Chinese Community

We are informed of some interesting facets surrounding the entertainment scene in 19th and 20th century Malayan and Singapore societies. One primary source has been written observations, *constructing detailed and often graphic narratives of the various activities…imported into Malaya from India, Java, China and Europe and then adapted and some transformed to suit local tastes and habits.*[1] While the cultural hybridisation is a logical consequence, Gullick notes the source of this early entertainment which seems to have been associated mainly *with significant religious festivals and events such as weddings and state ceremonies when rituals and entertainment, as spectacle and display of skills, dexterity and talents could scarcely be separated. The element of recreation and drama was part and parcel of the ceremonial event itself.* The most telling point is its site of purview, *performances of rituals … were often held in open spaces, in the streets, where people can easily gather…*[2]

By the late 19th century, there was an increasing number of Straits Chinese[3] who were adopting Western customs, taking on to European sports and past times. In 1885 a Straits Chinese Recreation Club was founded and in 1897, Lim Boon Keng, a third generation Straits Chinese born in Singapore who was the first Chinese Queen's Scholar and legislative councillor from 1895 to 1902, founded the Philomathic Society.[4] In 1897 also, Lim, together with Song Ong Siang, started the The Straits Chinese Magazine, published in English, which "*aimed to promote intellectual activity amongst the Straits - born people*" and will "*afford room for the discussion of useful, interesting and curious matters connected with the customs, social life, folk-lore, history and religion of the varied races who have made their home in this Colony.*"[5]

Both the Straits Chinese community, or at least a segment of members, and Mr. Salzmann had been in contact. In 1898, he had written an article on Chinese music for the magazine as well as harmonised a Chinese melody: *It is well understood that Chinese music is, as music, in quite a rudimentary state…the European orchestra of the present day…must be allowed to be a most beautiful combination of musical sounds, even if the music played be beyond comprehension. Judged by this standard, Chinese music cannot stand…it must be admitted that no beauty can be claimed for Chinese music at the present time…in the opinion of many people competent to judge, there is plenty of talent in music among the Chinese, if they were properly trained. Should they be begin to study the western system, there is little doubt but that before long a very great improvement would be heard.* [6]

Some of this disparaging discourse has had long precedence in the reception of Chinese traditional musics and their relationship to another practice, Wayang. In certain texts, usually Imperial, an ensemble that accompanied the wayang was considered an orchestra (Chinese by default) while at times it was a band or at worst, some form of hideous noise or civil disturbance. A sample of some of the letters to be found in the Singapore Free Press between 1885 and 1900 offers us a context of the perception and reception of Chinese traditional music. Two excerpts from the Singapore Free Press inform us of the **sumbayang** (prayer) festival (known to us today as the Hungry Ghost Festival). Despite the rather disparaging remarks made, mention is specifically made of the presence, attendance and support of the event by the highest ranked officials of the British Empire in Singapore:

The Ghee Hok Society held their sumbayang last night in Carpenter Street under very favourable weather …A number of our leading European residents visited the show, amongst whom we noticed the Hon'ble, the Colonial secretary, Dr. and Mrs. Rowell and Mr. Hole. The great sumbayang of the season, that of the Opium and Spirit farms, comes off tonight, and it is to be hoped that its success will not be marred by the weather.[7]

On Saturday night last night the 'spirits of the departed' were suitably entertained by the Hokkien Ghee Hin Kongsee, whose display of the good things of this part of the world was one of the largest and most magnificent that has been held this year… Several English-made toys placed at one end of the table served to amuse many of the ignorant Chinese to a considerable extent, who seemed astonished and puzzled at their well-timed motion and movements. There were altogether ***21 sets of wayangs*** *in full play placed at a good distance from one another, including* ***several Chinese concerts****. Notwithstanding this unusually large number, there were enough spectators to see and criticise the merits of each. Their genial headman Mr, Gun Kum Lian, assisted by Mr. Gun Chok, received a large number of residents at the Kongsee house, who were most hospitably entertained. We understand that the amount expended for the whole affair exceeded $3000. This closes the sumbayang season of 1886 which has been altogether very successful and creditable.*[8]

Another major festival noted was the Lunar New Year, the observation of festive ritual behaviour. Unfortunately, descriptions of the music are not equally complimentary:
Once more the Chinese year is drawing to its close, once more the clash of cymbals, the squeal of fifes and the sound of tom-toms is heard in the land and once more according to a time honoured custom in the flowery land, the clans Teo-chews, Hailams, and Khehs and Macaus repair to the house of supremest Joss in Phillip Street, there to join in united thanksgiving service…All the

streets leading to Phillip Street this morning were thronged with processions, with Chinamen with clean washed faces and gala costume children on horseback decked with endless frippery by indulgent parents, and gaily decorated conveyances ***crowded with singing girls and instruments of fullest discord****, while the streets themselves were radiant with innumerable and costly silk banners and all manner of emblems and paraphernalia. The proceedings will be continued until the return of the different Josses to their respective temples during Chinese New Year.*[9] (emphasis mine)

Letters to the Editor also form an impression in the newspapers and through them an English-conversant and English-enabled community in Singapore of what Chinese music sounds like or is judged to be:

"And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infest the day,
Shall lift up their tents like the Arabs
And as silently steal away."

MR. EDITOR—Let the music be Chinese tom-tom music and I guarantee the cares of the day will not budge an inch. A Chinaman's house in the upper part of Killeney Road considerately treated the midnight air last night to a vigorous and lengthened recital on the tom-tom, much to the delectation (?) of the European would be sleepers in the neighbourhood. The quarter is a European one and I think this fact should weigh with the organisers of the entertainment before they attempt a repetition of it. It should certainly attract the attention of the Police authorities.[10]

SUFFERER

TO THE EDITOR

SIR—Permit me to avail myself of the opportunity offered by the letter signed by A Sufferer to corroborate fully all he says regarding the nuisance of which he complains. I regret to say that I am a fellow sufferer to such an extent that I have already threatened Mr. Lee Cheng Yan who is responsible for the annoyance with legal proceedings. One would think that a person who mixes with Europeans and knows their customs and habits so well, would be well aware what an annoyance such nightly performances must be. When Supt. Bell was residing in the neighbourhood he managed to bring some persuasion to bear, which mitigated it a little, but it has now got worse than ever. It is hoped that Mr. Lee Cheng Yan will have sufficient consideration for his neighbours to put an end to the nuisance without obliging them to take steps to compel him.[11]

I am Sir,

Yours truly
E. Nathan

SIR:--The inhabitants of houses in River Valley Road, Killeney Road, Institution Hill and that neighbourhood generally, have had a magnificent opportunity presented them, during the last few days, of studying the technical intricacies and intense beauties of Celestial music even when living in recognised European localities. The writer is informed that the occasion giving rise to this unusual order of things is the occurrence of Chinese nuptial jubilations. The celebrations appear to be on a large scale, as is testified by the number of guests continually arriving at the house where the happy pair are staying. The civilised West prefers to spend its honeymoons in quietude and comparative solitude but the enlightened Celestial evidently likes to make as much show and noise as possible during such happy periods. After melancholy and irritating banging of gongs, interspersed with the accompaniment of drums, and lasting for some five days, the neighbourhood above mentioned was on Sunday (the quiet Sabbath of happier England) treated from 5.30pm to midnight, to the incessant charivari of a high Celestial order, varied occasionally by shrill Chinese songs. The latter appeared to be mainly comic, to judge by the shouts of boisterous laughter that greeted the various verses, especially towards midnight. It is true that the monotony of the Chinese music, which to the uncultivated mind resembles the noise usually met with a working smithy, was interspersed with music given by a band of musicians playing European instruments. The two orchestras evidently vied with each other as to which could make the most bunyi-bunyi. They followed each other in incessant rotation. The writer has just been awakened this (Monday) morning by more Celestial music from this same house at the hour of 5 am, and the intolerable row has already lasted nearly an hour. He trusts his "boy" is right when he states that to-day sees the close of this unexpectedly rich musical treat given gratis to the community at large. The un-musical and those whose ears do not appreciate the beauties of Celestial music, especially when such appreciation entails the total banishment of sleep during ordinary sleeping hours, will doubtless desire, with the writer, if they live in the neighbourhood in question that the enlightened Chinese would spend their honeymoon in European fashion, or in neighbourhood un-infested by the orang-puteh, or say at Selitar, by the sea, or any such places, so long as these be out of sight, out of hearing and out of mind.[12]

ONE WHO HAS SUFFERED

These extracts taken from the one of the local newspapers gives the reader a likely impression of Chinese music from European, predominantly English, ears. Salzmann's comments, however, disparaging or deprecating, are comparatively much milder than the reports and letters to the Editor. Curiously, though, even with the beginnings of the Straits Chinese Magazine, the tone is decidedly pro-Colonial. Therefore when Salzmann judges Chinese music to be

at a very rudimentary level, it should not escape our notice that the article receives fullest approval by the Straits Chinese and who permit it to be written in the Straits Chinese magazine. These are ways in which the Chinese community is divided into an English-supporting and Chinese-supporting groups.

In the 1920s, Alec Dixon recounts how *significantly, perhaps, there was very little talk of what are now known as 'cultural activities', although these certainly existed to claim the attention of Europeans and Asiatics alike. The Straits Chinese community was constantly busy, not only with sporting matters, but with philomatic, philharmonic, debating, literary and drama societies, many of which have been described by the late Song Ong Siang in his excellent book* ***One Hundred Years of the Chinese in Singapore****. When the Macdona Players produced a series of Shaw plays at the Victoria in Singapore it was notable that, at every performance, more than half the audience consisted of Straits-Chinese.*[13]

In the field of creative work, Mo Ze Xi (born 1935) is identified as a composer who came to Singapore at the age of five. He gradually gained recognition as a composer who was also an orchestral and choral conductor. Mo believed traditional musical arts in China began with courtesans. It was generally replaced by other forms of musical genres such as xi qu, suo chang and ping tan, which involve instrumental accompaniment and action. During the 1920s and 1930s, overseas Chinese musicians introduced the idea of solo and chorus singing into Chinese culture. Mo claims it was a culture that was soon proliferated in institutions and cultural troupes. Music, according to Mo, also mirrored the life of a people of a particular time. Mo claimed Malayans were often abused and ill-treated by both British and Japanese soldiers and provided the impetus for Malayan composers to write anti-colonial and anti-Japanese songs. The text of one such song reads:
Victory, victory, victory belongs to the people.
Mo reports that several Malayan composers emerged, **Chang Hong**, **Hong Chang**, **Li Qiu** and many others. They were either from China or local composers. Among the locals, **Ye Li Tian**, together with **Ren Kwang**, founded **Tong Luo**. **Ye Li Tian** served as the president of the society. His musical style was greatly influenced by the early Russian revolutionary music. Mo relates a composition, Singapore River, as a popular song which was about life during the Japanese Occupation. Unfortunately, most of the manuscripts were missing or lost.

Composers of the 1960s were **Li Hua** and **Qiu Jiu**. The lyrics written by them concern the social environment of their time and hence they were not widely broadcast. Music composers were prevented from writing music that helped

translate their deep seated desire to be rid of imperial/colonial powers in inflammatory or revolutionary songs. Unfortunately, this only succeeded in hastening the closure of their societies. Mo believed this was the cause for the eventual disappearance of revolutionary music.

On the other hand, Mo condemned what he called unscrupulous, immoral and socially irresponsible intellectuals who encouraged the development of popular music of the time. Mo suggested these pieces focused on non-important issues, were in bad taste and had performers rocking and dancing insanely and demonstrated little or no fighting spirit—a term he used was soul-less. These performers he said made use of music to convey unhealthy emotions. Such compositions, he declared had negative influences on the young and innocent and this would affect the development of the country.

He closed off his article by noting that in the present, societies or associations have sung some form of "art songs", folk songs (Malayan min yao), Russian folk songs and 'popular' music– *liu sing ker chee* –**Zhou Xuan** from the 1930s to the 1940s, **Yu Min** between the 1940s and 1950s, followed by **Liu Wen Zhen** and **Fung Fei Fei** in the 1960s. Much of this music, Mo felt, lacked life and energy and did not possess the value for fighting for independence or revolution.[14]

Interestingly enough, in the 1950s, the wholesome culture association saw their movement as part of an anti-Yellow (anti-Colonial/Western influence) Culture Campaign. Dances performed in Singapore by both associations were reconstructed by using dance scores which were imported from China or by repeatedly observing the choreography from the dance films. Several Chinese dance films in the early sixties indicated strong and direct Chinese influences. Many other documentaries from the same period include folk dances of different ethnic groups in China. These dances contained no explicit political message and the folk dances were presented in a light enough manner to appeal to a broad spectrum of the audience in Singapore. Given this seemingly unobstructed access, why was there a need to articulate an anti-yellow culture? One possible view is the lack of confidence in the Colonial government especially after the Japanese Occupation and disdain with all the value systems. That might have been part of the reason.

Tony Beamish also informs us of a number of developments in the post Japanese Occupation period:
…Mandarin music [is] *popular far beyond the confines of the…Chinese communities and interesting experiments in Western orchestration can now be heard in both. At the same time, traditional skill is being maintained and the more esoteric forms of communal music continue to be played in*

Malaya…ancient Chinese instrumental music have an enthusiastic following in the country, and are supported not only by local arts societies but by the occasional visits of distinguished performers from Hong Kong… and other parts of South-East Asia. [15]

Beamish's observations highlight two directions for Chinese traditional music, possibly mutually exclusive. The first may have been the older more chamber-like or solo instrumental concerts featuring the er-hu, pipa or qin. At the other end, the tong-luo would have given rise to what is known today as the Chinese orchestra with its newly acquired symbols, status and repertoire.

Another possible reason was the proliferation of popular form of music-making and dance in cabarets and dance bands; precisely the sort of criticism levelled by Mo Ze Xi. Arguably the most popular entertainment during the 1950s in Singapore was to be found in the New World which enjoyed massive crowds every night. 'Getai's enjoyed the best business in New World during the 50s. There was the "Man Jiang Hong" Getai, the Shangri-La, the New Nightclub, Feng Feng Song and Dance Troupe, and Broadway.[16] The Man Jiang Hong 'Getai' was used by the famous Zhang Lai Lai Song and Dance Troupe, which met with enthusiastic crowd response. Part of the show included the performance of a series of love ballads between Zhang Lai Lai and the male lead, which was a crowd-pleaser. Zhang eventually moved to the Hong Kong motion picture scene. Despite her considerable success and fame as a singer locally, the troupe was subsequently dismantled. The Man Jiang Hong Getai was then replaced by the Dong Fang Getai.[17] Moreover, Joseph Peters' overview of musics in Singapore reveals[18] that, **Bunga Tanjong** at the **New World Amusement Park**, **New World**, **Great World** and **Happy World** were venues around which a thriving nightlife in Singapore revolved in the 1950s. People flocked to these clubs every night to participate in contemporary popular dance crazes such as cha-cha, rumba, and tango to name a few. Live popular band performances sufficed for all of these types of dances, thus making it economically lucrative and at the same time characterised variety and 'local' flavour in entertainment. It would not have been surprising to have speculated on the loss of 'wholesome' Chinese in the community to these popular forms.

The turning point in the 60s was a variety show in 1962 by the Singapore Amateur Player which featured folk dance, folk songs, poetry recitation and dances choreographed by its members, which was severely criticised for ignoring the needs of the people and neglected their duty to depict the peoples' lives and express their thoughts. In February 1963 the PAP government cracked down on left-wing extremism, trade unionists, student leaders and activists of the wholesome cultural associations; fuelling the speculation of the rivalry between the PAP and oppositions party Barisan Socialis. Most of the groups

within the wholesome cultural associations were abolished by law between 1964 and 1969 because of their political alliance with the outlawed Communist Party. As a result, wholesome cultural associations transferred their links to the 'art associations'.

It was during this period that *a Chinese song book entitled "Revolutionary Songs" had been proscribed by the Singapore Government. Any person selling, distributing or possessing this publication is liable to prosecution. This publication consisting of 104 pages has red covers of which the front cover carries a picture of four armed men killing their enemy. Most of the songs are quotations from Mao-Tse-tung. The publication has been banned principally because it is intended for use by local pro-Communist elements as paraphernalia for organising riots and destruction of public and private property in Singapore. These songs call on people to resort to violence in order to establish a Communist regime and there is little of musical worth in them. This publication will therefore serve as a stimulus to get teenaged children to go on the rampage at the behest of adult pro-Communists who plan these disorders in the safety of their homes and offices.*[19]

On the other hand, when the National Theatre was first commissioned, there was support to initiate many practices found in the Chinese community in Singapore. Ho Hwee Long remembers, that among other activities, *there was a National Theatre Chinese Orchestra…that started in 1963…it was a very strong Chinese orchestra…the conductor was a Chinese-born Hong Kong person* (Mr. Cheng Si Sum—resigned from NTCO in 1971)*…can't remember his name…he returned to Hong Kong….*[20]

In the annual report of 1969, not only has the Chinese Orchestra seems to have grown but also the need to support a growing demand for Chinese traditional instrumental lessons:
In August 1969, the National Theatre Company undertook another project for the promotion of Chinese music. The Company organized instrumental classes for Er Hu, Pipa, Ku Ch'ng and Flute for both children and adults. The tutors were the conductor and leading members of the Chinese orchestra. As these classes were successful, the National Theatre Company now intends to organize new classes for beginners and at Intermediate levels jointly with the Adult Education Board. In addition to the staging of concerts, the Company also cut several discs. The first disc was "Chinese Festival Music" which was a selection of traditional Chinese orchestral music. The Company hopes to produce more recordings of other serious music in the near future.[21]

By the annual report of 1970, the reports have gone a step further:

The music section of the National Theatre Company made further progress in its performing standard and crowned another year of success…Senior members of the Chinese Orchestra were invited to instruct the Youth Junior Chinese Orchestra of the Ministry of Education, the Nanyang University Chinese Orchestra and the Ngee Ann Technical College Chinese Orchestra. It was evident that Chinese instrumental music had gained a marked increase in popularity in our Republic. [22]

By March 1980 however, The Chairman's foreword to the Annual Report of that year included the following:
The Trust continued to provide a varied programme of cultural activities. The cultural units continued to have a good year…The Chinese Orchestra still provides an avenue for enthusiasts to participate in their musical interests.[23]

What is most curious is that under list of cultural activities, only Mr. Au Yong Puay could be seen to provide Ku Ch'ng classes.[24] However, under the National Theatre Club activities, there was recorded a Chinese Orchestra concert with a very curious brief: In commemoration of its Anniversary, the two-year old Chinese Orchestra provided a concert on 27 March 1979 at the Singapore Conference Hall. Members consisted of amateurs from all walks of life who strived and made the concert a success. [25] From hereon, the promotion of Chinese traditional musics came under the purview of the National Theatre Club's Activities, producing during the 1980 season A Chinese Wind Ensemble on 18 May 1980 at the DBS auditorium; a fund-raising concert for the Singapore Cultural Foundation on 29 June 1980 featuring five artists from Hong Kong at the Singapore Conference Hall; and Chinese Instrumental Music Festival from 14-22 March 1981. [26]

The first noticeable absence of the Chinese Orchestra from one of the main sections into the National Theatre Club Activities is now replaced by an absence of the Chinese Orchestra from the Club activities by the 1987/8 Annual Report. Nothing is seen or heard of the National Theatre Chinese Orchestra after that.[27] However, there is seen growing demand for instrumental lessons of which the ku ch'ng (qin) maintained one of the most sustained demands.

The People's Association Chinese Orchestra (reportedly formed in 1968) which had worked together with the National Theatre Chinese Orchestra emerges towards the mid-1990s as the Singapore Chinese Orchestra. In 1996, with the recommendation of Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, the Singapore Chinese Orchestra Company Limited was set up to transform the SCO into a national orchestral ensemble of high international standard. Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong was named its Patron. In 1998, the Orchestra, under music director, Hu Bing Xu, toured Beijing, Shanghai and Xiamen to critical acclaim.

In January 2002, the SCO appointed Shanghai-born, US-based maestro, Tsung Yeh as its music director. A major initiative of the director of the SCO, according to its website,[28] is to reach out to new audiences, to win the hearts of non-Chinese music listeners and cultivate the affections of existing audience. As a non-profit professional organisation, the Orchestra has been extending its presence in the community with Community Series concerts at Community Clubs, Arts Education Programmes in schools and Outdoor Concerts at National Parks. The SCO has a current membership of 31 musicians and augments that when having to perform works requiring larger forces.

One of the outcomes of its outreach and education programmes has been a continued focus on Chinese traditional instruments in the school system. Many of the instrumentalists from the SCO are to be found offering lessons on instrumental and aesthetic facility to those wishing to learn. Additionally, the schools provide one of the strongest and most sustainable bases for its proliferation and is seen in Special Assistance Plan Schools (SAP) as a school-tradition. The extent to which the Singapore Youth Festival remains the only reward system for such learning remains to be researched at the school level and perhaps identifying some of these students longtitudinally into adult life. What has also become more common is the seeking of further studies in Chinese traditional musics in the PRC – notably Beijing and Shanghai. We know very little of Singaporean proponents. Further scholarship needs to understand if this is a move that will help generate a critical base to support a critical mass.

What is also not easily determined is the extent to which other institutions become part of the learning curve. For instance, there are some Taoist and Buddhist temples in Singapore who offer instrumental lessons in particular Chinese tradtional instruments, including the voice and choral singing. These organizations have been known to have carried it out for some time but the extent of their efficacy and lessons imbibed something of an unknown in the written and documented discourse.

REFERENCES

1 Yung Sai Shing & Chan Kwok Bun, Leisure, Pleasure and Consumption: Ways of entertaining Oneself, In Chan Kwok Bun and Tong Chee Kiong, (eds.) Past times, A Social History of Singapore, Times Editions, 2003,pp.153-181, p.153.

2 Gullick, J.M. Malaya Society in the late Nineteenth Century: the Beginnings of Change. Singapore, Oxford University Press, in Yung and Chan, op.cit., p.153.

3 For a fuller discussion on definition and identity of the Straits Chinese, Straits-born Chinese, Peranakan and Baba, see Rudolph, Jurgen. Reconstructing Identities: A Social History of the Babas in Singapore Vermont: Ashgate 1998 pp. 25 - 64. See also Tan Chee Beng. The Baba of Melaka: Culture and Identity of a Chinese Peranakan Community in Malaysia p. 44. Rudolph has argued that the terms 'Baba', 'Nyonya', 'Peranakan', 'Straits-born Chinese' and 'Straits Chinese' sometimes used synonymously have changed in meaning over time. From 1852, the legal definition of 'Straits Chinese' was that of a 'Straits born Chinese or 'Chinese British subject'. The Straits Chinese not only considered themselves native to their birthplace but also the legal identification by the British colonials and "subsequent self-identification as 'Straits Chinese' came to be associated with status, wealth and the availability of local-born 'Chinese' women'. (p. 43), cited in Phan Ming Yen, Music in Empire, Western Music in 19th century Singapore through a study of selected texts, Unpublished MA dissertation, Nanyang Technological University, 2004,, pp.165-167.

4 Turnbull, C.M. A History of Singapore 1819 – 1988, Second Edition, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1989, p. 103, in Phan, Ming Yen, op.cit, pp.165-167.

5 "Our Programme." in The Straits Chinese Magazine (SCM) March 1897 Vol. 1 No. 1 p. 2, in Phan, Ming Yen, op.cit, pp.165-167.

6 Salzmann, Edward Charles. "A Few Remarks on Chinese Music" in SCM, December 1898 Vol. 2 No. 8, pp.169-170. in Phan, Ming Yen, op.cit, pp.165-167.

7 Thursday 26th August 1886 Singapore Free Press

8 30th August 1886 Singapore Free Press Monday

9 Singapore Free Press, 17 December 1892.

10 Am obnoxious Nocturne, Letter to the Editor, Singapore Free Press 31 July 1897.

11 The tom-toms of Killeney Road, Letter to the Editor, 2 August 1897

12 Disturbers of the Public Peace, Letter to the Editor, Singapore Free Press, 31 October 1899.

13 Dixon, Alec, For Entertainment Only, p.2.

14 Mo, Zexi. The Malayan song composers and their works, YanHuang Journal. Singapore: Yan Huang Researching Association, 2: 18-20, December 2003, translations by Wong Joon Hwang, June 2004.

15 Beamish, Tony, Arts of Malaya 1954., pp.43-45, in Chapter Six, Music and Letters.

16 See Wang, Zhenchun, Gen de Xilie [Chinese source], Seng Yew Book Store 1988, p.34; Wan Chiew Inn, Hainanese Opera in Singapore: Case Studies through Oral History pp.17-18; Tyers, Ray, Singapore, Then and Now Edition 2, Singapore: Landmark Books 1993, p200.

17 See Wang, Zhenchun, Gen de Xilie [Chinese source], Seng Yew Book Store 1988, p.34-35.

18 Peters, Joseph E.E., Evolving traditions of ASEAN, Chapter on Singapore, Malay Music segment on Traditional Music in Singapore, pp.94-106.

19 Song Book Banned June 9 1967 Ministry of Culture JUN 16/67 (CUL) Issued at 1700 hrs.

20 Interview with Ho Hwee Long May 29 2004.

21 National Theatre Trust Annual Report 1969, p. 4.

22 National Theatre Trust Annual Report 1970, p. 2.

23 National Theatre Trust Annual Report 1980, p.4.

24 National Theatre Trust Annual Report 1980, p.16.

25 National Theatre Trust Annual Report 1980, p.26.

26 National Theatre Trust Annual Report 1981 under National Theatre Club activities.

27 National Theatre Trust Annual Report 1987/8 under National Theatre Club activities.

28 www.sco-music.org.sg