

## 4. The Musical Heritage of Asia

Now hang on to your hats, 'cause we've got three countries to visit while we're here in ancient Asia! First stop is China—the Land of the Dragon!

In 187–140 B.C., when Western music was just coming to life in Greece, the Chinese had already established the first Imperial Office of Music. Music was important to the Chinese, and they used it on many occasions. The Chinese already had large orchestras by this time—one was an outdoor orchestra with 1,346 musicians!

During the expansion of the Chinese empire, the Chinese had a great influence on the music and instruments of Japan and Korea. Let's go on over to Korea, the Land of the Morning Calm!

Throughout its 5,000 year history, Korea has enjoyed a rich musical tradition. The earliest Korean music can be traced to ritual fall and harvest festivals, where music and dances were performed for several days and nights.

Korean music generally falls into two categories: ceremonial court music and traditional folk music. The court music dates back to 1116, when it was introduced from China. While its court music is formal and highly structured, Korean folk music reflects the humor, tenderness and joy of its people.

Just as Korean music was influenced by the Chinese, Japanese music was influenced by

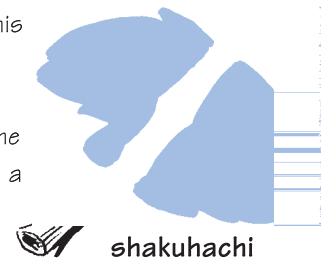
the Koreans. This brings us now to Japan, the Land of the Rising Sun!

Like its neighbors, Japan has always held music to be an important part of its culture. Japanese music dates back to the sixth century, and by the seventh century, Japanese court musicians were elevated to a high social status that would be the envy of musicians in other lands.

This traditional Japanese piece, called “The Water Wheel,” is the name of a game that children play, in which they join hands to form two circles, one inside the other, and turn in opposite directions, imitating the movement of a water wheel spinning under a stream of water.

### Did You Know?

A traditional Japanese instrument called the **shakuhachi** originated in the 8th century. A hermit named Omori Toku discovered the secret of mastering the shakuhachi. He never wrote it down, but passed the secret on only to his students. Ever since then, his teachings have been handed down generation by generation to students of the shakuhachi, and they remain a secret to all but true masters of the ancient instrument.



shakuhachi



# The Water Wheel

Traditional Japanese  
Arr. by Alphonso Coda & Scherzo

## Andantino con moto

1 4 2 4 5 4 2 1

*mf* (Spin - ning, spin - ning round and round; We're turn - ing, turn - ing

4

up - side down!) — There is a wa - ter wheel by the ri - ver - side,

7

spin - ning, spin - ning 'round all day; Take your friend and then

10

hur - ry; run a - way! An - y - one with - out a part - ner will be "It!" ONE! TWO! THREE!

\*When using the GM sound, play both hands 8va higher.