for volume VII of Abraham Rees's *The Cyclopaedia*.

18) See Ribeiro, ed., *The Letters of Dr Charles Burney, Volume I, 1751-1784*, p172-176 and p178-180, where two letters of Autumn 1774 from Burney to Lind are given.

19) See Ribeiro, ed., *The Letters of Dr Charles Burney, Volume I, 1751-1784*, p231-235, for a letter from Burney to Raper of Autumn 1777. The tentative identification of Raper's French correspondent in Beijing is Ribeiro's. In his entry on Chinese music for volume VII of Abraham Rees's *The Cyclopaedia* Burney rates that French informant as having a greater understanding of music than Amiot. According to his will, Burney also later received two Chinese instruments 'of inferior quality' from Macartney, (see Harrison, *Time, Place and Music*, p169),

although in his article for *The Cyclopaedia* he instead mentions having been given a 'chest of instruments, and a gong'. In his *A General History of Music* (volume I, 1776, p38) he also mentions having seen a Chinese instrument 'in the possession of the abbé Arnaud of the French Academy'. Burney's encyclopedia article identifies the various instruments sent by Raper. John Barrow notes 'A English gentleman in Canton' who collected Chinese musical instruments, and illustrations of them are included in his book, *Travels in China* (see Harrison, *Time, Place and Music*, p193, and illustrations M and N, but Harrison may not be correct to identify - p169 - this Englishman as Raper since the latter seems to have returned to Britain in 1781). Edward Jones (1752-1824) also obtained a sample of Chinese music from 'A Gentleman, who resided some time in the English factory, at CANTON' - possibly the same source as Barrow relied on - which he included in his *Lyric Airs* (London, 1804), see Harrison, 'Observation, Elucidation, Utilization', p15.

20) Abraham Rees, *The Cyclopaedia; or Universal Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, and Literature* (published in 39 volumes), London, Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1819-1820. *A General History of Music* does have brief references to Chinese music, for example volume I (1776), p38, where Burney presents information obtained from Lind. See also p406, and volume II (1782), p437.

21) See Ribeiro, ed., *The Letters of Dr Charles Burney, Volume I, 1751-1784*, p232-234 and p173. In *A General History of Music*, volume I (1776), p38, Burney seems persuaded on the basis of examining a Chinese stringed instrument that there are no semitones in Chinese music, but doubts seem to have resurfaced later.

22) Burney shows his awareness of Du Halde as a source on Chinese music in his *A General History of Music*, volume I (1776), p38, and in his article on Chinese music for volume VII of Abraham Rees's *The Cyclopaedia* (which discusses du Halde at the beginning, also mentioning Amiot and Roussier).

Personal contact between members of the Macartney embassy and the Jesuits based in China was also to play a role in dissemination of information about Chinese music. Hüttner met Grammont, whom he refers to as 'Father Grammond', in Beijing (see Harrison, *Time, Place and Music*, p185).

23) Despite broad continuities in the way Chinese music is understood there are nevertheless important shifts in the way China as a whole is perceived. Mackerras, for example, argues for a shift from a largely positive image of China presented by the Jesuits (who had their own particular reasons for avoiding criticism, given their missionary aims) to a more negative view emerging at the eighteenth century's end with Macartney that can be tied to the rise of European imperialism. See Mackerras, *Western Images of China*, p28-65.

24) See Harrison, *Time, Place and Music*, p162-3 (Du Halde) and p193 (Barrow).

25) See Ribeiro, ed., *The Letters of Dr Charles Burney, Volume I, 1751-1784*, p173, p179, and p232; and Burney, *A General History of Music*, volume I (1776), p38: 'Now no music can be composed from such a scale that will not remind us of the melody of Scotland, which will hereafter be proved of a much higher antiquity than has generally been imagined'.

26) See Harrison, *Time, Place and Music*, p172 (Barrow), and p178 (Staunton).

27) Aeneas Anderson, *A Narrative of the British Embassy to China, in the years 1792, 1793, and 1794* (second edition, London, 1795), excerpt in Harrison, *Time, Place and Music*, p180-182 (see p180). Hüttner (see p186) likened Chinese vocal music to 'bagpiping'. William Crotch (1775-1847), who republished five examples of Chinese music from Du Halde and Barrow in his *Specimens of Various Styles of Music referred to in a Course of Lectures read at Oxford and London and Adapted to Keyed Instruments* (three volumes, c. 1807), likens them to Scottish and Irish music, which he suggests have a common origin with

Chinese music (see Harrison, 'Observation, Elucidation, Utilization', p16). The Scottish seaman John Nicol, who visited Canton more than once in the 1780s and 1790s, wrote in the memoir of his travels first published in 1822 that the only 'instrument of music' he observed in China 'was a bagpipe, like the small Lowland pipe, on which they play well' (see Tim Flannery, ed., *The Life and Adventures of John Nicol, Mariner*, Edinburgh, Canongate Books, 2000, p160).

28) A.B., 'A Chinese Air', *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. XXVII, January 1757, p. 33. Pseudonymous contributions or those signed by initials were a common feature of the magazine, and since the initials 'A.B.' appear frequently, indicating their use by more than one writer, the author of this piece cannot be identified. Musical notation was presented in the *Gentleman's Magazine* on a number of other occasions, for example 'A Favourite Song', March 1756, p133; and 'The Country Wedding', December 1756, p583-4.

29) On the central importance of the *Gentleman's Magazine* (founded in 1731) for the development of a recognizably modern reading public in Britain, see for example Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding*, London, Chatto and Windus, 1963, p35-59. Watt argues that this expansion and transformation of the literate public during the eighteenth century helped enable the rise of the novel as a form, and it may have exerted some influence on attitudes to other art forms such as music too, albeit to a lesser extent. Samuel Johnson, who spoke in 1781 of 'a nation of readers' (Watt, p37), estimated (p51) that the *Gentleman's Magazine* had a circulation of around 10,000 (Edmond Burke estimated the total size of the British reading public towards the end of the eighteenth century as being 80,000). Its material was often reprinted in other publications.

30) Du Halde records the missionaries at the Chinese court surprising the Emperor Kangxi with their ability to note down Chinese musical performances by ear, and then reproduce them (see Harrison, *Time, Place and Music*, p163).

31) Serres was primarily a marine painter, and had spent an earlier part of his life at sea. He was one of the founding members of the Royal Academy.

32) The tragic story of one Chinese Catholic convert brought to Europe is told in Jonathan Spence, *The Question of Hu*, New York, Knopf, 1988. Wang-Y-Tong, who arrived in London in the early 1770s, was still young at the time, and was placed in Sevenoaks School by his sponsors, subsequently becoming a page to George Frederick Sackville, the Third Duke of Dorset, before returning to Canton where he engaged in trade. Even in the nineteenth century when Londoners encountered a Chinese person in their own city it could be someone who was other than an autonomous traveler. At that later date Chinese people were sometimes brought to Britain to play passive roles in a spectacle of the exotic, as for example when in 1827 visitors could view a Chinese lady with bound feet at the Grand Salon, 94 Pall Mall, for a shilling, or in 1848 - for the same price - could meet a Chinese man aboard the Junk *Keying* (see Ting Chang, 'Object, beeld en voorstelling twee 19c-eeuwse Europese verbeeldingen van "China"', *Aziatische Kunst*, 38:2, June 2008, p56-7). Chinese musicians were taken to perform in London at the 1884 International Health Exhibition, and since there also seems to have been a lecture at the same time by J. A. Van Aalst (author of the book *Chinese Music*, published in Shanghai by the Statistical Department, Imperial Inspectorate General, in the same year), some in-depth understanding of Chinese music might have been available to British audiences on that occasion (see Han Kuo-huang, 'J.A. Van Aalst and his Chinese Music', *Asian Music*, Vol. 19, No. 2, Spring-Summer 1988, p127-130). Chinese chefs were also taken to London to cook Chinese food in a restaurant during the same event. The *Illustrated Catalogue of the Chinese Collection of Exhibits for the International Health Exhibition, London, 1884*, London, William Clowes and Sons, 1884, published by order of The Inspector General of Customs, includes (p. 142) a 'List of Chinese sent to the Health Exhibition' which mentions thirty-one visitors in total, including (from Beijing) 'Six Musicians, who sing, play and act', plus six

cooks (four from Beijing and two from Canton). Chapter 26 (p. 143-180) gives a detailed description of Chinese music and its instruments (some of which appear to have been on display), as well as a transcription in Western notation of the musical items included in the Exhibition's programme.

33) On Chitqua see David Clarke, 'Chitqua's English Adventure: An Eighteenth Century Source for the Study of China Coast Pidgin and Early Chinese Use of English', *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2005, p. 47-58. The most detailed contemporary source concerning Chitqua's London sojourn is the *Gentleman's Magazine*, May 1771, Vol. XLI, p. 237. Like Loum Kiqua, Chitqua was also from Canton. He similarly met King George and other prominent figures, and relied on the East India Company for his return journey. Both visitors to London may have had commercial motivations for making their journey, since Chitqua, who had operated a shop in Canton trading with foreigners, was to carry on his business of making portrait sculptures while in London. It is entirely possible that Loum Kiqua and Chitqua encountered each other in Canton, and that the latter was inspired to undertake his trip to London by an account of the former's visit. Another merchant from Canton who travelled to Europe even earlier in the eighteenth century than Loum Kiqua and Chitqua was Poankeequa (1714-1788), who visited Stockholm in the 1740s (see C.J.A. Jörg, *Porcelain and the Dutch China Trade*, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1982, p70).

34) For a study of the international trade at Canton and the role of Chinese merchants within it, see for example Weng Eang Cheong, *The Hong Merchants of Canton: Chinese Merchants in Sino-Western Trade*, Richmond, Surrey, Curzon Press, 1997.

35) Boswell persuaded Chitqua 'to read a little to me from a fan with Chinese characters', and remarks concerning the sound of spoken Chinese that 'It was just what Mr. Johnson told me of another Chinese: a sound like the ringing of a

small bell'. See Frank Brady and Frederick A. Pottle, *Boswell in Search of a Wife, 1766-1769*, Melbourne, London and Toronto, William Heinemann Ltd, 1957, p. 317. On Samuel Johnson and China see Tsen-chung Fan, *Dr. Johnson and Chinese Culture*, London, The China Society, 1945; and Adrian Hsia, *The Vision of China in English Literature of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, Hong Kong, Chinese University Press, 1998.

36) Amongst accounts of meetings with Chitqua see Richard Gough, letter of 3 August 1770 to the Rev. B. Forster, in Nichols, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century, Consisting of Authentic Memoirs and Original Letters of Eminent Persons. Volume V*, London, J.B. Nichols and Son, 1828, p. 318; and Thomas Bentley's letter of 4 November 1769 to his business partner Josiah Wedgwood, in Llewellynn Jewitt, *The Wedgwoods: Being a Life of Josiah Wedgwood*, London, Virtue Brothers and Co, 1865, p. 209-10. The only reference to Loum Kiqua I have found in a textual source from anywhere near to the period in question is simply a transcription of the inscription on the Burford print. This is given as an editorial note by Nichols at the bottom of the page on which he prints Gough's letter concerning Chitqua.

37) In addition to 'Lin' there is another similar sounding Chinese family name character, 'Lian' (in the *pinyin* romanization system), which Goldsmith could instead perhaps have been attempting to approximate in the name he chose for his fictional visitor. If Goldsmith indeed put his own words into the mouth of an actual Chinese visitor to London then he was only doing something similar to what William Chambers was also to do when he attributed his comments on Chinese gardens to Chitqua in his *A Dissertation on Oriental Gardening, Second Edition with additions to which is annexed an explanatory discourse by Tan Chet-qua of Quang-Chew-fu, Gent.* London: W. Griffin, 1773. A suggestion that Goldsmith's work was inspired by a Chinese visitor to London was made by Richard Garnett in his introduction to Oliver Goldsmith, *Letters from a Citizen of the World, to his Friends in the East*, London, Wells, Gardner, Darton and Co.,

1904, p.xii, but Garnett was not in a position to know that visitor's name. A more recent edition of Goldsmith's text (with an introduction by Rosalind Vallance) is *The Citizen of the World or Letters from a Chinese Philosopher Residing in London to his Friends in the East*, London, Folio Society, 1961.

38) This identification of the instrument as a *Qinqin* was suggested by Chan Hing-yan, who also arranged for a recording to be made of the piece on that instrument, minus the added bass line, to aid me in its evaluation. Thanks also to Karl Kugle, Giorgio Biancorosso and Daniel Chua for their comments on 'A Chinese Air', to the anonymous reader for *Early Music* for extensive helpful suggestions for revision of the first and second drafts of this article, and to the Committee for Research and Conference Grants of the University of Hong Kong for supporting the research on which it is based.

39) César Guillén-Nuñez, *Macao's Church of Saint Paul: a glimmer of the baroque in China*, Hong Kong, Hong Kong University Press, 2009, p49-51, discusses Jesuit religious music in Goa, and one can plausibly assume that analogous activities occurred in Macau.

40) See Paul A. Van Dyke, *The Canton Trade: Life and Enterprise on the China Coast, 1700-1845*, Hong Kong, Hong Kong University Press, 2005, p24. On musical life aboard ship and in British overseas trading communities (but with a primary focus on an earlier period), see Woodfield, *English Musicians in the Age of Exploration*. Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire: 1600-1800*, p93, mentions the role of music on board Dutch Indiamen. John Nicol (Flannery, ed., *The Life and Adventures of John Nicol, Mariner*, p161) wrote that the Hoppo's band 'consists only of bagpipes'. George Dixon (*A voyage round the world*, London, George Goulding, 1789, p313) states that the Hoppo's band 'consisted of two brass conchs, best like the English tabor, and three or four pipes, not very much unlike a bag-pipe'.

41) On the two dinners which Hickey attended, which took place on 1 and 2 October 1769, see Clarke, 'Chitqua's English Adventure', p. 56. It seems clear that in arranging this pair of dinners Pankeequa was not simply utilizing his cross-cultural knowledge but quite self-consciously putting it on display to impress his Chinese and Western guests.

42) See Linda L. Barnes, *Needles, Herbs, Gods and Ghosts: China, Healing and the West to 1848*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2005, p. 229.

43) See Ribeiro, ed., *The Letters of Dr Charles Burney, Volume I, 1751-1784*, p234. For a discussion of Amiot's method of transcribing Chinese music see Lo, 'New Documents on the Encounter Between European and Chinese Music', p1905.

44) Burney also describes one specific piece of Chinese music that was played by the Macartney embassy on their barrel organ: this was 'the melody to the hymn that is annually sung by the Chinese with the utmost pomp, reverence, and solemnity, in honour of their ancestors, in the presence of the emperor, entitled "The Son of Heaven"'. He notes that 'the melody to this hymn, like our psalmody, entirely composed of slow notes of equal length, it was thought a good foundation on which to build harmony in plain counterpoint; and as there are many stanzas to this hymn, a fundamental base only was added to the melody at first; then a second treble; then afterwards, a tenor; after which a little motion was given to the base, followed by other additional notes to the tenor and base, but always taking care to enforce the principal melody by one of the other parts, either in unison, or in the octave'. The result was not however a success: 'this had no other effect than to try the patience and politeness of the Chinese, who heard it without emotion of any kind'. A 'mandarin' sympathetic to the embassy helped them to understand that 'the additional parts confused and bewildered them [i.e. the Chinese audience]; they disguised the air, and rendered it doubtful which was the principal sound'.

45) For the two pieces and Kambra's comments on them see Harrison, *Time, Place and Music*, p213-217. For 'Higho Highau' Kambra composed a song, justifying this by a claim that the original 'loses its effect upon the Piano Forte'. Barrow (ibid, p 193-4) also gives a version of the first of Kambra's two pieces, but in what he claims is 'its unadorned state'.

46) See Harrison, *Time, Place and Music*, 188-191.

47) On 'Hindustani Airs' see for example Gerry Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1999, especially chapter 1, and Woodfield, *English Musicians in the Age of Exploration*, chapter 17. Ian Woodfield also treats the topic of the 'Hindustani Airs' in *Music of the Raj: A Social and Economic History of Music in Late Eighteenth-Century Anglo-Indian Society*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000 (see especially chapter 5), as well as two articles of earlier date, 'Collecting Indian songs in late 18th-century Lucknow: problems of transcription', *British Journal of Ethnomusicology*, 3, 1994, p73-88; and 'The "Hindostannie air": English Attempts to Understand Indian Music in the Late Eighteenth Century', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 119:2, 1994, p189-211. The first of these two articles, making use of evidence from diaries and letters, offers analysis of the process of transcribing culturally alien musical material which can be considered of broad relevance to the interpretation of 'A Chinese Air', concerning which no such documentary material is available.

48) Woodfield (*English Musicians in the Age of Exploration*, p281-3) notes the relative absence of a cross-fertilization between British music and that of the empire, even by a late nineteenth-century date, when compared to the case of the Hispanic colonies. He explains this as due to an absence of the systematic missionary effort found in Catholic colonies.

Captions for illustrations (see published version for illustrations)

Fig. 1: A mid-Ming dynasty (late fifteenth century) blue and white porcelain vase, one of many items of Chinese ceramics exported to the West. In the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (FE.6-1986). Image © The Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Fig. 2: Painting on the reverse of a sheet of glass, made for export to the West in Canton (Guangzhou), c. 1760-1780. In the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (FE.26-1970). Image © The Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Fig. 3: 'A Chinese Air', as published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. XXVII, p. 33, January 1757. Image © The British Library Board.

Fig. 4: Loum Kiqua, an engraving by Thomas Burford after the painted portrait by Dominic Serres. From an original in the British Museum Prints and Drawings Collection. Image © Trustees of the British Museum.