



Echoes of History: Naxi Music in Modern China

Book and CD-ROM

Helen Rees

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Based on extensive fieldwork and documentary research in China, this book is a chronicle of the musical history of Lijiang County in China's southern Yunnan Province. It focuses on Dongjing music, a repertoire borrowed from China's Han ethnic majority by the indigenous Naxi inhabitants of Lijiang County. Used in Confucian worship as well as in secular entertainment, Dongjing music played a key role the Naxi minority's assimilation of Han culture over the last 200 years. Prized for its complexity and elegance, which set it apart from "rough" or "simpler" indigenous Naxi music, Dongjing played an important role in defining social relationships, since proficiency in the music and membership in the Dongjing associations signified high social status and cultural refinement. In addition, there is a strong political component in its examination of the role of indigenous music in the relation of a socialist state to its ethnic minorities.

The first in English on this rich musical tradition, this book is also unique in providing a complete history of the music in a single region in China over the twentieth century. It integrates individual, local, and national histories with musical experience and musical change. Ethnic music in China provides a vivid example of the tremendous cultural changes over the past century, and the tradition continues to evolve as China encourages ethnic diversity within a unified socialist nation. The book includes a case study of China's tourist trade and its policies toward minorities.

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